

underwhelming," says Greer, who says just a handful of people have come back so far for retesting. She's critical of Health Canada for only issuing a media release, saying the department should do more to make the public aware of the situation.

"They have a huge responsibility to put out the word," she says.

Health Canada spokesperson Ryan

he says. The four scientists evaluate and decide if it's safe and effective. In this case, we were satisfied that the information supported its use."

Greer agrees the tests were put through extensive trials. "Health Canada was slow to approve this," she says. "They were really well tested."

Since the tests' unreliability has only just been determined, Health Canada is not yet able to say what exactly

clinic. "We're not the scientists in the equation," she says.

However, Collins says that what is of more concern here is the large number of HIV carriers in the general population who are unaware of their condition. Fifty thousand Canadians have tested positive for HIV, and there are estimates that another 15,000 people in the country have HIV but don't know it. ■

School board spying on student politics

BY CARLYN ZWARENSTEIN

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS ARE concerned that the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is working with police intelligence officers to monitor students' personal political activities, and that teachers are being asked to inform on their students.

In a memo issued two weeks before the provincial Tory leadership convention in March, a TDSB executive notified school superintendents that police had been in contact with the board and advised it of possible student involvement in upcoming protests.

"We were informed recently by Toronto Police Service intelligence," wrote Darlene Leaver, the board's superintendent of student and community services, "that the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP) is planning to protest the Provincial Conservative Leadership Convention by organizing two days of demonstrations and 'snake marches' in downtown Toronto on March 22 and 23."

She also cautioned that the OCAP site contains a six-page "high school student organizer's manual," encouraging students to "cause a lot of ruckus with a large amount of students" by protesting at corporate headquarters, government offices or schools.

"This manual suggests how students can organize and conduct school walk-outs and demonstrations," wrote Leaver. "The manual encourages students to be

disruptive in different ways."

She asked that her memo be shared with secondary school administrators, who were in turn to share the information with their staff and discuss the issue with students where appropriate. Leaver also wrote that the board would maintain communications with police intelligence.

"We told [teachers] that they don't have to take part in monitoring students," says Doug Joliffe, vice-president of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) District 12, the local that represents Toronto's public high school teachers.

Joliffe says the local can't take any further action in the matter. "My legal advice is that management has the right to phrase the memo the way they did," he says.

"[It's] couched in a certain kind of way."

Calls placed to the school board and to the Toronto Police Service's community policing unit and intelligence and anti-terrorism unit were not returned.

A high school teacher, who declined to have her name published for fear of losing her job, was worried enough to file a human rights complaint with the TDSB after her school principal brought up the memo with his staff.

"We know that [the TDSB is] working with Toronto Police intelligence and we're concerned that this is going to lead to violations of civil rights," the teacher says.

She says she was horrified to hear the principal warn at a staff meeting that students might be getting involved with anti-poverty organizations. "He mentioned that OCAP had put stuff on the internet again, and that they were attempting to recruit students," she says.

"He said, 'Please let me know if you hear anything.'"

She viewed this as an instruction to teachers to inform on their students for taking a legitimate interest in protesting. Her human rights complaint alleged that the principal jeopardized staff and students' Charter rights to freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression as well as freedom of association. The complaint was rejected on the grounds that the TDSB human rights policy does not explicitly prohibit harassment based on political activities.

A group of OSSTF members now plan to oppose the monitoring of students by attending demonstrations and observing police behaviour. "They're looking for concrete things to do to help," explains Joliffe.

"Some of the teachers have volunteered to be legal observers to witness and report on any kind of abuses by police."

Some teachers are also concerned that an increased police presence in the city's schools, which is supposed to be occurring for safety reasons, could be used to collect information on students and staff. ■