



National Institute of Justice

The Comprehensive School Safety Initiative: Awards Made in Fiscal Year 2016

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Comprehensive School Safety Initiative Fiscal Year 2016 Funded Project List

Project Title	Award Amount
Category 1. Developing Knowledge about What Works to Make School Safe	
Assessing a School, Justice, and Behavioral Health Collaborative Approach to Improving School Safety	\$2,985,543
Link for Schools: A System to Prevent Violence and Its Adverse Impacts	\$3,675,128
Rainier Beach Campus Safety Continuum: A Comprehensive Place Based Approach	\$3,834,667
Evaluation of a Principal Training Program to Promote Safe and Civil Schools	\$4,135,418
A Randomized Controlled Trial of Participatory Peace Circles in New York City Schools	\$4,181,239
Cultivating Healing by Implementing Restorative Practices for Youth (CHIRPY)	\$4,196,537
A Randomized Controlled Trial of a Comprehensive, Research-Based Framework for Implementing School-Based Law Enforcement Programs	\$4,315,804
Project SECURE: Keeping Kids Safe in San Francisco Unified School District	\$4,641,134
A Randomized Controlled Trial of Safe School Ambassadors in High Risk Schools in Puerto Rico	\$4,744,947
Shelby County School District Comprehensive Safety Initiative	\$4,833,916
Research of Effects of an Anonymous Tip Line and Multidisciplinary Response Teams in Schools across the State of Nevada	\$4,835,367
Identifying and Embedding Brokers into a Multi-Tiered System of Services to Reduce the Bystander Effect Leading to a Reduction in School Violence	\$4,866,107
Category 2. Causes and Consequences of School Violence	
The Consequences of School Violence: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis	\$446,679
A Comprehensive Longitudinal Study of School Violence and School-to-Prison Pipeline: Root Causes and Consequences of and Implications for Restorative Justice Approaches	\$499,863
Understanding the Causes of Violence Using Open Source Data	\$669,629
Assessing the Role of Immigration in the Linkage between School Safety, Education, and Juvenile Justice Contact	\$776,949
Category 3. Shorter Term Studies on School Safety	
Mapping Decision Points from School Based Incidents to Exclusionary Discipline, Arrest, and Referral to the Juvenile Justice System	\$240,000
School Climate, Student Discipline, and the Implementation of School Resources Officers	\$370,307
Reducing Exclusionary Discipline and Ensuring School Safety	\$497,491
Understanding the Adoption, Function, and Consequences of School Resource Officer Use in Understudied Settings	\$623,047
The Influence of Subjective and Objective Rural School Security on Law Enforcement Engagement Models: A Mixed Methods Study	\$645,952
School Emergency Preparedness: Status Assessment at the State, District, and School Levels	\$682,794
An Investigation of School Resource and Safety Programs Policy and Practice in Virginia	\$689,416
Category 4. Developing and Evaluating A Comprehensive School Safety Framework	
Nashville Longitudinal Study of Youth Safety and Wellbeing	\$4,916,705
Examining the School and Community Contexts that Contribute to the Root Causes and Prevention of School Violence in Rural, Urban, and Large County School Districts in California	\$4,964,124
Total	\$67,268,763

CATEGORY 1: DEVELOPING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT WHAT WORKS TO MAKE SCHOOLS SAFE

Category 1 awards support demonstrations and evaluation of programs, practices, policies, and strategies to enhance school and student safety.

Assessing a School, Justice, and Behavioral Health Collaborative Approach to Improving School Safety **Policy Research Associates, Inc. (Delmar, NY)**

\$2,985,543

Many schools have the potential to marginalize children with behavioral health conditions through exclusionary discipline policies that often disrupt their education. Effective, non-exclusionary methods have been developed to respond to this problem, and the goal of this project is to evaluate two of these strategies. This research project examines the impact of the School Justice Mental Health Collaborative (SJMHC) and Adolescent Mental Health Training for School Resource Officers (AMHT-SRO) on promoting school climate and school safety. Policy Research Associates will conduct this project in partnership with 16 high schools (8 in Louisiana, 8 in Michigan), the Child Health and Development Institute, and Louisiana State University's Institute for Public Health and Justice. They will construct four study groups, three treatment groups will implement a combination of SJMHC and AMHT-SRO and the other study group will serve as the control group. This 42 month study will use a quasi-experimental, mixed methods research design to measure the programs' effect on school (discipline, attendance), juvenile justice (arrest, adjudication), and mental health services (emergency psychiatric services, referrals to community-based services). A cost-benefit analysis will also be conducted. This research has the potential to contribute to knowledge on alternatives to zero-tolerance policies, strategies to increase safety in schools, improve school climate, and support positive outcomes for youth with behavioral health conditions.

Link for Schools: A System to Prevent Violence and Its Adverse Impacts **University of Iowa (Iowa City, IA)**

\$3,675,128

In Cedar Rapids Community School District (CRCS) there have been a growing number of students who have exhibited violent behaviors that required intervention by police (e.g., defiance, fighting, bullying, etc.). The goal of this project is to evaluate Link for Schools. Link for Schools is a system that incorporates principles of Trauma Informed Care and Psychological First Aid (PFA) to intervene when mental and behavioral precursors to violence occur to mitigate their impacts among youth. The overall purpose of this project is to evaluate whether Link reduces school violence and improves school outcomes, and to conduct a cost/benefit analysis. This study will be conducted in 12 schools with approximately 5,000 students from CRCS. It is the second largest school district in Iowa. The intervention will be implemented in three clusters of schools (one middle school and its three feeder elementary schools compose a cluster). At-risk youth will be identified by either scores on the Pediatric Symptom Checklist that measures trouble with teachers, teasing others, trouble sleeping, etc., or the existing behavioral management system which identifies students based on factors such as referrals, absenteeism, falling grades or stress symptoms. At intervention schools, at-risk students will be randomly assigned to either an immediate intervention (PFA) or a waitlist control group. Data will be collected on school safety, school climate, violence-associated behavioral referrals, unexcused absenteeism, suspensions, and reports of school violence. Presentations, publications and policy briefs will be produced for both the academic and practice communities.

Rainier Beach Campus Safety Continuum: A Comprehensive Place Based Approach
George Mason University (Fairfax, VA)

\$3,834,667

There is a lack of information on what works to improve school climate and how to reduce disciplinary referrals within a framework of racial justice. This project builds on two existing local initiatives, “Rainier Beach: A Beautiful Safe Place for Youth”, a community-led approach to address youth crime and victimization, and “Rainier Beach: Beautiful!” an application of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). The overall goal of this project is to combine PBIS with school based restorative justice (RJ) (called Rainier Beach Campus Safety Continuum - RBSCS) in an effort to reduce racial disparities in school discipline and juvenile justice processing. Another goal of the study is to see if this program can change social norms and reduce rates of youth crime and increase community safety. The Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy at George Mason University will work in collaboration with the Seattle Public Schools, the Seattle Police Department and a number of community members to develop this initiative. The RBSCS will be developed over a four year period that includes a period for planning, training and implementation, stabilization and evaluation. The RBSCS will be evaluated using a quasi-experimental design which will include process evaluation, community surveys and implementation tracking. Schools in Rainier Beach that receive the intervention will be compared to schools with similar population, demographic profile, and crime rates. Results will be disseminated through peer reviewed journal articles, a final report aimed at schools administrators and teachers, and an interactive website for RBSCS.

Evaluation of a Principal Training Program to Promote Safe and Civil Schools
The Curators of the University of Missouri (Columbia, MO)

\$4,135,418

Research has demonstrated that principals play a key role in creating a safe school environment, however, no evidence based training programs exist to support principals in developing these skills. The goal of this project is to evaluate the Safe and Civil School Leadership (SCSL) plus Start on Time (START) program, a professional development program designed to help school principals foster positive school climate and safety. The SCSL and START provide principals with explicit training and resources to develop effective disciplinary practices and student supports using data. This project includes 60 principals from secondary schools in the Puget Sound Educational School District (PSESD). The PSESD includes 35 rural, suburban, and urban schools districts serving 397,000 K-12 students in Washington State. The program will be evaluated using a group randomized trial where 30 schools will implement SCSL plus START while 30 schools, used as the control schools, will do business as usual. Data will be collected over a two year period from school records and principal/teacher/student ratings of school safety, climate, student compliance, and leadership behaviors. Assessments will occur prior to the intervention and at six months, 12 months, and 18 months after intervention. Results will be summarized and widely disseminated through peer-review publications, conference presentations and a digital repository.

A Randomized Controlled Trial of Participatory Peace Circles in New York City Schools
Fund for the City of New York (New York, NY)

\$4,181,239

Given the growing body of research that points to the damaging effects of exclusionary school discipline, schools are trying to find alternatives for holding students accountable for their misbehavior. This research project evaluates Restorative Justice (RJ) practices. These practices hold students accountable for misbehavior without removing them from the learning environment. Instead of using suspensions and expulsions as a form of punishment, restorative justice programs use alternatives such as

victim/offender mediation and family conferencing with the goal of promoting healing and understanding between the victim and the offender. This project, in partnership with the New York City Department of Education, will implement this restorative justice program in a school district that has one of the highest suspension rates in New York City (NYC) as well as elevated rates of neighborhood crime and violence. Researchers will use a randomized controlled trial in middle and high schools in NYC. Schools will be assigned to one of three groups: 1) school that will implement the RJ intervention (called the peace program); 2) control school that will not implement the peace program but have general restorative practices training; or 3) matched comparison school from a nearby district that will be business as usual. Results will be disseminated in peer reviewed journals as well as practitioner-oriented formats.

Cultivating Healing by Implementing Restorative Practices for Youth (CHIRPY)
Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (Beltsville, MD)
\$4,196,537

Zero tolerance policies that include removing students from schools and referrals to juvenile justice systems disproportionately affect minority/disadvantaged students. These policies often result in severely disciplining students for minor behavior problems, impeding their academic performance and graduation rates, and potentially leads them to detention or incarceration. In contrast, restorative justice practices involve conflict resolution, addressing the effect of offenses, and remedying damages of those offenses thus opening up opportunities for healing without removing students from school. This research project will develop a Community-Academic Partnership (CAP) to implement and evaluate a large-scale restorative practice initiative for Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) middle schools. The CAP involves APS, other community entities, and academic researchers with the goal of reducing the number of students that are removed from the classroom and referred to juvenile justice systems for misbehavior. APS middle schools will be randomly assigned to implement CHIRPY and be compared to control schools. A combination of qualitative (interviews, focus groups, and document review) and quantitative (surveys and administrative data review) data will be collected and used to evaluate and track program success and outcomes. The CAP will disseminate findings to national/state conferences, district-wide reports, peer-reviewed publications and open access mediums.

A Randomized Controlled Trial of a Comprehensive, Research-Based Framework for Implementing School-Based Law Enforcement Programs
Texas State University (San Marcos, TX)
\$4,315,804

Many school districts are assigning police officers to their schools, but little is known about “what works” in terms of school-based law enforcement. There are mixed conclusions in the research literature as to how the presence of school-based law enforcement impacts student outcomes. The goal of this project is to conduct a rigorous evaluation of a school-based law enforcement program to examine how this program is related to student behavior and school discipline. This project is a collaboration between a practitioner focused research and training center, Texas School Safety Center, and two experienced outside evaluators, WestEd and Texas State University. The research project will take place on 26 campuses across six neighboring school districts in central Texas. Data will be collected over two school years. The treatment schools will be guided by a comprehensive, research-based framework for their school-based law enforcement program and the control schools will continue as normal. The framework includes training officers and staff, and using data to make program adjustments and solve problems. Student self-report and student archival data will be collected to compare treatment and control schools on outcomes including school climate (e.g., delinquency and

victimization), and school discipline. In addition to publications, guidelines for implementing school-based law enforcement programs in schools will be disseminated to practitioners.

Project SECURE: Keeping Kids Safe in San Francisco Unified School District

SRI International (Menlo Park, CA)

\$4,641,134

Community violence is particularly devastating and can result in ongoing trauma. San Francisco has experienced an increase in community violence as well increases in calls to crisis lines and child abuse and neglect cases. In an effort to enhance physical and emotional safety of elementary students in high-need schools, SRI International will partner with San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) to develop, implement, and evaluate Project SECURE. Project SECURE seeks to increase students Safety, Equity, Caring, Understanding and Resilience. Project SECURE will offer universal interventions (Second Step) and targeted interventions (Bounce Back) intended to improve students social-emotional skills, reduce bullying and traumatic stress. The project will evaluate whether or not Project SECURE is implemented correctly, whether the intervention affects student academic outcomes, behavior outcomes, and reduces disparities in school discipline policies and practices. Researchers will randomly assign 10 participating schools where half will get Second Step in the first year and the second half will be wait-listed and receive Second Step in the second year. In each of the 10 schools 4th and 5th grade students will be screened for traumatic stress and be randomly assigned to either a Bounce Back group intervention or a business as usual comparison group with an estimated 100 participants. Data will be collected on program implementation, school climate, student attendance, social/emotional skills, academic grades, behavioral/emotional assessments, and discipline. SRI will examine outcomes at the district, school, and student levels and conduct a cost/benefit analysis.

A Randomized Controlled Trial of Safe School Ambassadors in High Risk Schools in Puerto Rico

WestEd (San Francisco, CA)

\$4,744,947

Puerto Rico is experiencing high rates of school violence, including bullying between students, fighting, and sexual harassment. For example, in a 2010 survey of 766 middle school students, 20% self-reported bullying other students. The Safe School Ambassadors (SSA) program is an intervention that aims to reduce school violence and aggression by improving school climate using influential peers (Ambassadors). SSA trains 40 students in each school to identify bullying, and other mistreatment, and then to safely intervene. The student ambassadors are supported by adult mentors who troubleshoot difficult cases. Researchers will evaluate this program by including 48 high-risk schools in seven territories in Puerto Rico that are selected by the level of violence and drop-out rates in their schools. The study will include 20,000 students from grades 7 – 12. The study uses a clustered randomized experimental design where schools are randomly assigned to either the experimental group or a wait-listed control group (these schools will eventually receive the intervention). Researchers will be examining violence perpetration, victimization and social competencies. Data will be collected before the intervention starts and also during the first two years of implementation.

Shelby County School District Comprehensive Safety Initiative

Research Triangle Institute (Research Triangle Park, NC)

\$4,833,916

Currently in the American education system there is a tension between protecting students from violence in the school and having zero tolerance policies when misbehavior does occur. Schools want solutions to this tension and are looking for strategies that they can use to make schools safer without relying on suspensions/expulsions. In a partnership between Research Triangle Institute (RTI) and the

largest school district in Tennessee, Shelby County, this research project evaluates the implementation, outcomes, and cost effectiveness of three types of school safety strategies: 1) student-focused school safety programs that includes a pro-social skill building program (instead of suspensions) and gang prevention/intervention program; 2) comprehensive school safety strategies that includes a pro-social skill building program (instead of suspensions), gang prevention/intervention program, police officer presence on student routes to and from school, staff training on youth mental health first aid, and data sharing with other school districts/departments/local partners; and 3) business as usual. Schools will be randomly assigned to one of the two intervention strategies (student focused or comprehensive) or the control (treatment as usual). Quantitative data will be collected to assess change over time, and qualitative data will be collected to assess how groups differ in their experiences and perceptions of school safety. Results will be published in scholarly outlets including peer-reviewed journals and presentations at conferences. Additionally, other products will be disseminated to help schools evaluate their own programs.

Research of Effects of an Anonymous Tip Line and Multidisciplinary Response Teams in Schools across the State of Nevada

Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (Beltsville, MD)

\$4,835,367

In Nevada, there is a lack of clarity on where students can go to for help if they are in a crisis. The Nevada Department of Education (NDE) seeks to create a “no wrong door” approach for youth looking for help in a crisis or wanting to aid a peer by reporting harmful behaviors (e.g. suicidal thoughts). NDE will develop and evaluate Help2Tell, which is a safe and anonymous method for informing school staff, mental health providers, and law enforcement officials of concerning behaviors that may result in preventable tragedies (e.g., threats of violence, substance use, and suicidal thoughts). The program is designed to mobilize local teams to provide a rapid response to meet the needs of the student in distress, prevent intended acts of violence, and refer students to mental health services. This program seeks to intervene in cases of reported problem behaviors, increase students perceptions that the school is a safe and caring environment, and lead to a reduction in reports of problem behaviors (e.g., bullying, self-harm and violence). The Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) will work in collaboration with the University of Nevada, Reno and NDE to conduct an evaluation of Help2Tell services, and a cost/benefit analysis. Data will be collected monthly in reports of problem behaviors, and annually/biennially in student surveys, intensive case studies, interviews, focus groups and cost/benefit assessments. All schools in the state will participate, half of the schools will be randomly assigned in Year 1 and the other half will participate in Year 2.

Identifying and Embedding Brokers into a Multi-tiered System of Services to Reduce the Bystander Effect Leading to a Reduction in School Violence

Campbell County Board of Education Public Properties Corp. (Alexandria, KY)

\$4,866,107

Research has shown that many children and adolescents have witnessed or experienced violent victimization in the past year, and this experience has been linked to higher dropouts, poor school attendance, and poor academic achievement. Because peers are often present during the victimization that occurs, focusing on bystander actions could effect change and help real or potential victims. The purpose of this study is to evaluate a method that identifies and involves peer brokers (i.e., students who could intervene and help the victim) in a multi-tiered (i.e., tiers of universal and targeted interventions) school anti-violence model. Different aspects of the multi-tiered system of services (MTSS) model will be implemented based on the tier (or level) of need (universal, selective and intensive interventions), and each will involve peer brokers. The project will be applied to over 2,000 students

from different ages across a 4-year period. Part of the project will involve identifying key peers necessary to reduce the bystander effect, thus promoting social resiliency among the students. Campbell County School District will partner with a team from Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. Research will be conducted to determine if brokers are the key change agents in producing optimal school violence prevention outcomes. Two school districts that are similar in their demographics, size, school enrollment, and violence incidences were chosen for this study. One district will receive the violence prevention program and the other will be the control group. Self-reported and peer-reported data will be collected during the fall semester of the academic year.

CATEGORY 2: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Category 2 awards support research to better understand the potential root causes and related factors that contribute to school violence, as well as the impact and consequences of school violence.

The Consequences of School Violence: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

Development Services Group, Inc. (Bethesda, MD)

\$446,679

There is a need to understand how school violence impacts students' mental health, school success, and potential involvement in crime. The purpose of this research project is to conduct a large-scale systematic review and meta-analysis of studies that examine school violence and policy-relevant student outcomes over time. This is one of the first meta-analyses to include longitudinal relationships between school violence and student outcomes. This meta-analysis will cover research on school violence including physical aggression, bullying, teen dating violence, hate crimes, cyber aggression, and threats in an effort to synthesize research findings so that appropriate and specific policy and practice responses can be made to address school violence. Over a two year period, researchers will complete a review protocol, conduct a comprehensive search of the literature, extract relevant information to produce a database, analyze the findings and then disseminate results. Findings will be presented at national and interdisciplinary conferences to reach practitioners, researchers and policymakers. Additionally, researchers will write policy-oriented briefs, conduct webinars and publish findings in peer-reviewed academic journals.

A Comprehensive Longitudinal Study of School Violence and School-to-Prison Pipeline: Root Causes and Consequences of and Implications for Restorative Justice Approaches

RMC Research Corporation (Portland, OR)

\$499,863

Research on how neighborhood, family, school, and individual factors interact to influence the trajectory of school violence is limited. In partnership with RMC Research, the Oregon Youth Authority and Oregon Department of Education seek to understand the root causes that contribute to school violence, the responses to school violence, and the consequences of school shootings. The goals of this project are: 1) to better understand the root causes and related factors of school violence; 2) to understand the disciplinary response to school violence and the rates of suspensions/expulsions among students; 3) to understand the sequence of events that lead from a school disciplinary incident to juvenile court involvement and the factors that influence this trajectory; and 4) to understand the responses and consequences of shootings in a K-12 setting. Researchers will conduct a study using existing data from K-12 students (1,343,591 students). They will also collect data from staff from two Oregon high schools that experienced a school shooting. Analysis will be conducted using 15 years of de-identified longitudinal individual-level data, interviews with school staff, student achievement data, school data, and neighborhood data. In addition to publications, presentations and webinars, brief guides for

educators and community practitioners will be developed that outline the early warning indicators for violent behavior and protective factors that may mitigate risk for violent behavior.

Understanding the Causes of Violence Using Open Source Data

Research Foundation of CUNY John Jay College (New York, NY)

\$669,629

In order to prevent the next school shooting, we need to understand the factors that can lead to school shootings and rampage shootings. Unfortunately research on the individual, institutional, and community level factors related to school violence is hindered by lack of reliable data. The goal of this project is to remedy this problem by creating the first ever open-source database that includes all publicly known shootings that resulted in at least one injury on K-12 school grounds since 1990. The three objectives of the project are: 1) document the nature of the problem and clarify the types of shooting incidents occurring in schools; 2) provide a comprehensive understanding of the perpetrators of school shootings and test causal factors to assess if mass and non-mass shootings are comparable; and 3) compare fatal shooting incidents to events where only injuries resulted to identify intervention points that could be exploited to reduce the harm caused by shootings. Researchers will use quantitative, multivariate, and qualitative case studies to document where and when school violence occurs. They will highlight key incident and perpetrator level characteristics to help law enforcement and school administrators differentiate between the kinds of school shootings that exist with the goal of advancing policy responses that are appropriate for individuals and communities. This study will generate journal articles, monographs, and training manuals for law enforcement and school officials.

Assessing the Role of Immigration in the Linkage between School Safety, Education, and Juvenile Justice Contact

Texas A&M University (College Station, TX)

\$776,949

Research is needed to examine if strict school discipline practices are addressing school violence and ensuring school safety, or if these practices are contributing to the marginalization and derailment of the educational progress of immigrant youth. The four goals of this research project are: 1) determine if violence, safety and academic achievement are distinct at schools with a large population of immigrant students; 2) determine the effect of a strict-school wide discipline policy on student achievement, school completion, and juvenile justice contact at schools with a large population of immigrant students; 3) to determine whether the effects of individual school discipline experiences on student educational and juvenile justice outcomes differ for students enrolled in schools with a large population of immigrant students; and 4) to identify combinations of student attributes that characterize subtypes of youth at high risk of school discipline and/or juvenile justice contact and examine whether these subtypes differ for students enrolled in schools with high/low enrollments of immigrant students. Researchers will examine data from two kindergarten cohorts in the state of Texas through one year past their expected graduation (approx. 600,000 students). Results will be submitted to peer-reviewed journals, presented at research conferences and practitioner association conferences, and reports will be developed outlining key factors, and barriers, for the relationship between immigration and school safety. Additionally, there will be a symposium on immigration and school safety for Texas stakeholders.

CATEGORY 3: SHORTER TERM STUDIES ON SCHOOL SAFETY

Category 3 awards support research that can be produced within a 24-month period to inform school safety practices and policies.

Mapping Decision Points from School Based Incidents to Exclusionary Discipline, Arrest, and Referral to the Juvenile Justice System

National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (Reno, NV)

\$240,000

Zero tolerance policies have the unintended consequence of increasing the likelihood that students will be involved in the juvenile justice system. Research has provided conflicting results on whether school resource officers (SROs) prevent or increase juveniles' involvement in the justice system. The current research project seeks to understand the sequence of events and decisions that lead from a school related incident to suspension/expulsion, arrest and/or referral to the juvenile court, and determine which factors are the most predictive of specific actions. The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) will work in collaboration with the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) to collect data at three different sites (Fulton County Georgia, Clark County Nevada, and Mahoning County Ohio). The goal of this project is to provide descriptive information and insight into the processes and decision points within schools that lead to suspensions/expulsions and referral to the juvenile justice system.

School Climate, Student Discipline, and the Implementation of School Resources Officers

University of Louisville Research Foundation (Louisville, KY)

\$370,307

There is a need to understand the effect school resource officers (SROs) have on school and student outcomes. The purpose of this research is to examine the impact of SROs on school climate and student discipline and whether these effects vary across the race of the student, school context, and SRO's roles. Researchers will first look at school-level data from one school district from the 2000-01 through 2015-16 school years to examine student, parent and school staff perspectives on school climate, student discipline, and school contexts. Then researchers will analyze the data to estimate trends in school climate and student discipline before and after the implementation of SROs. Qualitative interviews will be conducted to understand school contexts and the responsibilities of SROs. Results will be submitted for publication for both researchers and practitioners, presented at conferences and will be used for training local agencies.

Reducing Exclusionary Discipline and Ensuring School Safety

The Urban Institute (Washington, DC)

\$497,491

Schools are under increasing pressure to reform their policies surrounding suspensions/expulsions, however, some worry that this may incentivize schools to under report exclusionary discipline and jeopardize school safety. In partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Urban Institute will examine trends across the state regarding school discipline policies to understand how schools are attempting to achieve reductions in out of school suspensions (OSS), and how students/parents/teachers perceive these reforms. Researchers will conduct interviews with schools administrators, school resource officers, and other school staff on student behavioral issues; conduct focus groups with teachers, students and parents; and conduct systematic observations in classrooms and common spaces. Additionally, researchers will use administrative data to examine trends in OSS rates, disparities by students' race/ethnicity, and disability status, and school violence for all public school districts before and after new legislation took place in 2014. The results of this project will provide generalizable, actionable information for policymakers and practitioners across the country who aim to reform their discipline policies without compromising school safety.

Understanding the Adoption, Function, and Consequences of School Resource Officer Use in Understudied Settings

University of Maryland, Baltimore County (Baltimore, MD)

\$623,047

To date there has been little research on the reasons why law enforcement personnel become involved with schools, what they do in schools, and the impacts they may have on schools. This research project will investigate school resource officers (SROs) within elementary schools within an affluent, high performing school district. This project is guided by four research questions: 1) why and through what process were SROs implemented? 2) What roles and activities do SROs engage in within schools? 3) What impacts do SROs have on schools and students? And 4) how do the roles and impacts of SROs differ across school contexts? Data will come from interviews with the districts' SROs, and a sample of teachers, school leaders, students and parents. Researchers will conduct full day observations of each of the SROs and have the SROs complete time logs that document their activities over a two week time period. Additionally, researchers will analyze official policy documents such as the memorandum of understanding between the law enforcement agency and the school district. Qualitative analyses will be conducted on all data collected, and results will be disseminated in the form of academic journals, conference presentations, interactive websites, and policy briefs.

The Influence of Subjective and Objective Rural School Security on Law Enforcement Engagement Models: A Mixed Methods Study

Board of Regents, University of Nebraska, University of Nebraska-Lincoln (Lincoln, NE)

\$645,952

There is a general lack of information on the role of law enforcement in schools across the country. In rural areas, although schools engage with law enforcement, they often do not label this engagement as a part of a formal school resource officer (SRO) model. The University of Nebraska Public Policy Center will collaborate with the Nebraska Department of Education to examine how perceptions and organization of school safety and security are associated with the type of law enforcement engagement in rural schools. This project has three main goals: 1) understand how law enforcement is engaging with rural schools; 2) establish the reliability of school perceptions of safety and security; and 3) examine how safety and security preparedness are associated with law enforcement engagement in schools. A mixed methods research design will be used to collect, analyze and interpret quantitative and qualitative data on the individual, school, and community levels. Data will be collected in the form of a self-assessment using the state's safety and security standards rubric from 151 rural schools, and an online survey from 2,265 rural school personnel and 755 law enforcement representatives on the perceptions and protocols guiding their relationship. Additionally existing data on crime statistics, school incidents, census information, school quality data, and student survey data from the Nebraska Risk and Protective Factors Student Survey will be analyzed. Results will be published in journal articles and be presented at conferences. Also, a policy brief will developed to reach a broader audience.

School Emergency Preparedness: Status Assessment at the State, District, and School Levels

Research Triangle Institute (Research Triangle Park, NC)

\$682,794

Shootings, weapon-related incidents, and terroristic threats are a reality in today's educational system. Although the U.S. Department of Education provides recommendations and guidance for such incidents, it is not well understood what policies schools and districts have in place for these violent emergencies. RTI International seeks to understand what schools and districts are doing to prepare for violent emergencies. Researchers will conduct their analysis in four phases. In phase one, they will conduct an analysis of the state Department of Education websites to identify mandates, policy guidelines, and

recommendations related to violent emergencies. In phase two, they will conduct a national web survey of districts to better understand how prepared they are for violent emergencies. In phase three, they will conduct a content analysis of the district plans and procedures for violent emergencies. In phase four they will conduct school-level phone interviews with personnel from a sample of schools (from phase two), on school-level violent emergency plans, policies and procedures. Results will contribute to the knowledge regarding emergency preparedness for violent events in schools. This project will yield rich quantitative and qualitative datasets that will be archived with the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data.

An Investigation of School Resource and Safety Programs Policy and Practice in Virginia
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Blacksburg, VA)

\$689,416

Research has shown that suspensions and expulsions increase the likelihood of referrals to the juvenile justice system. This pathway from school-based misbehavior to the juvenile justice system is often labeled the school-to-prison pipeline. The goal of this project is to conduct a systematic analysis of existing data in Virginia in order to explore how the school to prison pipeline is activated and conduct qualitative research to explore in-depth case studies of how the pipeline has been avoided. In partnership with the Virginia Departments of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), Juvenile Justice (DJJ), and Education (DOE), Virginia Tech will analyze data on statewide threat assessments; secondary-school climate; School Safety Audits; Discipline, Crime and Violence; and juvenile court referrals. In addition to quantitative data, researchers will conduct interviews, case studies, and document analysis to better understand how successful schools have avoided facilitating entry into the school to prison pipeline. The results from this project will contribute to the knowledge base on better alternatives for supporting students and managing problematic behavior in schools. Results will disseminated through webinars, presentations and publications.

CATEGORY 4: DEVELOPING AND EVALUATING A COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL SAFETY FRAMEWORK

Category 4 awards support will support studies to understand the localized and interrelated factors that influence school safety and school violence using a longitudinal perspective.

Nashville Longitudinal Study of Youth Safety and Wellbeing
Vanderbilt University (Nashville, TN)

\$4,916,705

Studies examining youth violence and school safety have indicated a complex set of factors that increase risk of or protect children from poor outcomes. However, knowledge related to how these factors interact is limited because of the lack of multi-level, longitudinal data. Vanderbilt University and Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) will work together to develop a four cohort, multi-level longitudinal study of youth safety and wellbeing. Over the course of four years, researchers will collect data using a longitudinal survey and administrative data on achievement, disciplinary referrals and sanctions, social emotional competencies, school climate, community violence exposure, and attitudes toward violence for more than 15,000 students (grades 1-12) in 144 schools. Additionally, researchers will collect data on the school environment (e.g., teacher/school staff training, resources, tenure, climate, parent engagement) and neighborhood context (e.g., neighborhood economic structure, assets/resources, crime, housing, mobility). An interdisciplinary team of people will use this data to advance research in this area and support school and community initiatives related to understanding the role of neighborhood exposure to violence, the role of school climate and access to resources on

neighborhood and school risk factors, the factors that affect the racial/ethnic disparities in discipline referrals and exclusionary discipline, and finally the factors that influence students social/emotional competence.

Examining the School and Community Contexts that Contribute to the Root Causes and Prevention of School Violence in Rural, Urban, and Large County School Districts in California

American Institutes for Research (Washington, DC)

\$4,964,124

Schools are looking for specific strategies that they can use to help make their schools safer. Working with Virginia Tech, and Public Counsel, American Institutes for Research will examine school-based risk and protective factors and readiness for school safety reforms among students, parents, schools and communities in three rural, urban and large county school districts in California. There are two overarching research goals: 1) examining how student safety and educational outcomes change as the ecology of risk and protective factors in the school and community context change; and 2) determine the extent to which school, staff and community readiness reduce these risks, and how protective factors are associated with improved school safety and student outcomes. Over the course of four years longitudinal survey data will be collected from students, staff and parents on school safety risk and readiness. Three years of pre-study school-level, crime and community data will be collected from each site. Researchers will collect qualitative data from public deliberation meetings of youth, families and community stakeholders to contextualize results, share study data, and engage the community as a key stakeholder in school violence prevention.