

**MEETING: BOE Regular Meeting 7/13/2021 7:30 PM**

Comments are listed in the order submitted via the electronic form.

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**Subject Matter: Safety and Security Recommendations**

When I went to high school, there was not Police officer on duty at school, but then we heard about Flint Michigan in 2000. From then on, there have been school shootings yearly. Certainly not having a dedicated SRO will embolden assailants and increase these events. Drugs are another problem in high school and a police officer certainly helps deter some of this. Lastly violence between students is subdued thanks to the SRO. Removal of the SRO is nothing more than a political move that some individuals are trying to push through our school board. If any one officer shows any signs of improper conduct he should be replaced, however it cannot be assumed that all officers are out to get the minority kids. The officer is there to help our kids. I don't want people on the board with no kids in the school making bad choices for us to elevate themselves politically.

Allison beerger

**Subject Matter: D219 boe**

To the board of education at Niles North High School,

I am the current parent of a Niles North High School student .

I hope that you will consider appointing Dr

Paul Cantz or Alan Levy for the current open board positions. I believe they will be fair and free of political biases which we need in our school. Thank you for considering their appointment.

Furthermore , thank you for changing the date of graduation from the Jewish Sabbath as my child and we observe the sabbath on Saturday.

Thank you for standing against anti Semitism as this is important .

Thank you for making sure Jewish students and students of all faiths and backgrounds feel safe at our schools .

Sincerely ,

Irma and Ira Oliff

**Subject Matter: Keep the security officers in the building**

Keep our kids safe. Keep the police in the school. The teachers are usually the last persons you would want to stop a fist fight. Keep the police in the school before somebody gets hurt.

Sam Barhoumeh

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

There's nothing more important than the safety and security of our children and staff. No other person aside from the SRO can help maintain that in a case of an emergency. When seconds matter, responding officers will be minutes away. Well, except the SRO who will be in the building. With the right fit, the SRO program is community relations at its finest. To be able to build relationships with kids, teach, educate on top of being a support system to staff, students and parents is a win-win. The majority of the community members asked for a full time SRO in the building. You can not turn your back on them. If a certain number of students are concerned with the presence of an officer, you can not turn your back on them either. Instead, identify the problem and come up with solutions to fix the problem. This district has not addressed this issue ever and now the answer to the problem is to remove the SRO from the school ? That would be the absolute irresponsible thing to do. Address the issue at its source. Don't hide behind it. KEEP OUR CHILDREN SAFE !!!!

Raimond Pavely

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

This letter's intent is to request the SRO contract to be renewed for INSIDE the buildings.

I attended the SRO committee presentation at the BOE meeting, and was disappointed by the lack of due diligence during the 7 months of planning, as well as the lack of consideration of dissenting opinions of members of the Task Force. In light of the fact that over 60% of students, parents and staff who completed your survey indicated that they were in favor of keeping an SRO at each of our high schools, this decision should have been a no-brainer in favor to retain the SRO. There is no reason to appease 26% of your community, only 10% of which strongly disagree with it, when 43.3% STRONGLY AGREE that having an SRO makes the school safer.

Rather, there should be a plan developed that provides constructive strategies for that 26% to demonstrate the efficacy and value of an SRO and how to further develop sustained positive relationships between the SRO and the Students/Staff. Removing them entirely puts our children in a direct path of potential danger, one that could result in blood on your hands. Are you okay with that? I know I would not be if I had a choice to provide protective guardrails to keep our children out of harm's way and chose not to.

In the event that you decide to remove the SRO, how will you ensure our children are safe in their absence should a dangerous situation arise, such as a school shooter? What is the plan to protect the students and staff without this professionally trained individual in the school? These are answers to critical questions that have yet to be provided.

Thank you,  
Emily McCall

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

We need to keep our children safe. We need police in the building.

Katina Geroulis

**Subject Matter: Safety and Security Recommendations**

2020 and the wake of the pandemic has tested our community's physical ,economic, and mental health . Our childrens' lives have been turned upside down, and suicide and depression is on the rise. Overall in the United States in March 2020, self-harm claims in that age-group rose 90.7% over the same month in 2019 and nearly doubled (99.8%) from April 2019 to April 2020. The new normal and the mental strain on on our children in the coming years is unknown and we have no history to compare it to.

To that point, I implore you NOT to remove the school resource officers from our schools. The officers provide invaluable assistance to the students, staff and parents. It would be impossible to replace the services they provide with teachers or civilians. I am sure no teacher wants to dissuade an active shooter from harming students. I would much rather see social workers and teachers COLLABORATING WITH AN SRO TO IDENTIFY A THREAT AND DIFFUSE IT PROACTIVELY, but in the event of a life threatening situation, they should be guiding students to safety, while an SRO does their job to end the threat. Each position plays an important role, but one is NOT in lieu of the other. An SRO in the building also allows the individual to be more familiar with building layout and student traffic flow which could be significantly important in the event of a major emergency. SROs are the first lines of defense when a preventable violence occurs. Beyond law enforcement, SROs also serve as educators, emergency managers, and informal counselors

According to the D219 survey that the School put out showed over 60%of our community feels safer with an SRO in the school. We as a district should work collaboratively with social workers and the SRO to see why 10% are opposed to the SRO, but we should not get rid of the position especially since over half of the community is in favor of keeping an SRO in the schools. As a community, we should never assume that we are immune to a major act of violence. Now is not the time to make rash decisions that could impact the safety of our children, and have grave consequences. A decision you would quickly regret if something critical happened at the school.

Thank You

Dr.Kathy Knobel (D219 Parent and community member)

**Subject Matter: Board vacancy seat**

I would first like to express my appreciation to the board for listening and addressing our anti-semitism concerns at the last board meeting. Today, the focus of my email is on filling the vacant board seat. I would like the board to assign someone whose primary goal is education and the improvement of our district. We, as a community, do not want someone who prioritizes the advancement of their own political agendas and notoriety by making inaccurate claims about our administration, staff and our schools, over our childrens' education. I believe Alan Levy would be a great choice. He is a district parent with 2 kids at d219. Alan is an licensed IL attorney and has had experience with advocacy for under-served African-American and Hispanic legal communities. He spent time doing pro-bono work the Cabrini Green Legal Aid Clinic and First Defense Legal Aid. He manages very large annual budgets and understands well what good financial stewardship looks like. He is someone who can bring everyone together behind the common goal of educating students, and will wisely keep the board's focus fully on education.

Thank You

Kathy and Joseph Osborne

**Subject Matter: Thank you and BOE open positions**

To whom this may concern:

I am the parent of two former and one current student at Niles North High School. I'm writing to communicate my gratitude for explicitly repudiating anti-Semitism in your email from Dr. Steven Isoye, Dr. James Edwards and Dr. Karen Ritter on June 22, 2021. Thank you for correcting the graduation date for the benefit of Jewish students and teachers who observe the Jewish Sabbath, in keeping with the long standing tradition in this district.

Also, I hope that whomever fills the current BOE vacancy has a student in district and is fully invested in the education and welfare of all students rather than an agenda outside of the scope of the role of a BOE member.

We've been through so much, our kids have been witness to hardships these past two years, and we need healthy leadership.

I'm not familiar with all of the potential candidates for the open BOE position. However, I'd like to express my support for both Alan Levy and Paul Cantz.

Thank you for your time,  
Susan Richter

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

District 219 should remove SROs from the schools. I have previously sent you a number of public comments sharing the story that follows, but I'm reiterating it because it feels important to share the real-life impacts that SROs have on people's lives.

In the early 2000s, my sister Keeley attended Niles West, followed by OCLC (now Niles Central). She was arrested while at school. This arrest led her down a path toward probation, then house arrest, then juvenile detention, then drug addiction. This was followed by many years of jail and prison -- all for extremely minor drug and theft crimes.

Last year, Keeley died of an overdose while still entrapped in the criminal punishment system -- a system that prevented her from truly getting help for her addiction. In fact, this system continually contributed to the underlying trauma that drove her addiction.

I want everyone who hears this comment to understand that the SROs in District 219 initiated the cycle that led to Keeley's death.

Policing in schools has been shown to inevitably lead to police violence, including the violence of arrest. This violence is particularly targets Black students and other students of color. It also disproportionately impacts students who are disabled and students living with addiction and mental illness, like my sister.

I'm coming at this issue from a personal perspective, but also a professional one. I've written and edited books that address the violence of school policing. Again and again my research has shown that police have no place in institutions of learning. they are antithetical to safety.

Please consider the way in which the SRO policy is brutally harming people and families, particularly Black students and other students of color, as well as students with disabilities. Please answer the call to END the district's partnership with the Skokie Police Department, through the School Resource Officer (SRO) program. And as you make these decisions, I urge you to center the voices of Black community members, students, faculty and staff, and listen to the experiences of students who have experienced violence and harassment at the hands of SROs.

I'm a mom now myself. I am dreaming of schools where students truly feel safe, secure, and able to learn and grow and heal. And in schools like that, there is absolutely no room for police.

Sincerely,

Maya Schenwar

Niles West, Class of 2001

Co-editor, *Who Do You Serve, Who Do You Protect? Police Violence and Resistance in the United States* and co-author, *Prison by Any Other Name*

**Subject Matter: Safety and Security Recommendations**

\*Keep the SRO program at the high schools and have their contract renewed. SROs are to remain inside the high schools, not outside circulating.

\*If SROs are removed, what is the plan to protect students without SROs?

\*We are completely taken back by the fact that this is up for debate. Haven't we learned from the history of school violence? Given the number of students in the Niles district, maybe we should be re-evaluating if the number of SROs on property is sufficient.

\*We expect a response to the questions.

Sam & Norma Barhoumeh

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

I am writing with regards to the SRO program at the high school and wanting their contract to be renewed. I would like the SROS to remain in the school and not circulating outside the schools.

I do not understand why this up for discussion. When the SROs were placed in schools there was far less violence. Has there been a study of the SROs to student population? Are there adequate amount of SROs within the high school?

If SROs are are removed, what is what is the plan to ensure the protection of the students?

I would like a written response to all my questions.

Maritza Ihmoud

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Dear Dr. Isoye and District 219 School Board,

We share these words as a response to the Board meeting agenda that was released yesterday for tomorrow's regular Board meeting.

In our June 8, 2021 public comment, we shared that it had been a year since students and alumni of D219 flooded the board and administration with stories of the trauma endured at the hands of police officers in D219 schools. With over 200 public comments, parents, community members, teachers, and administrators have added their voices to demand the removal of SROs and continue to move the district in the direction of racial equity and inclusion for all. The recommendation of the SRO Task Force, appointed by Superintendent Dr. Isoye is clear: 6 voted in favor of removal, and 2 opposed removal. The Task Force recommendation should stand.

We now find that there is a discussion and action item for tomorrow's meeting concerning "Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers." Without a full school board currently, we want to share our deep concern and frankly, our outrage at this decision to move forward.

Let us remind you that the data from your district reveals that your decision tonight will have the most bearing on Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and Asian children and families of District 219. These groups make up double to triple times their population in discipline infractions and referrals to the court system.

Many educational advocacy groups, including the NAACP, have historically and recently been instrumental in SRO removal from local school districts all across the country. These measures are made in order for schools to implement a holistic, social-emotional, restorative approach to student engagement rather than a trauma-inflicting, destructive, policing approach. In fact, Niles Township Districts 68 and 69 have removed their SROs in effect for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year.

Moving forward with an action concerning "Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers" without a full school board risks revealing the following:

A tie which means the agreement remains

The disregard of a whole year's worth of work of the SRO Task Force, a group of District 219 administrators and staff, community members, parents, and students charged with compiling findings and recommendations for the District with the recommendation for SRO removal

If you choose to move forward, knowing that the vote may result in a tie with six board members, which will keep the Intergovernmental agreement concerning SROs intact, this reveals the possibility of a preemptive vote, which is not what democracy is about.

We urge you to fill the open board seat first. Filling the board seat is the actualization of American democracy, which is a system that vows to ensure that all in this country, state, county and local district can have their voices represented.

Former Board President and Board member James Specker, a Black leader in the community, has made his choice for who should take his open board seat, Jasmine Sebagala. She could have been appointed by the Superintendent, and this seat could have been filled. However, a Black leader's voice was discounted once again, and an alternative process is underway. We urge you to fill the position before any action items are taken.

Consider this as yet another plea for racial equity and inclusion from members of your community, especially those who are historically excluded from human rights policies that have the most detrimental effects on them.

If this vote moves forward without a full school board, what will we tell our children about democracy at District 219, about how this school board and Superintendent feel about representative democracy? About the work of the SRO Task Force that met for a full academic school year after the most violent summer of our present lives concerning police officers and their murders of Black people? What will the world say about this moment in District 219? Everyone is watching and you have the opportunity to do right and stay the course and trust the process.

Postpone the action item concerning "Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers," fill the board seat first, and demonstrate respect not haste to your students and families and community. We look forward to your prompt response, Dr. Isoye and School Board of District 219.

Sincerely,

Abolition Coalition of Skokie

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Dear Dr. Isoye and District 219 School Board,

We share these words as a response to the Board meeting agenda that was released yesterday for tomorrow's regular Board meeting.

In June 8, 2021 public comment, it was shared that it had been a year since students and alumni of D219 flooded the board and administration with stories of the trauma endured at the hands of police officers in D219 schools. With over 200 public comments, parents, community members, teachers, and administrators have added their voices to demand the removal of SROs and continue to move the district in the direction of racial equity and inclusion for all. The recommendations of the SRO Task Force, appointed by Superintendent Dr. Isoye, were received at a previous board meeting, and the message from all parties is clear: remove the SROs and end D219's Intergovernmental Agreement with the Skokie Police.

We now find that there is a discussion and action item for tonight's meeting concerning "Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers." Without a full school board currently, we want to share our deep concern and frankly, our outrage at this decision to move forward.

Let us remind you that the data from your district reveals that your decision tonight will have the most bearing on Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and Asian children and families of District 219, for these groups make up double to triple times their population in discipline infractions and referrals to the court system.

Many educational advocacy groups, including the NAACP, have historically and recently been instrumental in the practice of SRO removal from local school districts all across country in order for schools to implement a wholistic, social-emotional, restorative approach to student engagement rather than a trauma-inflicting, destructive, policing approach.

Moving forward with an action concerning "Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers" without a full school board risks revealing the following:

A tie which means the agreement remains

The disregard of a whole year's worth of work of the SRO Task Force, a group of District 219 administrators and staff, community members, parents, and students charged with compiling findings and recommendations for the District with recommendation for SRO removal

Former Board President and long-time Board member James Specker has made his choice for who should take his open board seat, Jasmine Sebagala. She could have been appointed by the Superintendent and this seat could have been filled. However, an alternative process is underway. , We urge you to fill the position BEFORE any action items are taken. Consider this as yet another plea for racial equity and inclusion on behalf of Black and Brown children, from their BIPOC families of your D219 family, those who are historically excluded from human rights policies that have the most detrimental effects on them.

If this vote moves forward without a FULL school board then it's would seem it would not be a fair accurate vote on something that should have been settled months ago. Also note that your feeder schools including district 68 and 69 have already dissolved their SRO way not be on the same page. Plus the running of 219 board as been shaky and should really try to unit and make a decision that would show your support towards improving racial equality and your ability to work as a team.

Kandice Cooley

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

It is my understanding the SRO task force has given a recommendation to the board for the upcoming SRO vote this week. As a member of the SRO community task force, I was displeased with the recommendations, the process, the facilitators and the members of the committee I sat on. Feeling unheard as a task force member, two of us wrote a dissenting opinion.

As a community member, a taxpayer and a mother, this issue is very emotional and close to my heart. I do not believe the SRO is the cause of the systemic racism that exists in D219. The racism that exists (as we learned in the task force) starts in the classroom. Teachers are disproportionately disciplining BIPOC students, as the information was presented. From the classroom, as you know, the students are sent to the Deans and in some cases to the police. The school has not collected any information regarding why students are being sent to the Deans or holding those teachers accountable for their implicit bias. There is little information regarding when the police are called and for what infractions.

Rather than address the institutional issue, the administration has chosen to scapegoat the police and point fingers at the symptom (the police) rather than address the cause (the institution and it's employees). In my opinion, this is cowardice, this is ignoring the voices of the majority of the parents and this is preserving the status quo. The administration has become the problem rather than the solution. As a parent in the school who has been actively involved for over a decade, I have never been so disappointed.

As a taxpayer and as a parent, I expect there will be no removal of the SRO without an announced plan for the safety and security of the students in the district. I demand to know our children are safe in the schools. I also demand the hating to stop and the administration treat our law enforcement with the respect they deserve. It is possible to support the police and simultaneously hold them to high standards. It is possible to use restorative justice practices and maintain an SRO. It is possible to reinvent the SRO position, so that bridges are built instead of walls. It is possible to hear all voices, not just the vocal minority.

The decision regarding the SRO needs to be based on what is best for D219. Again, you have not been elected to the BOE in 219 to fix the world, you have been elected to represent the constituents of this community not just the vocal minority.

Elline Eliasoff

**Subject Matter: Open Board Position**

To Whom It May Concern:

I am the parent of a former student at Niles North High School. I have written to the Dist 219 BOE before to express concern. Today I am writing to communicate my hopes for the open board position, and to express my appreciation and thankfulness to you.

Thank you for thoughtfully filling the current board vacancy with an individual who will wisely keep the board's focus fully on education and away from controversy related to hot button political issues. Please resist the push to choose based on any agenda other than reaching for educational excellence for Dist. 219 students, peaceably, safely, securely, and without undue distractions. I don't know who all of the applicants are, but I believe that Paul Cantz or Alan Levy would be great choices.

Thank you for correcting the graduation date for the benefit of Jewish students and teachers who observe the Jewish Sabbath, in keeping with the long-standing tradition in this district.

Thank you for explicitly repudiating anti-Semitism in your email from Dr. Steven Isoye, Dr. James Edwards and Dr. Karen Ritter on June 22, 2021. Thank you for standing squarely against anti-Semitism.

Thank you for continuing to ensure that Jewish students, and students of all backgrounds, feel safe and secure at school. We look forward to good results from your feedback group program that you plan on doing this summer.

Thank you for providing quality agenda/trainings for our children's teachers and for helping the teachers excel at teaching, by staying safely out of politically and ideologically motivated activism.

Sincerely,

David Lowenthal

**Subject Matter: Open Board Position**

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I am the parent of a former student at Niles North High School. I have written to the Dist 219 BOE before to express concern. Today I am writing to communicate my hopes for the open board position, and to express my appreciation and thankfulness to you.

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Thank you for continuing to ensure that Jewish students, and students of all backgrounds, feel safe and secure at school. We look forward to good results from your feedback group program that you plan on doing this summer.

Thank you for providing quality agenda/trainings for our children's teachers and for helping the teachers excel at teaching, by staying safely out of politically and ideologically motivated activism.

Sincerely,  
Erin Lowenthal

**Subject Matter: D219 Innovation & Professional Learning**

I am the parent of a student at Niles North High School. I have written to the Dist 219 BOE before to express concern. Today I am writing to communicate my hopes for the open board position, and to express my appreciation and thankfulness to you.

Thank you for thoughtfully filling the current board vacancy with an individual who will wisely keep the board's focus fully on education and away from controversy related to hot button political issues. After all we have been through, what this district needs now is not another political or social activist, but someone who can rally all of us together behind the common goal of educating students. We urge you to base your choice solely on the educational needs of this particular district, and the specific qualities and temperaments of the individual candidates which make them suited for this task. Please resist the push to choose based on any agenda other than reaching for educational excellence for Dist. 219 students, peaceably, safely, securely, and without undue distractions. I don't know who all of the applicants are, but I believe that Paul Cantz or Alan Levy would be great choices.

Thank you for correcting the graduation date for the benefit of Jewish students and teachers who observe the Jewish Sabbath, in keeping with the long standing tradition in this district.

Thank you for explicitly repudiating anti-Semitism in your email from Dr. Steven Isoye, Dr. James Edwards and Dr. Karen Ritter on June 22, 2021. Thank you for standing squarely against anti-Semitism.

Thank you for continuing to ensure that Jewish students, and students of all backgrounds, feel safe and secure at school. We look forward to good results from your feedback group program that you plan on doing this summer.

Thank you for providing quality agenda/trainings for our children's teachers and for helping the teachers excel at teaching, by staying safely out of politically and ideologically motivated activism.

Sincerely,  
Irina Pechenik

**Subject Matter: Safety and Security Recommendations**

To Members of the D219 School Board:

The Niles Township Federation of Teachers & Support Staff would like to thank the Safety & Security Task Force facilitators for the incredible amount of work done over the past many months. Angie Hankes, Alexia Kemp, DJ Kosiba, Nick Pahl, Sonia Pietryk, Imee Reichel, and Omar Salem planned and organized meetings, led the meetings, secured over a dozen guest speakers, and ensured productive use of the Task Force members' time and discourse. These were no easy assignments, especially considering the diversity of the task force members' perspectives. In addition to that work, the facilitators researched peer-reviewed articles, studied district discipline data, and familiarized themselves with the current IGA. While the facilitators were not voting members of the Task Force, their work was vital and we are proud of each of them for their service.

Thank you to the Task Force members for their thoughtful input and considerable hours of debate and reflection.

The NTFTSS wholeheartedly supports the recommendations put forth by the task force and wishes to highlight the following recommendations:

- Safety staff should be full-time employees of the district
- One centralized director of safety with assistants in each building
- Well-developed crisis plan in which all employees and students are trained
- Form an ongoing Safety & Security Committee
- District-provided training for anyone who has contact with students (Anti-bias, Equity, Trauma, Informed Restorative Practices)
- SROs, if any, are located outside of district buildings
- Increase the number of social workers and make them available to students without IEPs

Thanks again to the task force members and facilitators for thoughtfully tackling the issues of safety and security. We owe you an incredible debt of gratitude.

Respectfully,

Caitlen Sweeney - NTFTSS President for Support Staff

Laurie Hall - NTFTSS President for Teachers

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Dear Niles Township School District 219 Board of Education,

I hope you share my appreciation of the good work and research of the Safety and Security task force and of the Superintendent's Cabinet. Thank you for considering an end to the district's \$100,000 contract with the local police department.

As you make your decision, please consider these irrefutable facts compiled by former Harvard instructor David Ropeik:  
"The statistical likelihood of any given public school student being killed by a gun, in school, on any given day since 1999 was roughly 1 in 614,000,000. And since the 1990s, shootings at schools have been getting less common.

"The chance of a child being shot and killed in a public school is extraordinarily low,...far lower than almost any other mortality risk a kid faces, including traveling to and from school, catching a potentially deadly disease while in school or suffering a life-threatening injury playing interscholastic sports."

Yes, the U.S. suffers from an enormous gun violence problem. But schools remain one of the safest places children can be. The argument and false perception that D219 schools need to pay for an armed officer because of a great risk of a school shooting does not stand up to the facts.

Respectfully yours,  
Cindy Fey

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

This letter's intent is to request the SRO contract to be renewed for INSIDE the buildings. It is my understanding over 60% of students, parents and staff who completed your survey indicated that they were in favor of keeping an SRO at each of our high schools. Please vote in line with the majority of your constituents.

In the event that you decide to remove the SRO, how will you ensure our children are safe in their absence should a dangerous situation arise? What is the plan to protect the students and staff without this professionally trained individual in the school?

Donna Dreuth

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Thank you, D219 board for your time and service. Please vote on the SRO presence when you have a full board. Both the Superintendent's Task Force (made up of a variety of volunteers) and the Superintendent's Cabinet (made up of administrators) put in so many hours to review research and hear testimonials about this crucial issue. They have recommendations and a plan ready and please let the board decide when you are a full board. When that time arrives, you have the power to make institutional change based on these groups' recommendations. These changes can positively impact not only our black and brown students but all of our kids. Please listen to the research that has been done and support mental health supports and restorative justice practices. Please listen especially to what the task force and cabinet recommend. Make this vote with a full, seven member board.

Best regards,  
Alice Pappas

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

My name is Molly Greening and I live in District 69. As a white undergrad professor committed to antiracism work, I have noticed a pattern in educational institutions that I hope D219 will not repeat. When a structural issue of racism is raised in a predominantly white institution, sometimes it seems that administrators think the work of making the committee, gathering the research, or meeting as a task force IS the action. Instead of ACTUAL structural change, change that frequently was already advocated for by students, faculty, and staff of color well before any of the committees existed, the labor of the stakeholders and subgroups is both diminished in its importance AND pointed to as proof of "dealing with a situation." This performance of concern without actual intention to stop causing harm deepens the wounds of racist devaluation, exclusion, and erasure. Please show respect to the students, faculty, staff, and parents that have spoken up about the racial harm they have experienced with SROs. Please give the task force recommendations the value that they deserve by delay this vote until James Specker's seat is filled. Thank you.

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

To the Board of Education and Superintendent Isoye,

I'm writing to urge you to remove the IGA vote from the agenda tonight and to wait for that vote until a new board member is seated so that a majority vote can be assured, regardless of which way that vote goes. Our community has waited over a year and we can wait a little while longer to ensure that this is a good faith vote and not a set up to fail. We know that if the vote is a tie, which it very well may be, the motion will not pass. After all the letters and the hundreds of hours of work done by the task force, all of the research, all of the stories of trauma shared, the press conference, the protests, and detailed recommendations put together by your own administration -- to push for this vote tonight is to undermine all of that. It sends a very clear message -- regardless of anyone's stance on this issue -- that the process was a sham.

I also ask that when this vote occurs, you choose to follow the recommendations of both the SRO and Security Task Force and the D219 Cabinet who, in tonight's board packet, outlined, in detail, why the presence of police in our schools threatens the safety of our Black, Brown, disabled, and LGBTQIA+ students. This is based on research, not opinion. Likewise, there is no data showing that SROs make schools safer -- again, this is based on research. While every parent can relate to those worst case scenario fears, I am confident that the recommendations of the Task Force and the detailed plan laid out by the administration will ensure the safety and security of our students in the very unlikely case of an outside threat. Once again, we know that the most important determinant of school safety is relationships and investment in student growth. THAT is how we keep our students and staff safe. I would urge community members who fear mass shootings to direct their concerns towards advocating for stricter gun safety legislation and to note that gun safety has been the advocacy focus of student and parent activists who have actually experienced mass shootings.

Lastly, I'd like to thank the members of the SRO Task Force and the Cabinet who worked so hard to put together these incredibly thoughtful recommendations. Thank you for understanding that safety is not achieved by inserting a person with a gun and the power to send kids to court. Thank you for prioritizing relationships and for recognizing that addressing the systemic racism inherent in policing kids in schools goes beyond SROs. Thank you for addressing the many ways we police Black and Brown kids in particular. Thank you for demonstrating that physical security can be achieved without police in schools. The layers of protection you have outlined not only address physical security at multiple levels but also the social and emotional safety of students who deserve to be free of biased surveillance, carceral discipline strategies, and unfair and biased punishment. Thank you for demonstrating how interrogating our systems and rooting out racist practices from those systems actually makes ALL students safer in every way.

Sincerely,

Maggie Vandermeer

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Good evening Superintendent Isoye and D219 Board:

Once again the voices and concerns of Black and Brown families and students are shut down. Once again those who are most affected by these policies are the least heard and respected. As a white member of this community, I am outraged at the continued disregard of the inequities that exist in D219 regarding security and the presence of SROs. Furthermore, you are willingly ignoring the months of committed work of the SRO Task Force and their recommendations which voted 6-2 to remove SROs from D219.

Your vote tonight on SROs is bogus and does not represent the wishes of our whole community. While other feeder districts have done the right thing in removing SROs (namely 68 and 69), 219 holds on despite unlimited research and resources that state that SROs do NOT keep our children safe and do, in fact, harm many our of BIPOC students.

As a REPRESENTATIVE body of our community, you are entrusted to do what is fair and DEMOCRATIC. This vote must be delayed when a FULL school board is present and all the voices of our community are heard and respected.

Paola Ruocco

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

I, Carrie Swan, founding member of the Lorel Park Action Network, stand in solidarity with the members of the Abolition Coalition and share their concerns as outlined below.

Dear Dr. Isoye and District 219 School Board,

We share these words as a response to the Board meeting agenda that was released yesterday for tomorrow's regular Board meeting.

In our June 8, 2021 public comment, we shared that it had been a year since students and alumni of D219 flooded the board and administration with stories of the trauma endured at the hands of police officers in D219 schools. With over 200 public comments, parents, community members, teachers, and administrators have added their voices to demand the removal of SROs and continue to move the district in the direction of racial equity and inclusion for all. The recommendation of the SRO Task Force, appointed by Superintendent Dr. Isoye is clear: 6 voted in favor of removal, and 2 opposed removal. The Task Force recommendation should stand.

We now find that there is a discussion and action item for tomorrow's meeting concerning "Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers." Without a full school board currently, we want to share our deep concern and frankly, our outrage at this decision to move forward.

Let us remind you that the data from your district reveals that your decision tonight will have the most bearing on Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and Asian children and families of District 219. These groups make up double to triple times their population in discipline infractions and referrals to the court system.

Many educational advocacy groups, including the NAACP, have historically and recently been instrumental in SRO removal from local school districts all across the country. These measures are made in order for schools to implement a holistic, social-emotional, restorative approach to student engagement rather than a trauma-inflicting, destructive, policing approach. In fact, Niles Township Districts 68 and 69 have removed their SROs in effect for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year.

Moving forward with an action concerning "Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers" without a full school board risks revealing the following:

A tie which means the agreement remains.

The disregard of a whole year's worth of work of the SRO Task Force, a group of District 219 administrators and staff, community members, parents, and students charged with compiling findings and recommendations for the District with the recommendation for SRO removal

If you choose to move forward, knowing that the vote may result in a tie with six board members, which will keep the Intergovernmental agreement concerning SROs intact, this reveals the possibility of a preemptive vote, which is not what democracy is about.

We urge you to fill the open board seat first. Filling the board seat is the actualization of American democracy, which is a system that vows to ensure that all in this country, state, county and local district can have their voices represented. Former Board President and Board member James Specker, a Black leader in the community, has made his choice for who should take his open board seat, Jasmine Sebagala. She could have been appointed by the Superintendent, and this seat could have been filled. However, a Black leader's voice was discounted once again, and an alternative process is underway. We urge you to fill the position before any action items are taken.

Consider this as yet another plea for racial equity and inclusion from members of your community, especially those who are historically excluded from human rights policies that have the most detrimental effects on them.

If this vote moves forward without a full school board, what will we tell our children about democracy at District 219, about how this school board and Superintendent feel about representative democracy? About the work of the SRO Task Force that met for a full academic school year after the most violent summer of our present lives concerning police officers and their murders of Black people? What will the world say about this moment in District 219? Everyone is watching and you have the opportunity to do right and stay the course and trust the process.

Postpone the action item concerning “Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers,” fill the board seat first, and demonstrate respect, not haste, to your students, families, and community. We look forward to your prompt response, Dr. Isoye and School Board of District 219.

Carrie Swan  
Lorel Park Action Network

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

I'm Elizabeth Palmer and I live in District 219. I want to thank the Task Force for its many months of collecting data about school resource officers and assessing the impacts on our children of the district's intergovernmental agreement with the Skokie Police Department. During a pandemic that has upended all of our lives, it's incredible that these volunteers from the community would devote hundreds of hours to studying the short-term and long-term effects on children of the decisions we make about how to keep them safe in school. Following their work, the majority of the Task Force members—6 out of 8—agreed that what's best for our children is for D219 to end the intergovernmental agreement. The Superintendent's Cabinet has come to the same conclusion and supports the Task Force's development of a comprehensive approach to safety. I encourage the board to honor the work of the Task Force and Superintendent's Cabinet by voting to end the IGA.

Statistics show that having an SRO doesn't prevent school shootings or decrease campus violence. It does contribute to the perception that some teenagers are such dangerous criminals that the adults employed by the school can't keep the other children safe from them. The criminalization of students by adults falls disproportionately on Black and Brown children, children with IEPs, and LGBTQ children. If we want to keep our children safe in their schools, this criminalization needs to be replaced with social and emotional support for students who are struggling, staff training in culturally responsive disciplinary practices, and intentional work around building a culture of respect that honors the flourishing of all children in the school.

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Board of education,

I am writing, as a community member, parent, and alumnus of district 219, to comment on the discussion and vote surrounding the SRO contract.

It is my belief that this vote should not take place at this meeting. Since we do not have a full board at this time, it is important to me that we seat a new member before addressing something that is this important. If a vote is taken on this issue with an incomplete board, it minimizes the importance of the work that our students, staff, and community members have done to really process and understand this issue.

When you do vote on the issue, however, I implore you to remove the SRO from our school buildings. I live in this community solely because it has always strived to be a progressive and welcoming place. If that is who we want to be as a community, then criminalizing our students, particularly our students of color, by bringing law enforcement into our discipline and security procedures is directly contradictory to our goal. For months you have heard community members share their stories. They have provided data and anecdotes to show you that our current discipline models and the presence of the SRO are both harmful to students of color. If, upon hearing that, we elect to keep the SRO in our schools, even knowing the trauma that doing so inflicts on some of our students, then we need to stop pretending that Skokie is somehow more welcoming or more progressive than its other suburban neighbors. This issue strikes right to the heart of the question, "Who do we want Skokie to be?" I hope you take the time to answer that question with the courage and vision that I expect from this district.

Thank you.

Maureen Jacob

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Dear Dr. Isoye and District 219 School Board,

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In our June 8, 2021 public comment, we shared that it had been a year since students and alumni of D219 flooded the board and administration with stories of the trauma endured at the hands of police officers in D219 schools. With over 200 public comments, parents, community members, teachers, and administrators have added their voices to demand the removal of SROs and continue to move the district in the direction of racial equity and inclusion for all. The recommendation of the SRO Task Force, appointed by Superintendent Dr. Isoye is clear: 6 voted in favor of removal, and 2 opposed removal. The Task Force recommendation should stand.

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Let us remind you that the data from your district reveals that your decision tonight will have the most bearing on Black, Latino, Indigenous, and Asian children and families of District 219. These groups make up double to triple times their population in discipline infractions and referrals to the court system.

Many educational advocacy groups, including the NAACP, have historically and recently been instrumental in SRO removal from local school districts all across the country. These measures are made in order for schools to implement a holistic, social-emotional, restorative approach to student engagement rather than a trauma-inflicting, destructive, policing approach. In fact, Niles Township Districts 68 and 69 have removed their SROs in effect for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year.

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We urge you to fill the open board seat first. Filling the board seat is the actualization of American democracy, which is a system that vows to ensure that all in this country, state, county and local district can have their voices represented. Former Board President and Board member James Specker, a Black leader in the community, has made his choice for who should take his open board seat, Jasmine Sebagala. She could have been appointed by the Superintendent, and this seat could have been filled. However, a Black leader's voice was discounted once again, and an alternative process is underway. We urge you to fill the position before any action items are taken.

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their murders of Black people? What will the world say about this moment in District 219? Everyone is watching and you have the opportunity to do right and stay the course and trust the process.

Postpone the action item concerning "Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers," fill the board seat first, and demonstrate respect, not haste, to your students, families, and community. We look forward to your prompt response, Dr. Isoye and School Board of District 219.

Michelle Kapusta

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Dr. Isoye and Cabinet,

I am parent in d219, and I ask that you terminate the IGA with the police department and remove the police presence in our schools. I agree with the majority of the SRO taskforce that police officers in schools do not make schools safer; instead, they make schools more dangerous for students. I want school to be safe for all children in the community. Students should not be seen as potential criminals.

I understand the Board is divided on this issue. I urge you to follow the advice of the SRO taskforce and remove SROs from the schools. At the very least, please defer this decision until a new member is seated.

Michelle Kapusta

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Please hold the vote regarding the SRO placement within the high schools until there is a full board. And please remove the SRO from the school. They are disruptive to the learning environment.

Elissa Cahan

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Dr. Isoye and Cabinet,

I am parent in d219, and I ask that you terminate the IGA with the police department and remove the police presence in our schools. I agree with the majority of the SRO taskforce that police officers in schools do not make schools safer; instead, they make schools more dangerous for students. I want school to be safe for all children in the community. Students should not be seen as potential criminals.

I understand the Board is divided on this issue. I urge you to follow the advice of the SRO taskforce and remove SROs from the schools. At the very least, please defer this decision until a new member is seated.

Respectfully,  
Marcus Williams  
SD74 parent

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

SRO presence in schools has a significant negative impact on students, particularly students of color. Let's use these funds on programs and supports that have a proven track record of helping students: more social workers, smaller class sizes, more teacher support, etc.

Policing in our schools sends the wrong message to our students- one that says "might makes right" and problems can, and should, be resolved punitively. Additionally, students of color are more likely to be targeted by these policies/SROs, creating a hostile learning environment for them and those around them.

We can do better and have a responsibility as adults and community leaders to do so.

Lissa Levy

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Please end the IGA with the police department. Police officers in schools do not make schools safer; instead, they make schools more dangerous for students. I want school to be safe for all children in the community. Students should not be seen as potential criminals.

I understand the Board is divided on this issue. I urge you to follow the advice of the SRO taskforce and remove SROs from the schools. At the very least, please defer this decision until a new member is seated.

Theresa Gibbons

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

I am in favor of KEEPING the SRO's in our schools. Both my students benefitted from the services and help of their SRO during the junior high years.

It is imperative our students feel safe and supported by the SRO's and that this responsibility is not added to our teachers and administrators.

Let the SRO's do their jobs in our schools! Do not remove them.

Gina Schmidt

**Subject Matter: Safety and Security Recommendations**

Dear Board of Education,

I am a resident of Lincolnwood, a mother, and an alum of Niles West High School, class of 1995. I saw a post indicating you are voting to remove the SRO at the high schools.

I am also an employee at Evanston Township High School. The district is focused on equity, on ending the predictable gaps in achievement we see from systemic racism, and maintaining a welcome environment for all of our students. I have seen firsthand the wonderful relationships that develop between the SROs and students, and have also seen incidents where the SROs are very needed. I know there is national attention about how SROs reinforce stigma and what they do. I agree that the traditional role can be problematic.

I urge you not to vote to remove the SROs from the schools, but to reconsider how SROs are integrated in the school community.

Thank you for your time and for your service to the D219 community.

Rachel D'Onofrio

**Subject Matter: Safety and Security Recommendations**

To D219 Board, PLEASE for the safety of ALL our students and teacher population DO NOT remove the D219 SRO. My children (former graduate of NW) & current feel Safer with having a SRO and don't view them as a threat! My children are also bi-racial.

Thank you.

Jen Cost

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

The board should wait to vote on this extremely important issue until there is a full board. It is unfair to have the SRO vote without a full board. When there is a full board, the community that I am a part of would like the vote on Student Resource Officers to be no. I have an incoming freshman student who is a student of color and I do not want him to have the same experience I did at Niles North regarding SROs. It was incredibly difficult for me to feel safe in school with police officers walking the halls and I do not want that for my son and his peers. The police do not help keep you safe unless you are white/white passing and I know this from experience within the walls of a district 219 school.

Heather Gawron

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

I am writing to request that a vote NOT be taken on the issue of SROs until a full board has been seated and is present. When that vote is taken, I am asking that the board vote to end the IGA and remove the SROs from our schools. Voting to end the IGA would best follow the findings of the task force and the vast amount of evidence that exists that shows that the presence of SROs within our schools does not create a safer space and, in fact, creates multiple barriers for many students to equal access to the education all students deserve.

Thank you.

Jess Lifshitz

**Subject Matter: Safety and Security Recommendations**

To the board of Education District 219

I am writing this in regards to the discussion of an SRO at the D219 schools. It is unfortunate that social media, and some posts by some of the board members have created a false narrative that all police officers are dangerous or racist. SROs are present in the school to provide a safer environment for the school. These officers are trained and equipped to work with teenagers and staff better than a city police officer who would be called if we no longer had our own SRO.

In the recent poll , 60% of the community feel safer with SRO in the school. SROs are there to develop positive relationships with students. They are there to help intervene before violence occurs. With the current CDC guidelines, all the kids and teachers are returning to full day school after this pandemic. The pandemic caused a mental health emergency among teenagers. More than 25% of high schools students reported worsened emotional and cognitive health. Mental health issues among teenagers have doubled. Some of these students haven't socialized with other kids in over a year. We also know that school shootings often include depression and desperation. If SRO are removed, what is the plan to protect students, teachers and other staff without an SRO?

I believe 2-3 board members are using their own radical political beliefs to dictate the school and board as evidenced by their social media tweets and profiles to make it their only agenda to remove the SROs. Personal political beliefs do not belong in the school system. This does not represent our diverse community. The school board has a duty to listen and respond to this community. The behavior of the school board members on social media fail to uphold a positive environment for the school and community as a whole, including police. Their behaviors on social media are not advocating for the board and community they represent.

I believe the SROs should remain in the school.

Thank you,  
Anna Hurtado

**Subject Matter: SRO vote**

District 219 Board

You as board members have a responsibility to protect our children, staff and schools. You are going to be voting on a very important and controversial issue involving the safety of our children, staff and schools. The SRO,s should not even be a question at this point. The polls/surveys that were taken in the past, showed people were in favor of keeping the SRO,s! So why was there ever an investigative committee formed, and why were the results from this committee never made public?

This issue has been kicked around way to long! When you surveyed the students it should have also included the family's of incoming and future students of the district. The feeder school students/families should have also had a say in the future.

It seems apparent that the Board has an agenda to eliminate the SRO's, no matter what anyone feels! You have delayed this way to long, in the hopes that the issue would fade away and you could do what YOU want.

You have taken a all or nothing approach. If there were some issues then deal with the specific issue. Modify, redefine the program, don't eliminate it.

If the Board votes to remove the SRO's, the board and each of you individually should and will be held responsible if something were to happen.

I for one has never seen what you are/would propose as a replacement for the SRO's. Which teachers/staff are going to protect the students in the event that something happens. Are they or will they be trained in how to handle the various issues that may arise? Leave this to the professionals!

Respectfully yours  
William Patterson  
Niles West alumni  
D219 resident

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Dear Dr. Isoye and District 219 School Board,

We share these words as a response to the Board meeting agenda that was released yesterday for tomorrow's regular Board meeting.

In our June 8, 2021 public comment, we shared that it had been a year since students and alumni of D219 flooded the board and administration with stories of the trauma endured at the hands of police officers in D219 schools. With over 200 public comments, parents, community members, teachers, and administrators have added their voices to demand the removal of SROs and continue to move the district in the direction of racial equity and inclusion for all. The recommendation of the SRO Task Force, appointed by Superintendent Dr. Isoye is clear: 6 voted in favor of removal, and 2 opposed removal. The Task Force recommendation should stand.

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We urge you to fill the open board seat first. Filling the board seat is the actualization of American democracy, which is a system that vows to ensure that all in this country, state, county and local district can have their voices represented. Former Board President and Board member James Specker, a Black leader in the community, has made his choice for who should take his open board seat, Jasmine Sebagala. She could have been appointed by the Superintendent, and this seat could have been filled. However, a Black leader's voice was discounted once again, and an alternative process is underway. We urge you to fill the position before any action items are taken.

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If this vote moves forward without a full school board, what will we tell our children about democracy at District 219, about how this school board and Superintendent feel about representative democracy? About the work of the SRO Task Force that met for a full academic school year after the most violent summer of our present lives concerning police officers and

their murders of Black people? What will the world say about this moment in District 219? Everyone is watching and you have the opportunity to do right and stay the course and trust the process.

Postpone the action item concerning "Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers," fill the board seat first, and demonstrate respect, not haste, to your students, families, and community. We look forward to your prompt response, Dr. Isoye and School Board of District 219.

Nia Tavoularis

**Subject Matter: Safety and Security Recommendations**

To Whom It May Concern:

I am the parent of a student at Niles West High School. I am writing to communicate my hopes for the open board position, and to express my appreciation and thankfulness to you.

In my opinion, what this district needs now is not another political or social activist, but someone who can rally all of us together behind the common goal of educating students. We urge you to base your choice solely on the educational needs of this particular district, and the specific qualities and temperaments of the individual candidates which make them suited for this task. I am sure that Paul Cantz or Alan Levy would be great choices.

Thank you for explicitly repudiating anti-Semitism in your email from Dr. Steven Isoye, Dr. James Edwards and Dr. Karen Ritter on June 22, 2021. Thank you for standing squarely against anti-Semitism.

Sincerely,  
Arthur Aptekar

**Subject Matter: Safety and Security Recommendations**

I am very much against the removal of the SRO at Niles West High School. Given our culture's current propensity for gun violence, I don't feel that it is in the best interest of students or staff to remove an individual who is trained to monitor for potential school shootings. Please keep the position of SRO intact at Niles West High School.

Tracy Collings

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

The students, faculty and staff in this district deserve an informed decision on this issue to be voted on by an ENTIRE board. Staff have expressed a great desire to remove the SRO, for good reason. Please wait until you have a new board member to vote on this; this decision should not be made lightly.

Kenzie Parry

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

As a parent of an incoming 9th grader to Niles West I would appreciate if decisions regarding the future of the D219 SRO program would be postponed until after the vacant board position is filled. I hope we can follow the recommendations and plans of the SRO task force, as well as the administration, which are based on evidence and research. A diverse community can and should be able to address concerns of safety in ways that improve safety and support for ALL of our community's students, including BIPOC, disabled, and LGBTQIA+ students. Please listen to the research and evidence and continue to make D219 a place that welcomes and supports all students. Thank you.

Erin Fenner

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Dear D219 Board of Education and Dr. Isoye, I am writing to you today to urge you to postpone the vote on the intergovernmental agreement between Skokie Police Department and District 219 until an entire board is seated. While I understand there may be a time constraint, this is a topic that deserves the full vote of elected officials. I am deeply concerned that our board is planning to vote on such an important topic which may result in a tie and a continuation of our agreement with SPD by default. As an SRO task force member who invested countless hours researching and digging through D219 data, it would be disheartening to be undermined in such a way. Board members and Dr. Isoye assured us very early in the process that our work was not in vain and would be strongly considered. Our task force members and facilitators worked tirelessly to ensure that our findings and recommendations were based on peer-reviewed and data-based information. In addition to our findings, our district cabinet has provided additional peer-reviewed expert recommendations which strongly oppose having police in the buildings.

It is imperative when this vote occurs that all of our board members have reviewed the data, recommendations and trust our district experts to know what is best for our school culture and overall safety. The research is indisputable, and the data speaks for itself. If we genuinely strive for equity for all, we must consider the harm inflicted on children, specifically Black and Brown kids, LGBTQIA+, and kids with IEP/504 plans. In good faith, we cannot continue a profoundly flawed practice of policing in schools having all of the information gathered from this deep study.

Lastly, I would like to thank our task force facilitators, members, and presenters for spending personal time on this critical matter. Thank you to the North Equity Committee for guiding the process and Dr. Wells for assuring the conversations were child and equity-centered.

I look forward to a more equitable and inclusive future for all of our District 219 students. We can and must do better.

Sincerely,

Victoria Wolfinger

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

I'm writing this note to express my disappointment that the district is considering removal of the School Resource Officers ('SROs'). I have lived in Skokie since 1987 and grown-up in District 219. I grew up with a sincere appreciation for Skokie police and all the officers that were present at Niles North. In no way did I ever think of them as a threat and felt much more physically safe knowing the presence of a trained individual that could handle and/or deter situations.

It is beyond frustrating that we are now at a point in society where adults are fueling such animosity towards SROs and law enforcement in general?

I would like to express my view as a long time Skokie resident that the SRO program should remain inside the high schools. In any profession, there are bad apples and any SROs that are not hyper focused on school safety should be reassigned. This should not with a broad brush paint all SROs and law enforcement in a negative light. Contrary to what the news media portrays, I know many police officers in Skokie, Chicago and other suburbs and they are solid, upstanding individuals who want a better community and actively participate in making that happen.

Lloyd Andrew

**Subject Matter: Safety and Security Recommendations**

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Richard Owen

## **Subject Matter: Safety and Security Recommendations**

Dear Dr. Isoye and District 219 School Board,

We share these words as a response to the Board meeting agenda that was released yesterday for tomorrow's regular Board meeting.

In our June 8, 2021 public comment, we shared that it had been a year since students and alumni of D219 flooded the board and administration with stories of the trauma endured at the hands of police officers in D219 schools. With over 200 public comments, parents, community members, teachers, and administrators have added their voices to demand the removal of SROs and continue to move the district in the direction of racial equity and inclusion for all. The recommendation of the SRO Task Force, appointed by Superintendent Dr. Isoye is clear: 6 voted in favor of removal, and 2 opposed removal. The Task Force recommendation should stand.

We now find that there is a discussion and action item for tomorrow's meeting concerning "Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers." Without a full school board currently, we want to share our deep concern and frankly, our outrage at this decision to move forward.

Let us remind you that the data from your district reveals that your decision tonight will have the most bearing on Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and Asian children and families of District 219. These groups make up double to triple times their population in discipline infractions and referrals to the court system.

Many educational advocacy groups, including the NAACP, have historically and recently been instrumental in SRO removal from local school districts all across the country. These measures are made in order for schools to implement a holistic, social-emotional, restorative approach to student engagement rather than a trauma-inflicting, destructive, policing approach. In fact, Niles Township Districts 68 and 69 have removed their SROs in effect for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year.

Moving forward with an action concerning "Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers" without a full school board risks revealing the following:

A tie which means the agreement remains.

The disregard of a whole year's worth of work of the SRO Task Force, a group of District 219 administrators and staff, community members, parents, and students charged with compiling findings and recommendations for the District with the recommendation for SRO removal

If you choose to move forward, knowing that the vote may result in a tie with six board members, which will keep the Intergovernmental agreement concerning SROs intact, this reveals the possibility of a preemptive vote, which is not what democracy is about.

We urge you to fill the open board seat first. Filling the board seat is the actualization of American democracy, which is a system that vows to ensure that all in this country, state, county and local district can have their voices represented. Former Board President and Board member James Specker, a Black leader in the community, has made his choice for who should take his open board seat, Jasmine Sebagala. She could have been appointed by the Superintendent, and this seat could have been filled. However, a Black leader's voice was discounted once again, and an alternative process is underway. We urge you to fill the position before any action items are taken.

Consider this as yet another plea for racial equity and inclusion from members of your community, especially those who are historically excluded from human rights policies that have the most detrimental effects on them.

If this vote moves forward without a full school board, what will we tell our children about democracy at District 219, about how this school board and Superintendent feel about representative democracy? About the work of the SRO Task Force that met for a full academic school year after the most violent summer of our present lives concerning police officers and

their murders of Black people? What will the world say about this moment in District 219? Everyone is watching and you have the opportunity to do right and stay the course and trust the process.

Postpone the action item concerning "Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers," fill the board seat first, and demonstrate respect, not haste, to your students, families, and community. We look forward to your prompt response, Dr. Isoye and School Board of District 219.

Allison Pink

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

I'm a district 219 parent who has been closely following the review of the district's use of School Resource Officers. I strongly urge the board to hold off on a final decision until the new board member is seated. To rush the vote without a full board will be perceived as an underhanded move motivated by politics rather than thoughtful consideration of the committee's extensive work studying the issue.

London Summerville

**Subject Matter: Safety and Security Recommendations**

The vote on the SRO program must be tabled until the full board is seated. Having a decision that ends in a tie does a great disservice to the great work the task force completed over many many months.

In considering your individual votes, it is clear from the task force recommendations and the D219 Administration recommendations that the SRO program should be terminated and we should develop an equitable and inclusive safety program that focuses on restorative justice covering both Niles North and West. As we see across the country and in the City of Chicago and surrounding area schools continue to terminate their SRO program and shift the funds to mental health, restorative justice and in-house, district employed safety employees.

The data is clear that police interactions and punishment in D219 disproportionately targets Black and Brown students. We must focus on the trauma and racism this district has inflicted on our students. Listen to the students as they are making their voices heard and it is then we must ensure we support and advocate for.

Thank you,  
Matt Temkin  
Skokie Resident

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

As a mother of 2 children in D219, one currently attending high school and one that will next year, my first requirement is for the district to keep the children safe. Under no circumstances should safety be compromised, ever!!! I am completely confused as to why Keeping SRO'S is even a topic of discussion. It should be a given. What parent wouldn't want the most experienced and qualified source of protection for their children? It doesn't make sense. If some children fear SRO'S, which from my understanding most do not, then why not tend to those students and bridge the disconnect through workshops or some viable solution that will lessen the fear factor. If there is a problem then what are the documented cases? We can't just remove the best source of protection for our children because of fear. The logical thing to do would be to tend to the child individually and find out what triggers the fear, and find a solution to overcome the fear. I am not insensitive to children's feelings, but when it comes to their safety I want the best resource available to keep the children safe and protected. As a concerned parent of D219 I am requesting the administration do the following:

- 1) Keep the SRO program and have their contract renewed
- 2) SROs are to remain inside the high schools not outside circulating.

I would like an update on any decision made and all the factors that went into the decision.

Thank you.

Goldie Nelson

**Subject Matter: Safety and Security Recommendations**

Please allow this letter to serve that Barry Bass of Lincolnwood IL that I am in favor of SROs remaining in schools both Niles West and Niles North.

Safety is a top priority for the students of these schools. Crime is escalating at an historic pace, and it would be foolish, very negligent on administrations part to eliminate an SRO. How and why this is an issue is beyond logic and common sense.

Keep SROs in place!!!

Thank you,

Barry Bass

**Subject Matter: Safety and Security Recommendations**

I am writing to express my support for the SRO program in D219. Neighboring districts such as CPS, Maine East, and Maine South are supporting SRO programs as their leadership deemed it essential for safety. As the individuals entrusted with our children's safety, please maintain the SRO program in our schools.

Calls to remove the SRO program from our schools is a misguided response to claims that they make students of color uncomfortable and afraid. Not only is it misguided, but it is bad example. It would be better to teach our children how to improve relations with SROs and how SROs can improve relations with students opposed to getting rid of them.

Please voice your support for the following:

- 1) Retain our SRO program and renew their contracts.
- 2) SROs must be positioned at all times INSIDE the building—not walking the perimeter of the school or at the police station.
- 3) SROs must have law enforcement training.

Thanks for your time.  
Jay Oleniczak

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

I am writing to express my support for the SRO program in D219. As board of education members, you are charged with protecting our children in school, I am imploring you to do whatever you can to keep SROs on both campuses in the buildings just like our neighboring districts CPS, Maine East, and Maine South voted to do.

Frankly, I cannot believe this is even on the table. I am shocked that our district would gamble with the safety of our children and even consider such an ill advised and risky move. How exactly do you plan to protect our children's physical well-being in the event of an active school shooter if the SROs are removed? When seconds matter, how will you ensure that someone with law enforcement training will be able to diffuse the situation IMMEDIATELY?

Please voice your support for the following:

- 1) Retain our SRO program and renew their contracts.
- 2) SROs must be positioned at all times INSIDE the building—not walking the perimeter of the school or at the police station.
- 3) SROs must have law enforcement training.

People who oppose SROs claim that they make students of color uncomfortable and afraid. If this is actually true, then it is incumbent on you as leaders to explore ways to improve trust and relations between students and the SROs—not eliminate them. Please act on behalf of the well-being for ALL students by providing them with life saving professionals who are prepared to respond to the unthinkable when seconds matter. I am also requesting a response from at least one of you to the directly address the questions I listed above. We the Niles Township tax payers voted you in, and we deserve to have timely and direct responses to our concerns. Also, please be advised that we are paying EXTRA attention to how board members vote on this issue and it will absolutely inform how we vote in the 2023 election.

Kind regards,  
Erin Oleniczak

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Hi there and thank you in advance for your time.

I'm writing to you in regards to keeping our SRO's in D219. I sincerely hope that you will make the best decision on behalf of the current and future students of district 219. Mental illness is on the rise in our youth following this pandemic. Social isolation and stress has taken a toll on us all but most importantly on our youth!

Psychiatric hospitalizations, suicide etc are on a significant rise among our youth. History has shown us that having an armed police officer at a school in the event of a shooting has helped decrease the amount of fatalities.

\*\*Moving forward how can both sides (anti SRO & pro SRO) work together to make a better and SAFER future for these kids. Removing the SRO's is not the answer!! It creates more divisiveness!!!

Please don't allow the personal agenda of some to risk the safety of all of our children.

Thank you for your time,  
Colleen Gray

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Good evening,

I am a current parent in SD74 and look forward to my children attending SD219 in the future. I want to thank you for your time and dedication in working to ensure a quality and safe public education for our children as I know it is not an easy task!

That being said, I would like to voice my opinion on the topic of security resource officers in schools. I believe it is important to keep SROs in high schools as a way to build positive relationships with students and keep both students and staff safe. I believe SROs are integral in limiting the incidents of dangerous and potentially life threatening occurrences from happening on school grounds. The officers need to be allowed inside the building in order to create trusting relationships as well as have eyes and ears in places in the building where dangerous incidents may occur.

I understand there is concern that having SROs in the school may lead to higher incidents of expulsion, suspension, and arrests, especially for students of color. This is certainly something that needs to be addressed and is very concerning. Have you found this is the case in SD219? Is there a way to keep SROs in the school, focusing on positive relationships and keeping students and staff safe, without promoting unnecessary and extreme consequences?

If security resource officers are taken out of SD219, what is the district's plan to replace these officers and what is the plan to keep children and staff safe if a dangerous or potentially life threatening incident occurs?

I do not believe eliminating security resource officers will solve the problems mentioned above and will in fact create larger, more harmful, issues in the future.

Thanks so much for your time and again, thank you for your dedication to our students in SD219.

Thank you,  
Stacey Johnson

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

We are writing tonight to join the growing number of people who are asking for the end of Police officers being stationed in our schools. Police do not belong in schools. Police in schools do not provide resources as they are not resource officers, they are Police. They are there to keep students in line through fear and intimidation. Let me be clear on this, the officers themselves do not have to actively engage in intimidation to intimidate, they do not have to overtly instill fear to make students fearful. Fear and intimidation are foundational to the institution of policing which is why I slow down and make sure to use my turn signal and that I am buckled in when I see a Police on the street as I suspect many of you do also.

To anyone who pays attention, we can see that parents of color, who have children of color are fearful for the health and wellbeing of their children in the presence of Police. You may not understand that, but that does not make it untrue. I cannot imagine what it feels like to worry about your child in the presence of those who are supposed to protect them. I ask all of you this, do you need to feel that fear for your own children in order to empathize with our friends and neighbors of color? If you feel strongly that our children need to be policed while in school for protection, who do they need to be protected from? I am a white person with a white child, I have the immense luxury and privilege of not being fearful of my child interacting with police but I can also say that I do not feel that my son is safer in a school with Police than one without. I suspect that is true for many white parents, unless they themselves are afraid of the very children who are disproportionately targeted, disciplined and made to feel unsafe by a system of policing that at its core, sees them, people of color, as the enemy.

I implore you, live into the promise of your elected positions and give voice to our friends and neighbors whose voices are marginalized and silenced. Work with your whole community to find solutions that work for everyone. Do not rush this decision without a full and complete school board. I hope that regardless of where we sit on the political spectrum that we can see that we all want our children to safe and brave and if we work together, we can achieve that goal.

Ross Sawyers and Cynthia Johnson

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

I am writing to express my concern, and implore you to keep the SRO program at Niles West & North High Schools and renew their contract. Our SROs need to remain inside the building, not circulating outside, so they can continue to protect and defend our most vulnerable - our children.

Do the right thing for our kids, keep the SRO program in place.

Michelle Wang

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Dear District 219 Board of Education Members,

As a concerned private citizen and parent in D219 and D72, I am writing to support the School Resource Officer (SRO) program in Niles West and Niles North High Schools. I have lived in Skokie for 20 years. My son is a graduate of Niles West and, my daughter will be entering as a freshman in 2023.

Many parents and teachers within D219 are concerned that our School Resource Officers will be removed. We understand a task force was created. We know the task force spent 7 months assessing the viability of having SROs, but it is no secret that most on the task force are anti-police, creating a false narrative that the SROs are harmful to students.

I would like to know where the evidence that SROs have harmed brown and black students is? Where is the evidence that the SROs are the ones who are in charge of disciplinary actions against students? What have your personal experiences been with the SRO's? Would you please provide evidence if it truly exists?

As of today, we have obtained over 1100 signatures in favor of keeping the SRO program. Link to Petition:  
<http://chnng.it/MHkPMKdV>

Along with many other parents and concerned citizens, we want to keep the SRO program intact. We want to keep the SROs INSIDE the high schools.

The task force has failed in its duty to look at the SRO topic objectively, and based on the survey responses with a majority in favor of keeping our SROs, a task force should never have been created. The defund police agenda has placed our children as pawns in this dangerous political game being played.

I ask that you carefully consider the type of liability the administration and acting school board directors will face should a school shooting occur, resulting in injury, disability, or loss of life.

If you remove the SROs, who are trained in law enforcement, what is your plan to keep our students safe? How will you protect our children outside of using social workers and security guards?

I, along with many other parents, would like an answer to the frequently asked questions stated above.

Sincerely,

Helen Levinson  
Parent and Resident of D72 & D219  
Co-Founder, Director of Niles Township Accountability Coalition (NTAC)

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Dear Niles Township Board of Education and Leadership,

I am writing to request the Township keep the SRO program at the Niles Township High Schools and have their contract renewed. I am shocked to learn that the Township has considered removing their school resource officers given the rise of gun violence, crime rates, and violence in Cook County over the past few years. This should prompt us to reinforce safety for our children, not to decrease their safety.

I also ask that SROs are to remain inside the high schools, not outside circulating, as they are able to respond to any situation quickly.

A few questions must be answered before making a decision that affects our Children's' safety:

What is the rationale for removing SROs from the Township? What benefits do students and teachers gain? Do these benefits outweigh the lack of safety?

What evidence have you seen to suggest students are safer by removing SROs outside of schools?

If SROs are removed, what are your plans to protect students or fill the void of safety the SROs provide?

Thank you,  
David Baban

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Dear Board of Education, please listen to the black and brown community, the task force, and the administration who are experts. Thank you, Nikolaus Kalteis

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Dear Board of Education and Dr. Isoye,

I am writing in support of keeping the SRO program at D219. I support having our SROs inside the buildings. I support keeping off duty or retired police officers in place as our security guards. I support encouraging healthy, positive relationships between our kids and the Police. When we send our precious children into your care each day, you are obligated to protect them. You are obligated to ensure their safety to the best of your ability. Even with the deterrent of a Police presence, weapons offenses, sexual assaults, physical violence, drug deals and other criminal activity have already occurred on school grounds. Without the SROs in the building, what is your plan to protect our kids? What is your plan to deal with the crime that will occur?

I patiently await your response to my questions.

Respectfully,

Kate DeWitt

Mom of 5 and Morton Grove resident

**Subject Matter: Safety and Security Recommendations**

To the board of Education District 219

I am writing this in regards to the discussion of an SRO at the D219 schools.

It is unfortunate that social media, and some posts by some of the board members have created a false narrative that all police officers are dangerous or racist. SROs are present in the school to provide a safer environment for the school. These officers are trained and equipped to work with teenagers and staff.

In the recent poll , 60% of the community feel safer with SRO in the school. SROs are there to develop positive relationships with students. They are there to help intervene before violence occurs. With the current CDC guidelines, all the kids and teachers are returning to full day school after this pandemic. The pandemic caused a mental health emergency among teenagers. More than 25% of high schools students reported worsened emotional and cognitive health. Mental health issues among teenagers have doubled. Some of these students haven't socialized with other kids in over a year. We also know that school shootings often include depression, desperation, and isolation. If SRO are removed, what is the plan to protect students, teachers and other staff without an SRO?

I believe 2-3 board members are using their own radical political beliefs to dictate the school and board as evidenced by their social media tweets and profiles to make it their only agenda to remove the SROs. Personal political beliefs do not belong in the school system. This does not represent our diverse community. The school board has a duty to listen and respond to this community. The behavior of the school board members on social media fail to uphold a positive environment for the school and community as a whole, including police. Their behaviors on social media are not advocating for the board and community they represent.

I believe the SROs should remain in the school.

Thank you,  
Anna Hurtado

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

I urge the Board to respect the time, energy, and hard work that both the Safety and Security Task Force and the Superintendent's Cabinet put into their recommendations regarding SROs by tabling tonight's scheduled vote on the Intergovernmental Agreement until the current Board vacancy is filled.

Once a new Board member has been seated, I strongly recommend that you vote to follow the evidence-based recommendations of the Task Force and Cabinet.

Shari Pollack

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers**

Dear D219 Board of Education and Dr. Isoye, I am writing to you today to urge you to postpone the vote on the intergovernmental agreement between Skokie Police Department and District 219 until an entire board is seated. While I understand there may be a time constraint, this is a topic that deserves the full vote of elected officials. I am deeply concerned that our board is planning to vote on such an important topic which may result in a tie and a continuation of our agreement with SPD by default. As an SRO task force member who invested countless hours researching and digging through D219 data, it would be disheartening to be undermined in such a way. Board members and Dr. Isoye assured us very early in the process that our work was not in vain and would be strongly considered. Our task force members and facilitators worked tirelessly to ensure that our findings and recommendations were based on peer-reviewed and data-based information. In addition to our findings, our district cabinet has provided additional peer-reviewed expert recommendations which strongly oppose having police in the buildings.

It is imperative when this vote occurs that all of our board members have reviewed the data, recommendations and trust our district experts to know what is best for our school culture and overall safety. The research is indisputable, and the data speaks for itself. If we genuinely strive for equity for all, we must consider the harm inflicted on children, specifically Black and Brown kids, LGBTQIA+, and kids with IEP/504 plans. In good faith, we cannot continue a profoundly flawed practice of policing in schools having all of the information gathered from this deep study.

Lastly, I would like to thank our task force facilitators, members, and presenters for spending personal time on this critical matter. Thank you to the North Equity Committee for guiding the process and Dr. Wells for assuring the conversations were child and equity-centered.

I look forward to a more equitable and inclusive future for all of our District 219 students. We can and must do better.

Sincerely,

Victoria Wolfinger

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Office**

Dear District 219 School Board, Due to the vacancy on the school board by James Specker, please hold off on voting on the Inter Government Agreement on SROs until this vacancy is filled. The task force put in a lot of hard work to review this issue and their voices should be heard and respected. District 219 students belong to all of us and they should be positively impacted by this decision, especially students of color.

-Tom Pappas

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Office**

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter to request that the SRO's remain and the contract renewed. The SRO position is a highly important position that fosters educational programs and activities for our youth to promote healthy development. The SRO promotes a positive relationship between students, staff, and law enforcement. They familiarize themselves with the many issues confronting students, e.x, alcohol and drug use, gang involvement, weapons, bullying, and teenage suicide. The SRO becomes familiar with the campus and learns of any troublesome locations on and off campus. Complete knowledge of campuses helps develop preventative tactics and techniques that promote a safe school environment. Most importantly to create safe and drug free schools. I don't see how eliminating this position is in the best interest of high school students.

To my understanding interviews have begun with an outside company for a security position. If memory serves me correctly this was done in the past around the year 2000 and horribly failed, they were a waste of tax payers. The outside staff was not trained appropriately. They could not handle student conflicts or assaults, thus showing an increase in violence, gangs, and disturbances. The failed actions of the security company ultimately ended the school contract and brought back law enforcement protection. Please do what is right, people can't be trained off the streets in 2 weeks to secure thousands of students and staff in a building. We are lucky to have men and women as very brave first responders who work hard for the protection of others. Keep the SRO !

Sincerely, Kristey Chalabi

**Subject Matter: Safety and Security Recommendations**

Hello D219 school board and administration,

Please make masks optional for ALL kids and staff regardless of vaccination status just as many other school districts in Illinois have done. That decision would be nothing out of the ordinary as many other states across the nation have been doing this for quite some time. Illinois is now leaving it up to the individual school districts to decide on appropriate "covid" measures including masks. Now that we finally have an opportunity to do what is right, let us finally do what is right.

Regarding the safety of mask use, a handful of concerned Florida parents sent their children's masks to have them analyzed at the University of Florida. The amount and types of dangerous contaminants found on these 6 masks was more than a bit shocking. These masks were all worn for just a few hours. What was found on these masks were as follows. Meningitis, E.coli, Lyme disease, diphtheria, legionnaires disease, staph, strep, pneumonia, tuberculosis etc..... The lab analysis can be found linked in this document for your review:

<https://rationalground.com/dangerous-pathogens-found-on-childrens-face-masks/>

A few other concerns with the masks that should be common sense are consistently breathing in your own carbon dioxide and having a lack of necessary oxygen to the body. I've seen this personally when my son's skin turned blue while playing soccer in a mask. Bluish skin happens when there is an insufficient level of oxygen to the blood. The condition is called cyanosis and this was from mask-wearing. His skin turned normal color when the mask was taken off.

Statistically speaking, kids are much more likely to die in a car accident than "covid", so masks are a supposed "cure" that is much worse than the problem for 99.9% of them.

Again, please make masks optional for ALL kids and staff regardless of vaccination status.

Thank you,  
Joe Potaczek

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Office**

Hello – My name is Denise Potaczek and I am a resident of District 219 and a parent of 2 children that attend one of the elementary feeder schools in the district.

Please do not remove the SRO. Our school resource officers collaborate with school administrators, security staff, and faculty to ensure schools are safe places for students to learn!

SROs are not meant to be an armed security presence, scaring kids into behaving, but rather educators, informal counselors, and law enforcement officers, who are part of the schools in which they serve. At each school, the SRO becomes a dependable, appreciated member of the administration who kids look to for advice, support, and safety. SROs stop any threat that may occur and act as a crime and violence deterrent. They gather a large amount of intelligence from kids who have no problem telling the SRO if something is up, whether it's about drugs or fighting or violence of any kind. They can do this in conversation without it being obvious or looking like a snitch. SROs can also see if something appears suspicious and keep an eye out for developments.

This open communication creates a safe, non-threatening school environment. If the SRO were not there, there is no way a kid would call the police on his or her own or be seen going to the administrator's office to report something.

And, of course, the thing none of us like to think about, but one of the biggest threats to our children today is school shooters. If a shooter were to get into the school, the SRO is trained to handle active shooter situations, stop the shooter as fast as possible, and triage anyone who may be injured. Nobody from the outside can be there as fast as an SRO. Period.

Getting rid of SROs is a very bad decision. Stop and think about the kids and what you're doing by taking them away. If there is no SRO, it makes your school extremely vulnerable to those who intend to do harm. All the security procedures in the world cannot replace the proactive intelligence that the SROs are gathering to stop attacks BEFORE they happen. Not having an SRO also removes the benefit of faster medical help.

We need to keep the SRO program at Niles West and have their contract renewed. SRO's are to remain inside the high schools not outside circulating.

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Office**

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter to request that the SRO's remain and the contract renewed. The SRO position is a highly important position that fosters educational programs and activities for our youth to promote healthy development. The SRO promotes a positive relationship between students, staff, and law enforcement. They familiarize themselves with the many issues confronting students, e.x, alcohol and drug use, gang involvement, weapons, bullying, and teenage suicide. The SRO becomes familiar with the campus and learns of any troublesome locations on and off campus. Complete knowledge of campuses helps develop preventative tactics and techniques that promote a safe school environment. Most importantly to create safe and drug free schools. I don't see how eliminating this position is in the best interest of high school students.

To my understanding interviews have begun with an outside company for a security position. If memory serves me correctly this was done in the past around the year 2000 and horribly failed, they were a waste of tax payers. The outside staff was not trained appropriately. They could not handle student conflicts or assaults, thus showing an increase in violence, gangs, and disturbances. The failed actions of the security company ultimately ended the school contract and brought back law enforcement protection. Please do what is right, people can't be trained off the streets in 2 weeks to secure thousands of students and staff in a building. We are lucky to have men and women as very brave first responders who work hard for the protection of others. Keep the SRO !

Sincerely, Kristey Chalabi

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Office**

This letter's intent is to request the SRO contract to be renewed for INSIDE the buildings.

I attended the SRO committee presentation at the BOE meeting, and was unimpressed with the lack of due diligence during the 7 months of planning, as well as lack of consideration of dissenting opinions of members of the Task Force. In light of the fact that over 60% of students, parents and staff who completed your survey indicated that they were in favor of keeping an SRO at each of our high schools, this decision should have been a no-brainer in favor to retain the SRO. There is no reason to appease 26% of your community, only 10% of which strongly disagree with it, when 43.3% STRONGLY AGREE that having an SRO makes the school safer.

Rather, there should be a plan developed that provides constructive strategies for that 26% to demonstrate the efficacy of an SRO and how to develop sustained positive relationships between the SRO and the Students/Staff, as well as Threat Mitigation guidelines. Removing them entirely puts our children in a direct path of potential danger, one that could result in blood on your hands. Are you okay with that? I know I would not be, if I had a choice to provide protective guardrails and chose not to.

In the event that you decide to remove the SRO, how will you ensure our children are safe in their absence should a dangerous situation arise, like a school shooter? What is the plan to protect the students and staff without this professionally trained individual in the school? These are answers to critical questions that have yet to be provided.

In the absence of an SRO who is trained to investigate and mitigate threats, how will you handle future incidents like what the schools have experienced in the last year and a half, including the following examples at Niles North: 1 robbery, 3 bomb threats, 2 sexual assaults, 2 sexual abuse cases, 8 battery, and at Niles West: 3 criminal sexual assaults, 11 disorderly conduct, 2 assaults (this is just a snippet of of the school threats that led to home searches)?

Thank you,  
Emily McCall  
D219 Constituent and Parent

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Office**

Dear School Board,

The following police report data was received via FOIA request. Please read the tallied police reports taken by the SRO from 1/2018 through 12/2019.

Niles North:

1 Aggravated vehicular hijacking  
1 Robbery  
3 Bomb threat  
2 Criminal sexual assault  
2 Criminal sexual abuse  
1 Aggravated battery  
8 Battery  
1 Domestic battery  
5 Domestic disturbance  
7 Disorderly conduct  
6 Disturbance  
4 Transport of mental cases  
1 Criminal trespass  
1 Intimidation  
1 Possession of cannabis (felony amount over 100 grams)  
Note another criminal sexual abuse reported 1/10/20 not included here

Niles West:

3 Criminal sexual assault  
1 Aggravated battery  
2 Battery  
2 Assault  
2 Disorderly conduct - fighting  
9 Disorderly conduct  
1 Possession of cannabis (felony amount over 100 grams)  
1 Delivery or intent to deliver cannabis

I also did a FOIA request for the police reports taken from 4 random Disorderly Conduct reports. Two of the reports were school threats that led to student home searched for weapons.

The School Board had an obligation to listen and consider the wishes and concerns of the parents, teachers, students, and other stakeholders in this community? So while Administration wants to remove our SRO I urge board members to consider the survey results:

82% parents want to keep the SRO  
63% teachers want to keep the SRO  
52% of students want to keep the SRO.

Do Board Members know that in the last ten years at D219 TWO teachers have been arrested for sexually assaulting students? And do they know there have been ZERO complaints against our SRO's? ZERO!

Lastly, almost 35% of our students at D219 identify as Asian. Can someone please explain why not ONE Asian person was selected to be on the SRO Task Force? Not even a teacher for representation. Shameful.

Kim Gordon

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Office**

I would like to voice my disagreement with the decision to remove SROs from District 219 schools. Given the number of incidents that the SRO has addressed over the years and the complete lack of any evidence of any misconduct on the part of the SRO, I see no need to have them removed from schools. I don't think the board is listening to the concerns and comments of the parents and students in the community, which should be at the forefront of any decision made. As a community member and district 219 parent, that has seen crime in our area increase, I strongly support keeping SROs in our schools. We should not gamble with our children's safety to make a political statement.

Vicky Mazur

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Office**

Dr. Isoye and the D219 School Board,

As a teacher and community member, I'm writing tonight to urge you to wait on the SRO/IGA vote and decision until the full school board is seated. The community became aware of the agenda item just yesterday and yet you are hearing and reading many public comments tonight asking you the same. It's time to listen to the voices of your community. The SRO task force work was and is important and should not be over looked by a quick decision before the full board can vote on it.

I also want to point out that all of the Administration/cabinet comments of the proposals from the task force are for ending the IGA and not having an SRO in our buildings. So the majority of the SRO task force as well as the admin feel SROs do not have a place in our buildings. Please sit with that!

Lastly, James Specker nominated Jasmine Sabagala to fill his seat, and I also strongly urge you all to once again listen to your community on this one. Jasmine would be amazing for all of our students, teachers, and Administrators in our schools and would be the perfect fit for our board. She is a passionate educator herself and knows what is needed to help keep our community moving forward with an equity lens in all that we do. Please make the right choice, our students deserve the best!

Thank you for your time!

Nicole Reynolds

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Office**

As a parent of a future district 219 student, I am extremely concerned to hear that the board is considering removing the resource officer from the school. Resource officers play an important role in the safety of the students, teachers and administrators by serving as the main security resource for the school. Their role consists of developing safety procedures and plans for potential threats in the school, conducting drills with students and staff, breaking up fights, and de-escalating aggression between students and between students and teachers.

A vote to remove resource officers should be considered a vote against the safety of every child, teacher, or anyone else within the school. My hope is that the board will put their personal and/or politically motivated agendas aside and vote to keep the resource officers and do what is best for everyone in the school.

Jeremy Wilson

**Subject Matter: Safety and Security Recommendations**

2020 and the wake of the pandemic has tested our community's physical ,economic, and mental health . Our childrens' lives have been turned upside down, and suicide and depression is on the rise. Overall in the United States in March 2020, self-harm claims in that age-group rose 90.7% over the same month in 2019 and nearly doubled (99.8%) from April 2019 to April 2020. The new normal and the mental strain on on our children in the coming years is unknown and we have no history to compare it to.

To that point, I implore you NOT to remove the school resource officers from our schools. The officers provide invaluable assistance to the students, staff and parents. It would be impossible to replace the services they provide with teachers or civilians. I am sure no teacher wants to dissuade an active shooter from harming students. I would much rather see social workers and teachers COLLABORATING WITH AN SRO TO IDENTIFY A THREAT AND DIFFUSE IT PROACTIVELY, but in the event of a life threatening situation, they should be guiding students to safety, while an SRO does their job to end the threat. Each position plays an important role, but one is NOT in lieu of the other. An SRO in the building also allows the individual to be more familiar with building layout and student traffic flow which could be significantly important in the event of a major emergency. SROs are the first lines of defense when a preventable violence occurs. Beyond law enforcement, SROs also serve as educators, emergency managers, and informal counselors

According to the D219 survey that the School put out showed over 60%of our community feels safer with an SRO in the school. We as a district should work collaboratively with social workers and the SRO to see why 10% are opposed to the SRO, but we should not get rid of the position especially since over half of the community is in favor of keeping an SRO in the schools. As a community, we should never assume that we are immune to a major act of violence. Now is not the time to make rash decisions that could impact the safety of our children, and have grave consequences. A decision you would quickly regret if something critical happened at the school.

Thank You

Dr.Kathy Knobel (D219 Parent and community member)

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Office**

Dear D219 School Board Members:

I am a NiWeHi grad of 1995 and the mother of two children who will attend Niles West. One will be the class of 2027 and the other the class of 2030. My children are bi-racial (white and black). I am also a middle school teacher on the North Shore.

I chose to come back to Lincolnwood and D219 for its diversity and acceptance. However, this move to remove the D219 SRO's is unsafe for our students, staff, and community. The data I have seen shows that families and staff support the presence of an SRO at Niles West and Niles North. Is there data supporting the removal or is this strictly a political move? How many reports against the SRO's have been filed?

As the mother of students identifying as black, I support the presence of an SRO at our Township High Schools. Elimination is not reform. Surrounding neighborhoods, including those with a higher black population than our own, have voted to keep their SRO's and have revamped the SRO program. That would show D219 to be leaders in and supportive of the Social Justice movement in America.

In addition, we are in a critical time in America for mental health. Students will return to school after a year and half at home and many are struggling with mental health. School shootings and public shootings are at an all time high. How will we protect our students if this were to happen on our campuses?

Please consider a reformation of the school resource officer program rather than an elimination.

Thank you for your time.  
Hilary Logan

**Subject Matter: Sro's and sign on building**

I have lived in d219 since 1953 and worked in Maine township d207 psychology dept for 25 years. We are doing a disservice to our children in d219. Safety must come first. There is no systematic racism in having the SRO program in d219 and the amazing security officers we all meet during school games and activities. They are cordial and helpful in many instances for ALL. We need to stop politics and keep our children safe. If we would FOIA both high schools to see the police reports for the past 5-10 years, could you explain why we do not need the SRO's?!. Also could you explain if 85% of people want the SRO's why are we even having this discussion. Please as a tax payer since 1953 being a school employee, Parent and now grandparents of 2 student of d219 keep our SRO's. We do not want a Columbine high school problem here in our schools.

Also the sign on both Niles North and West need to be removed immediately. My tax monies did not approve of such nonsense. These signs are no inclusive.. they exclude so many people, and that is pushing an agenda us tax payers did NOT agree to. They need to be removed now. As well as the few school board members who on social media are racist toward white people or "yt" people and Jewish families. The hate and the divide is coming from the school administration, school board members and it needs to stop. No hate here, means NOT excluding others.

Thank you

Patricia Russell

Homeowner/grandparent/psychologist

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Office**

To the Board of Education and Superintendent Isoye,

I am writing to urge you to please delay the vote on the IGA regarding SROs until a new board member is seated. The task force, administration, and community have invested an incredible amount of time and effort in this process, and it deserves full consideration by a full board. Anything else would disrespect their remarkable commitment and service to our community and students.

When you do vote on the IGA, I urge you to please listen to the extensive research and heed the recommendations of the task force and the administration and vote to end the IGA and remove the SRO. To ignore the conclusions of the task force, after their in-depth research, would be to reject the evidence of what would actually promote school safety. The research is clear that SROs are not the way to ensure the safety of our students, and they overwhelmingly criminalize Black and Brown children and support the school to prison pipeline. Please invest in our youth with a focus on trauma prevention and healing, mental health treatment, and restorative justice, not biased surveillance, criminalization, and incarceration.

Thank you,  
Carrie Bradean

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Office**

Dear Dr. Isoye and District 219 School Board,

We share these words as a response to the Board meeting agenda that was released yesterday for today's regular Board meeting.

In our June 8, 2021 public comment, we shared that it had been a year since students and alumni of D219 flooded the board and administration with stories of the trauma endured at the hands of police officers in D219 schools. With over 200 public comments, parents, community members, teachers, and administrators have added their voices to demand the removal of SROs and continue to move the district in the direction of racial equity and inclusion for all. The recommendation of the SRO Task Force, appointed by Superintendent Dr. Isoye is clear: 6 voted in favor of removal, and 2 opposed removal. The Task Force recommendation should stand.

We now find that there is a discussion and action item for tomorrow's meeting concerning "Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers." Without a full school board currently, we want to share our deep concern and frankly, our outrage at this decision to move forward.

Let us remind you that the data from your district reveals that your decision tonight will have the most bearing on Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and Asian children and families of District 219. These groups make up double to triple times their population in discipline infractions and referrals to the court system.

Many educational advocacy groups, including the NAACP, have historically and recently been instrumental in SRO removal from local school districts all across the country. These measures are made in order for schools to implement a holistic, social-emotional, restorative approach to student engagement rather than a trauma-inflicting, destructive, policing approach. In fact, Niles Township Districts 68 and 69 have removed their SROs in effect for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year.

Moving forward with an action concerning "Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers" without a full school board risks revealing the following:

A tie which means the agreement remains

The disregard of a whole year's worth of work of the SRO Task Force, a group of District 219 administrators and staff, community members, parents, and students charged with compiling findings and recommendations for the District with the recommendation for SRO removal

If you choose to move forward, knowing that the vote may result in a tie with six board members, which will keep the Intergovernmental agreement concerning SROs intact, this reveals the possibility of a preemptive vote, which is not what democracy is about.

We urge you to fill the open board seat first. Filling the board seat is the actualization of American democracy, which is a system that vows to ensure that all in this country, state, county and local district can have their voices represented.

Former Board President and Board member James Specker, a Black leader in the community, has made his choice for who should take his open board seat, Jasmine Sebagala. She could have been appointed by the Superintendent, and this seat could have been filled. However, a Black leader's voice was discounted once again, and an alternative process is underway. We urge you to fill the position before any action items are taken.

Consider this as yet another plea for racial equity and inclusion from members of your community, especially those who are historically excluded from human rights policies that have the most detrimental effects on them.

If this vote moves forward without a full school board, what will we tell our children about democracy at District 219, about how this school board and Superintendent feel about representative democracy? About the work of the SRO Task Force that met for a full academic school year after the most violent summer of our present lives concerning police officers and their murders of Black people? What will the world say about this moment in District 219? Everyone is watching and you have the opportunity to do right and stay the course and trust the process.

Postpone the action item concerning "Intergovernmental Agreement Regarding School Resource Officers," fill the board seat first, and demonstrate respect not haste to your students and families and community. We look forward to your prompt response, Dr. Isoye and School Board of District 219.

Sincerely,

Abolition Coalition of Skokie

**Subject Matter: SRO vote**

Please keep the SRO's at Niles West. I am a parent of a current student and 4 graduates. I am a taxpayer. The SRO's are respected . The SRO's are respectful .

Thank you

Silvia Kosir

**Subject Matter: Thanks**

To Whom It May Concern:

I am the parent of two current, two former, and one future student at Niles North High School. I have written to the Dist 219 BOE before to express concern, and today I'd like to write in "thanks."

I was grateful to read the message explicitly repudiating anti-Semitism in the email from Dr. Steven Isoye, Dr. James Edwards and Dr. Karen Ritter on June 22, 2021. Thank you for this public stand against anti-Semitism.

Effective litmus tests for your actions should be 1) to put the student at the center of everything you do and 2) to do no harm. Had these tests been applied to actions by members of the Board and the the professional staff during the events during the recent war between Hamas and Israel, it is likely that my previous letter would not have been necessary.

Even assuming good intent, select actions by individual board members, teachers and leaders- including the act of doing nothing and staying silent in the face vile anti-semitism - left Jewish students feeling fearful, frustrated, and abandoned. While late, the June 22nd email was a step in the right direction, and I thank you for that.

I closed that letter seeking additional specific actions the Board would take to ensure that its members and the professional staff under its governance would protect the school experience of Jewish students just as it does other minorities and diverse populations including Black and LGBTQ+.

I'd like to suggest one action . . .thoughtfully filling the current board vacancy with an individual who will keep the board's focus fully on education and behave in accordance with the tests outlined by me earlier to put the student at the center of everything you do and to do no harm.

Fill the current board vacancy with an individual who will eschew a form of social and political activism, regardless of their intent, that is in direct conflict with your mission, ensuring that Jewish students, and students of all backgrounds, feel safe and secure at school.

Thank you also for your demonstration of inclusiveness for correcting the graduation date for the benefit of Jewish students and teachers who observe the Jewish Sabbath.

I would also like to offer myself to Board and professional staff as individuals or as a group to continue the dialogue and to add a Jewish perspective to current events and life.

Most sincerely,  
Brian Altgold

**Subject Matter: Open board position**

Hello, I'm Cyatharine Alias a registered voter of Skokie and a D219 alumna. I'd like to voice my support of Jas Sebagala to board position as an active organizer for the improvement of marginalized students in our community. Jas's leadership is impeccable, transparency is noteworthy, and values will help guide D219 towards continued improvement.

Thank you.

Cyatharine Alias

**Subject Matter: Appointing Jasmine Sebaggala to the vacant Board cabinet**

I have had the privilege of working with Ms. Sebaggala in various capacities. As an equity leader in Beyond Diversity, Jasmine has a talent for calling people in consistently. She is direct, yet compassionate, seeing multiple perspectives. Jasmine is Socratic with her questioning, helping others come to see their own biases and move toward positive change. As a teacher, Ms. Sebaggala has decolonized the curriculum in thoughtful, engaging, developmentally appropriate ways so that all her students learn about their intersections. Additionally, Jasmine works tirelessly with her colleagues, to make their pedagogy more inclusive and, thereby, more effective for ALL students.

As a community member, Jasmine Sebaggala is a peace warrior. She strives to make Evanston- Skokie an anti racist community, for me, for you, and for the future of all young people and their families.

Ms. Sebaggala will aptly fill the Board vacancy by adding her antiracist, educational, compassionate voice to make Evanston-Skokie move toward an upward trajectory for equity and high standards for all students and community members.

Ruth Young

**Subject Matter: Board position**

My name is Mary Checke and I have 2 children attending Niles West. I'm writing to support Jas Sebagala for the board. Jas's experience makes her an excellent candidate for the Board. I hope you'll consider her.

**Subject Matter: Board vacancy**

To the District 219 Board of Education,

I'm writing to implore you to honor the wishes of former Board President James Specker, and seat Jasmine Sebagala in his place on the board. I hope you have heard, over the course of this last year, through letters, student voices, teacher voices, parent voices, alumni voices, your principals, your equity officer, and your community, that there is an anti-Blackness crisis in this district. This is not a personal attack on you as a board. This crisis exists throughout our country -- we are all grappling with it. We are also not saying that there are no other oppressed groups in our district. All oppression is connected and I know Jasmine understands that better than anyone. But at this time, knowing what we know, how can we not respect the wishes of the only Black member of the board to seat a Black woman in his place?

This is about representation but it's about more than that. Jas is not a token -- she is unbelievably qualified for this position. As an experienced educator, an active social justice leader in our community, a D219 parent, and a student advocate, she is someone who can bring our community together and heal divisions. Jas is an incredibly compassionate listener and she embodies love for her community and especially for those most vulnerable -- children in particular. I have seen her tirelessly advocate for her own students to get the services they needed. I've seen her transform our shared district (69) by showing up again and again and advising the administration on things like affinity spaces, equitable practices, hiring, curriculum, and so on. Thanks to Jas, our middle schoolers (including my son) received an incredibly important training on the N-word. She's a Beyond Diversity trainer and brings that understanding of how to lead courageous conversations to this work. I encourage you to reach out to our D69 Superintendent, Dr. Margaret Clauson to hear more about how much Jas has done for our district.

Jas fights for all kids and I've seen time and again how she is able to connect to kids, to make them feel heard, valued, believed in, and loved. Nothing is more important for our students than that they feel a sense of belonging and safety, and Jas embodies that. Jas works tirelessly to make our institutions here in Niles Township are spaces where everyone can be safe, grow, and flourish. She's constantly seeking to educate herself and others and is a profoundly gifted communicator. I have been so honored to learn from her about how to give people the benefit of the doubt, how to assume the best, and how to stay grounded in the truth at the same time. This is a skill so desperately needed on this board and in this community. Because at the end of the day, we all want the best for all of our children. And I believe that you do too.

Thank you,  
Maggie Vandermeer

**Subject Matter: Filling the School Board Vacancy**

To the School Board of District 219,

I am writing to urge you to appoint Jasmine Sebagala to your school board. I have been a colleague of Jasmine for over ten years, and I am continually in awe of her advocacy and her commitment to the students and families that we serve in Evanston/Skokie District 65.

Jasmine never shies away from having challenging conversations and has them with grace and belief in the importance of creating the most effective, safe, and just school community possible. I have seen her make our school and district better by asking a single question in a staff meeting. I have seen her create space for families that had previously been unseen in our school community. I have seen her continue working through frustrating situations because of her commitment to and belief in the power of education and communication. And this is ALWAYS done with students at the center.

Jasmine has the experience and brilliance to help your district live true to its mission statement: embracing diversity, providing an equitable learning environment, eliminating the racial predictability of student achievement, and preparing students to achieve their full potential.

In my experience as an educator, mission statements can at times become just words on paper or a website, rather than the heart and soul of an institution. Appointing Jasmine Sebagala gives your district an opportunity to enact your values and bring a perspective to your board that will work to make your schools more effective, safe, and just for the students and families that you have been elected to serve.

Sincerely,  
Christine Skoglund

**Subject Matter: School Board Opening**

Hello,

I am writing in support of the appointment of Jasmine Sebagala as a D219 board member. I am a school social worker in the area and worked in District 219 for the last 3 years.

Since I have met Jasmine, I have known her as a dedicated advocate for the needs and rights of young people of color and their families with school systems. Jasmine is tireless in her commitment to promoting anti-racist work. She simultaneously reviews existing systems and policies, while also offering new solutions or best practices. As an educator and parent, Jasmine will bring a twofold perspective to board decision making- balancing the practical with the necessary so that all students can succeed. Her connections to the community as a long-time resident are essential in today's social-political climate of schools.

I urge you to appoint her as a board member to District 219.

Megan Garrad

**Subject Matter: New Board Member**

Members of the D219 School Board -

I wish you the best as you prepare for a new school year, and would like to humbly offer my support for two of the applicants for the vacant seat on the D219 board. I was greatly saddened to hear that James Specker had stepped down, but I'm sure you'll make the right choice for a replacement.

- Jasmine Sebagala is one of the most compassionate, dedicated, empathetic individuals I know in Skokie. It's no surprise that Specker mentioned her in his letter of resignation; she's a natural leader, and a great collaborator.

- Irena Petryk is an incredible young woman. I've worked in schools for the past 8 years, and I don't think I've ever met a more intelligent individual still in their teens. She was the runner-up in the April election for a reason; Niles Township voters have already expressed their confidence in her, so she'd be the democratic choice for Specker's replacement.

All the best,  
James Johnson

**Subject Matter: Appointment to vacant Board seat**

Please appoint Jasmine Sebagala to the open position on the Board. Former Board President James Specker was elected by the voters, and he selected Ms. Sebagala as the best person to fill his seat. Please honor that selection. Ms. Sebagala is incredibly qualified, and her service on the Board would be of great benefit to the district. She works tirelessly for our students and community, and she has demonstrated her expertise, knowledge, wisdom, caring, and dedication to address inequities and to ensure that all our students are safe and welcome and receive a high-quality education.

Thank you.

Carrie Bradean

**Subject Matter: Board seat**

Hello District 219 board

I am writing to urge you to appoint Jasmine Sebagala to replace out going board president James Specker . Jasmine is an excellent choice. She is a brilliant anti racist activist. She has worked in this community to bring about change through her equity work. She is a beautiful soul who cares about children and her community. She is an educator, a mother , and is not afraid to speak the truth with love. So again I urge you to appoint Jasmine Sebagala to replace James specker on the school board.

Lisa Spillman

**Subject Matter: Restructured IT Position**

I believe Jasmine Sebagala will be the perfect candidate for the D19 Board position. Jasmine has helped Skokie Community in so many ways.

Jasmine holds a conviction that public education is important. She is committed to public involvement. Jasmine has the ability to make healthy educational decisions.

She is willing to devote her time and energy to this position. Jasmine has excellent communication skills and holds a high respect for the district employees. Jasmine has the whole package, D219 needs her expertise!

Thank you!

Denise Beal-Adonissi

**Subject Matter: Jas Sebyggala**

Please appoint Jas Sebyggala as board member. I've known Jas for a while as our kids were at JEH together. She would be an excellent member of the board.

Thank you  
Claire Bain

**Subject Matter: Open Board Position**

I am writing in support of District 219 Parent and resident Jas Sebagala as the best option for appointment to the D219 School Board to fill the vacant position left open by James Specker. I know Jas personally through her volunteer work as a District 69 parent. Jas is an experienced educator who has firsthand knowledge of the challenges our students, teachers, and district families face. She is a passionate advocate for students, teachers, and families, especially in regard to fairness, equity, and anti-racism, and she is able to consider the needs of everyone in our diverse and welcoming community. Jas is a great listener, and she can turn difficult situations into teachable (and learnable) experiences that help all of us evolve into better community members. As a community resident and parent of children at both ends of the K-12 span, Jas has a vested interest in the long-term development of District 219. I think she is exactly what we need on our D219 board and I would be grateful if the board would appoint her to the open position.

Thank you!  
Erin Fenner

**Subject Matter: filling the board vacancy**

I'm writing to request that you appoint Jasmine Sebagala to fill the board vacancy left by James Specker.

Ideally, school board members are chosen by local residents in an election. I live in D219, and when James Specker ran for the board in 2019, I voted for him. I felt confident doing so because of his extensive experience in communications, nonprofit board relationships, and institutional leadership. While it's unfortunate that he was unable to complete his term, he recommended a person to fill his position: Jasmine Sebagala. While I have never met James Specker, I trust his judgment about this recommendation—just as I trusted him when I voted for him. I suspect that many of those who voted for him feel the same way: disappointed that he can't complete his term while at the same time trusting that he recommended someone whose values and leadership style are compatible with his own.

I've met Jasmine Sebagala on a few occasions and have observed how she interacts with others. Based on these experiences, I believe that she has the skill, communication style, and knowledge base to serve on the D219 school board in a way that will strengthen the health of the board. She's an educator who is committed to helping all children flourish in their schools. I haven't seen her interact with children, but I know that she communicates thoughtfully with adults: with a direct style, but always in a respectful way. She truly hears people when they challenge her. While she doesn't come to decisions lightly, I know that she is open to changing her mind. She is a uniter rather than a divider. These kinds of qualities are ideal for board members.

Jasmine Sebagala is highly qualified for the position, and she has the recommendation of the person whose seat she would be filling (and thus, implicitly, the recommendation of the voters who elected him). There is no good reason not to select her.

Sincerely,  
Elizabeth Palmer

**Subject Matter: School board nomination**

Nomination Jazmine

Marie Bourgouin

**Subject Matter: Open Board Position**

I am submitting a public comment to state that I believe Jasmine Sebagala should be selected for the open school board position. She is the best candidate because of her proven commitment to the community and commitment to creating more inclusive and equitable learning spaces.

Jess Lifshitz

**Subject Matter: Vacant Board member position**

Dear Superintendent Dr. Isoye and District 219 Board of Education,

It is with great honor that I write to recommend Jasmine Sebaggala for the current vacant board position. I have known Ms. Sebaggala for one year now, and during the most critical of times, her impact on me, my family, and our Niles Township community is nothing short of extraordinary.

Ms. Sebaggala's kindness, attentiveness, and advocacy demonstrates that she would be a most significant addition to the Board of District 219. She has been a consistent voice for equity in education for many years, being a part of the exciting changes in equitable practices at District 69 and other feeder schools of Niles Township, and most significantly, at District 219. Working with various stakeholders and as a trained Courageous Conversations facilitator, Ms. Sebaggala has the gift to not only see and hear the needs of each person, but to also bring them together to create something beautiful, innovative, and foundational for all.

Ms. Sebaggala is also a passionate educator. Beloved by her students and their families, she ensures that all children are safe, welcomed, and be given the opportunities to be successful academically. She is an active team member, sharing her ideas, and encouraging others to do the same, ensuring diverse voices and ideas are brought together. She has consistently participated in committees and teams in her professional district and also in the greater community, to ensure best educational practices.

I have seen Ms. Sebbagala utilize her personal narrative and identity, experiences as a parent and active community member, and expert training to bring all stakeholders, children, families, staff, and school leaders, together with a common goal of meeting the promise of District 219: "providing an equitable learning environment that embraces diversity and individual student needs." If chosen as a Board member, I know that she will continue to advocate for educational equity for our BIPOC children and staff, for all those who have been historically excluded from educational institutions, and I can only imagine how integral her participation will be in continuing to meet the goals of District 219 for the betterment of our community.

I cannot share enough how grateful I am that I get to share space with Ms. Sebaggala as she models how to choose love in action, be a pillar in our community, and be a support and advocate for me and for so many others whose voices are often not heard in policy making. Please do not delay in choosing Jasmine Sebaggala to fill the open board seat. Should any questions arise concerning the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Angela Sangha-Gadsden, M.Ed.

High School English Language Arts Educator

Master of Arts in Educational Policy Studies

**Subject Matter: Board vacancy**

Dear Board of Education, I'm writing to you today to urge you to fill the open board seat vacated by Mr. James Specker with Mrs. Jas Sebagala. It's imperative that our school board represents our community and that we aren't just hearing the voices of the majority. Mrs. Sebagala has been actively involved in leading D219 towards an equitable future for all of our children and live our district mission statement in deed not just mere words. Upon his departure, Mr. Specker requested his seat be filled by Mrs. Sebagala, I urge our board members to listen to the Black voices in our community and respect his recommendation. I look forward to seeing our district actively live out our mission.

Sincerely,  
Victoria Wolfinger

**Subject Matter: Appointment of new board member**

I am writing the board tonight to vehemently support Jas Sebagala as the new board member. District 219 is at a crossroads and must make the right move to ensure an equitable, inclusive, and safe future for our children. Not only was Jas explicitly requested by Mr. Specker to fill his place in the board, but Jas provides a unique and equity-based perspective that will unquestionably benefit the students of the district. D219 needs unapologetically anti-racist leadership. Jas is highly qualified for this opportunity, is extremely involved in the grassroots work happening in the community, and is right person for this position. Thank you for your time.

Robert Glassner

**Subject Matter: Jasmine Sebagala for D219 Board**

Jasmine Sebagala has been the voice for so many in our community and I believe she will bring a much needed perspective and accountability to the board. My son is a future student of D219 and I would feel better knowing that Jasmine Sebagala would be there to speak up for children like him.

Michelle Rivera

**Subject Matter: Vacant board seat**

It is critical to fill the vacant board seat and Jasmin Sebagala is far and away the best candidate for the D219 community. Not only did recently department board member James Specker enthusiastically endorse Jasmine for his vacant seat, but Jasmin is a strong advocate in Skokie throughout our community, including feeder districts and D219. Jasmin stands for all of our children, particularly those from marginalized groups, and being a parent and teacher herself is keenly aware of the critical issues the D219 board must grapple with and make the right decisions. Jasmin is a brilliant, tireless fighter for public education who has made significant strides in District 69. Jasmin has a tremendous ability to listen and speak with truth and love and above all else, centers the students.

The data collected these last few years shows the district is failing our Black and Brown children, and with Specker's resignation, the D219 board has no Black members. We have seen the gap widen between white students and Black and Brown students. We have seen Black teachers leave the district with no clear plan or track record for retention. If D219 is going to back their statements regarding equity and anti-racism, then voting for Jasmin Sebagala is the only choice to make amongst the current candidates. We cannot afford the status quo when public education, teachers, administrators and the fight for anti-racism and equity is under attack.

Thank you.  
Matt Temkin

**Subject Matter: 219 Board appointment**

I would like to express my support for Jasmine Sebagala to be appointed to the D219 board. She received the support of James Sprecker and I believe going against that recommendation would be disrespectful to those who voted for James' leadership.

Thank you  
Matthew Laufenberg

**Subject Matter: Board member vacancy**

As a D219 community member, I am writing today to say that I fully support for Jas Sebaggala to be appointed to the D219 school board. Not only did she receive the support of James Specker, Jas is an active member in our community, whose ability to truly listen to the community and advocate for all our children makes her a natural choice for the position. I wholeheartedly believe that Jas cares deeply about the quality of education for all students and will advocate passionately for students, families, teachers, and administrators. She will bring her passion, experience, expertise, and dedication to our district, and we would be lucky to have such an outstanding educator on our school board.

Melissa Ponce

**Subject Matter: Jas Sabagala on the Board and SRO**

Dr. Isoye and D219 Board,

I am disappointed to say the least about this email that we got today about the SRO. This basically means, in my eyes as a person on the task force, that the work we have done since November was not even taken into consideration. D68 & 69 were able to cancel the agreement without a years notice. And so it leads me to think that this was just an easy way out. It's unfortunate, our district had an opportunity to do something big and special!

Now, I urge you to really think hard about your next big decision and who you appoint to this board. This board needs Jas Sabagala! She is an amazing human, educator, mother, anti racist activist, community member, and all around amazing person. She would be fantastic for our community! Let's do the right thing here with this next big decision. Appoint Jas, and let's have a black woman representation on the board so all of our young black women can have an amazing role model to look up to leading our district!

Thank you for your time!

Nicole Reynolds

**Subject Matter: Vacant board position**

I am writing to express my support for Jasmine Sebagala to be appointed to the vacant d219 seat. As someone who ran for a spot on the board I was considering applying for this seat until I learned that Ms. Sebagala had applied. She is the ideal person for this seat and as a parent of a soon to be Niles West student I am confident that you won't find a more qualified and dedicated person to represent all of the students of d219.

Thank you.

Ross Sawyers

**Subject Matter: Vacant board position**

I am writing to express my support for Jasmine Sebagala for the district 219 school board. Ms. Sebagala's commitment to the community is clear, she is a tireless advocate for all of the children of district 219. I am a parent of a child who will attend Niles West in a few short years and I cannot think of a more qualified and capable candidate for the open seat on the school board than Jasmine Sebagala. Thank you for your time.

Cynthia Johnson

**Subject Matter: Appointment of new board member**

My name is Sherry Jo Baehr and I am the librarian at Niles West. I am writing in support of Jasmine Sebagala's appointment to the D219 Board of Education. Ms. Sebagala has spent countless hours advocating for the students in our community and is a respected equity leader and community organizer. When James Specker resigned from the Board, he requested they appoint Ms. Sebagala in his place. It is important that the Board honor Mr. Specker's request.

We are fighting anti-Blackness in our schools and community. It is imperative that our Black students, teachers, staff, and administrators have representation on the Board. Ms. Sebagala has shown her commitment to the students of our district and we are incredibly fortunate to have such a highly qualified leader willing to serve. We need more Black and Brown leaders in our district. The Board's commitment to equity MUST extend to diverse and inclusive leadership. Thank you for your time.

**Subject Matter: Board of Education vacancy**

I am writing in full support of Jasmine Sebaggala's candidacy for the open seat on the D219 Board of Education. As an educator, community activist, and parent of D219 and D69 students, Ms. Sebaggala will bring knowledge, expertise, leadership, and commitment to the Board. I urge the current Board members to honor the request of former Board president, James Specker, to appoint Ms. Sebaggala to serve out his term.

For far too long, we have failed the Black and brown youth in our community. As a white parent of white children, I strongly believe our school system is in need of reform to better serve and support ALL of our children. The perspective and experiences Ms. Sebaggala will bring to the Board as a Black woman/teacher/parent will help move the district and our BIPOC students forward.

I have no doubts that Ms. Sebaggala will work tirelessly to serve the interests of our children, and I urge the board to appoint her to the vacant seat.

Shari Pollack

**Subject Matter: School board vacancy**

Dear Dr. Isoye and D219 administrators,

My name is Roxann Salgado and I'm a Skokie resident and a parent of multi-racial children. I'm writing to urge you to appoint Jasmine Sebagala to the D219 School Board of Education as James Specker requested before stepping down as school board president.

As a mother of Black and Latinx children, representation is important to my family. Jasmine is a strong black woman that has a clear eye to the challenges of this district and to the needs of the children that attend your schools. Jasmine exudes strength, love and wisdom to everyone she comes in contact with. She is a unifying force that will make it her priority to unify this community that is so heartbreakingly divided right now. Please do what is best for our community and appoint Jasmine Sebagala to the vacant seat on the school board.

Sincerely,  
Roxann Salgado

**Subject Matter: Intergovernmental Agreement with Skokie Library**

Dear Dr. Isoye and D219 administrators,

D219 families received an update for the Intergovernmental Agreement Concerning School Resource Officers earlier today. Can you explain the next steps clearly? Please address the following concerns in your response:

-You shared that there was no quorum for the July 13, 2021 meeting and that “the Board was unable to consider any action on the IGA” so the Intergovernmental Agreement Concerning School Resource Officers could not be acted upon.

-You state that “the District must issue the Village written notice of its intent to terminate at least one year before the termination effective date” so this is still possible to enact for the 2022-2023 school year or sooner as seen in Districts 68 and 69.

-You state that this requires a majority vote at a lawfully-called meeting. Will the Intergovernmental Agreement Concerning School Resource Officers be placed on the next board meeting that has a full school board, in August?

-You state that “Because the Board has not yet held a vote on this matter, the IGA continues to remain in effect for at least a period of one year.” With clear language from the SRO Task Force sharing no automatic renewals, please place this as an agenda item at the next Board meeting with a full school board so that it can be acted upon immediately.

Your July 13 Board packet shared the amazing, yearlong work and recommendations of the District-appointed SRO Task Force and recommendations from district administration. However, one key fact that was left out was that the SRO Task Force had a majority vote of 6 in favor of SRO removal, 5 for retention, but three of those 5 were for the SRO to be outside of the school. Included in the report was all the research that centered a restorative safety plan for the school with oversight from the stakeholders and Task Force. D219 administration’s recommendation is clear as well as the Task Force’s: a sound safety plan can be enacted without SROs in D219 schools. The Village Manager has shared that this agreement is up to the school district. In addition, Districts 68 and 69 removed their SROs easily with Village support. Provide the community with the democratic process that this incredibly critical agenda item deserves, and allow the vote on the termination of the IGA Concerning School Resource Officers at the next board meeting with a full school board. We look forward to your response to this most urgent matter.

Parents of D219 and/or its feeder schools,

Angela Sangha-Gadsden

Monique Cooley Hicks

Natasha LaVallias

Maggie Vandermeer

Roxann Salgado