



# Department of Justice



## Office of Justice Programs

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### **DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ANNOUNCES \$63 MILLION TO SUPPORT SCHOOL SAFETY RESEARCH AND REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE**

WASHINGTON – The Office of Justice Programs’ National Institute of Justice (NIJ) today announced it has awarded nearly \$63 million to school districts and research organizations through the Comprehensive School Safety Initiative (CSSI). CSSI is a large-scale, multi-agency research effort to build knowledge about effective approaches to increasing school safety nationwide.

Through the initiative, 24 research projects receive funding under two different solicitations. The first, “Investigator-Initiated Research,” includes nine awards to research organizations totaling more than \$18 million. The second, “Developing Knowledge about What Works to Make Schools Safe,” provides more than \$45 million to 15 school districts and their research partners.

“This funding is being awarded as part of the Comprehensive School Safety Initiative – a large-scale, multi-agency research effort to build practical, and scientifically-sound, knowledge about effective ways to increase school safety nationwide,” said Attorney General Eric Holder. “These collaborative efforts will yield new insights and evidence about what works – and what doesn’t – when it comes to school discipline, violence and bullying reduction, school resource officers, mental health professionals and justice interventions like youth courts.”

President Obama’s January 2013 plan to end gun violence emphasized keeping guns out of potentially dangerous hands and recognized that additional actions are needed to make our schools safer. CSSI was launched in early 2014 in response to a congressional request for a broad, research-based effort to increase safety in the nation’s schools.

“We know a great deal about how to make schools safe in general but very little about the specifics for various settings and populations,” said Dr. William J. Sabol, Acting Director of NIJ. “With this \$63 million investment, the nation will gain an understanding of school safety that is scientifically sound, practical, and that can be easily interpreted and used by schools.”

The initiative has three primary goals: to collect national-level data; to convene stakeholders to identify and share best practices; and to conduct innovative research and evaluate pilot projects in school districts. The programs and policies within CSSI are designed to produce evidence about what works in such areas of school safety as effectiveness of school resource officers and mental health professionals, violence and bullying reduction, and effectiveness of

such restorative justice interventions as youth courts. The initiative will also examine potential unintended consequences of school safety efforts, including the excessive use of exclusionary discipline and arrests of students.

Although NIJ has primary responsibility for CSSI, the program is a collaborative effort among more than 20 federal partners, including the Departments of Justice, Education, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, and the Treasury. This partnership will allow the federal government to make a significant impact on school safety by investing limited funds in research that has practical applications for every school in the nation. By determining what interventions work best for specific schools and students, CSSI will provide professionals with a body of knowledge to help them make decisions about which programs will be most effective — and most cost effective — for their particular schools and their challenges.

A list of the awards can be viewed [HERE](#) and more information about CSSI is available at [www.nij.gov](http://www.nij.gov), keywords: “School Safety.”

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The Office of Justice Programs (OJP), headed by Assistant Attorney General Karol V. Mason provides federal leadership in developing the nation’s capacity to prevent and control crime, administer justice, and assist victims. OJP has six bureaus and offices: the Bureau of Justice Assistance; the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the National Institute of Justice; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; the Office for Victims of Crime; and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART).

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