



National Institute of Justice

# **The Comprehensive School Safety Initiative: Awards Made in Fiscal Year 2017**

February 2018

**Comprehensive School Safety Initiative  
Fiscal Year 2017 Funded Project List**

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
<b>Category 1. Developing Novel and Innovative School Safety Programs, Practices, and Strategies</b>	
A Developmental Study of the Keeping Kids in School Initiative	\$999,333
Enhancing School Resource Officers Effectiveness through Online Professional and Job Embedded Coaching	\$990,212
<b>Category 2. Demonstration, Evaluation, and Validation Tests for School Safety</b>	
PBIS in Challenging Contexts: Evaluating a Replicable Implementation Approach in Philadelphia	\$2,999,912
A Randomized Evaluation of a Comprehensive, Whole-School Intervention	\$2,993,500
Evaluating Promising School, Staff, and Resource-Officer Approaches for Reducing Harsh Discipline, Suspensions and Arrests	\$2,977,876
Increasing Safety in High Need: An Evaluation of Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Schools	\$2,975,446
Impact Evaluation of Complementarities between PBIS and Restorative Justice in Montgomery County Public Schools	\$2,970,725
Examining the Efficacy of Restorative Circles on School Safety and Student Outcomes in Boston Public Schools	\$2,737,815
<b>Category 3. Expanding the Use of Effective Interventions Through Scaling-Up</b>	
Taking Effective School Violence Prevention to Scale	\$6,867,878
Scaling-up School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) Framework in Rural Settings through the Idaho Rural Implementation Model (I-RIM)	\$5,691,859
<b>Category 4. Research on School Safety</b>	
Investigating the Effectiveness of the School Security Climate on Student Connectedness and School Performance	\$1,000,000
Improvement of School Climate Assessment in Virginia Secondary Schools	\$999,802
Comprehension of Emergency Operations Protocols: Do Students and Staff Know What To Do During a Violent Emergency?	\$932,662
A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Interventions to Decrease Cyberbullying Perpetration and Victimization	\$498,322
Making Schools Safer and/or Creating a Pipeline to Prison: A Study of North Carolina Schools	\$498,265
A Longitudinal Study of Teacher Victimization at Schools: Prevalence, Predictors, and Negative Consequences	\$364,469
<b>Category 5. Understanding School Safety in Tribal Schools</b>	
Understanding School Climate for American Indian Youth: A CBPR Case-Study Approach	\$811,125
<b>Research, Development, and Evaluation of Technologies to Improve School Safety</b>	
Assessment of National and State Tip Line Technology as a Strategy for Identifying Threats to School Safety	\$1,813,631
Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Say Something Anonymous Reporting System to Improve School Safety	\$999,679
Identifying Cost-Effective Security Barrier Technologies for K-12 Schools: An Interdisciplinary Evaluation	\$769,890
<b>Understanding the Impacts of Policing Strategies and Practices (Beyond Crime Reduction)</b>	
Evaluating Impacts of the Philadelphia Police School Diversion Program: An Alternative to Arrest Policing Strategy	\$1,281,046
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$42,173,447</b>

## **CATEGORY 1: DEVELOPING NOVEL AND INNOVATIVE SCHOOL SAFETY PROGRAMS, PRACTICES, AND STRATEGIES**

Category 1 awards provide scholars with an opportunity to develop new, innovative, and evidence-based programs, practices, or strategies that have not yet undergone evaluation.

### ***A Developmental Study of the Keeping Kids in School Initiative***

**WestEd**

**\$999,333**

Students who are chronically truant are at higher risk of dropout, poor job prospects, early parenthood, substance abuse, and offending. Schools with high levels of absenteeism are more likely to have poor school climate, poor school safety, unsupportive staff and administration, and inadequate attendance and behavior policies. WestEd and the Sonoma County (Calif.) Probation Department will study an innovative approach to improve school climate and safety and reduce truancy among risky student populations. The Keeping Kids in School (KKIS) initiative is a modified wraparound program designed to provide outreach and intensive case management services to students at moderate and high risk for chronic absenteeism within a multi-tiered behavioral supports framework. Participating schools will be selected from two mid-size school districts in Sonoma County. The evaluation will include a program development period, and a quasi-experimental study, with 10 schools that receive the enhanced KKIS program and 10 schools that receive the original KKIS program. The enhanced KKIS program is expected to improve school climate and safety, re-engage risky student populations, and reduce the student-level factors that increase the likelihood of justice system contact.

### ***Enhancing School Resource Officers Effectiveness through Online Professional and Job Embedded Coaching***

**University of Florida – Gainesville**

**\$990,212**

Like many school districts in the U.S., Miami-Dade County Public Schools have faced numerous challenges related to providing a safe and productive school environment for students. One specific challenge is providing effective training for adults who are responsible for a safe school environment. In partnership with the Miami Dade schools police department and school district, the University of Florida will conduct an evaluation of an innovative School Resource Officers (SRO) professional development platform. The system will target four areas found to be important for the SRO's success, but they are rarely included in current training: (1) social/emotional learning, (2) trauma-informed care, (3) cultural competence, and (4) restorative practices/problem-solving. SRO supervisors will receive coaching training so they will have the skills to help SROs effectively bridge the concepts learned to their day-to-day work. The experimental time-series evaluation will include a total of 140 SROs: 70 SROs who are randomly assigned to participate in the development program (Cohort 1) and 70 SROs who will be a part of the wait-listed control group and (Cohort 2). Data will be collected at three time points: prior to the training, immediately after the training, and 6 months after the training. The training is expected to improve knowledge of child development, classroom management, child problem behaviors, and behavior management strategies. The outcomes of this study include

school discipline and offense data, student self-reported measures of violence perpetration and victimization, peer support, and school engagement.

## **CATEGORY 2: DEMONSTRATION, EVALUATION, AND VALIDATION TESTS FOR SCHOOL SAFETY**

Category 2 awards support demonstrations and evaluations of programs, practices, policies, and strategies designed to enhance school and student safety.

### ***PBIS in Challenging Contexts: Evaluating a Replicable Implementation Approach in Philadelphia***

**University of Pennsylvania**

**\$2,999,912**

The School District of Philadelphia (SDP) has prioritized improving school climate in response to alarming local and national trends in out-of-school suspension. Part of that effort included Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), a recognized best practice in improving school climate and safety. However, the schools in Philadelphia that are implementing PBIS have encountered challenges related to implementation. This project would examine a newly developed approach, which developers call the Augmented, Deepened, and Scaffolded approach, to implementing Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in challenging school contexts. This approach would augment School-Wide PBIS with training on trauma-informed care, deepen the whole-school and classroom levels of PBIS, and gradually build the capacity for sustainable PBIS. The research team includes the Consortium for Policy Research Education (CPRE), the SDP, the Devereux Center for Effective Schools, North Carolina State University, the University of South Florida, and Drexel University. CPRE's independent evaluation will integrate several rigorous studies to ensure validity and test the hypothesis that this approach to implementation yields improvements in school climate and a range of outcomes. This project will include a randomized controlled trial (Year 1), a rigorous matched-comparison-group quasi-experimental study (Years 2 & 3), a comparative case study (Years 2 & 3), and a comprehensive cost study (Years 1, 2, 3).

### ***A Randomized Evaluation of a Comprehensive, Whole-School Intervention***

**Research Triangle Institute (RTI)**

**\$2,993,500**

Increased suspensions, expulsions, and school-based arrests have disproportionately affected children of color, especially African American males. Currently schools, especially high schools, lack evidence-based interventions to address discipline disparities, though literature suggests that the complex problem of disproportionality requires a multifaceted approach. RTI International will collaborate with Charlotte-Mecklenburg (N.C.) Schools to conduct a three-year rigorous evaluation of the whole-school Comprehensive Culturally Responsive Behavior Intervention (CCRBI) designed to reduce disparities in discipline and improve school safety. Using a randomized controlled design, the CCRBI will be implemented in eight high schools and compared to eight control high schools, with combined enrollment totaling about 33,000 students. The CCRBI has three components: (1) Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

(PBIS), (2) Restorative Practices, and (3) Culturally Responsive Practices, which includes implicit bias training, increasing equity and an environmental fit for culturally diverse students. A fidelity assessment will be conducted and implicit biases will be assessed among staff. Outcomes will include data on disproportionality and overall school discipline referrals, suspensions, expulsions, and school-based arrests, attendance, and dropouts. Annual surveys of students and staff will measure perceived school safety, school climate, and self-efficacy.

***Evaluating Promising School, Staff, and Resource-Officer Approaches for Reducing Harsh Discipline, Suspensions and Arrests***

**University of Maryland, Baltimore**

**\$2,977,876**

Schools have chosen to pursue targeted approaches for lowering student suspension rates. However, it is difficult for schools to determine what strategies for misconduct to use in lieu of exclusionary discipline. This project seeks to provide an independent evaluation of four promising but under-researched programs for reducing exclusionary discipline and improving the performance of School Resource Officers (SROs): the School-Based Diversion Initiative, a graduated sanctions and restorative practice approach with a high degree of SRO involvement; the Adolescent Mental Health Training for SROs, a course designed to improve SRO skills for interacting with students who have mental health issues; the Life Space Crisis Intervention, a conflict-resolution strategy that teachers and SROs use to de-escalate student behavioral problems; and Support for Students Experiencing Trauma, a treatment for students whose misconduct is related to trauma. The project will occur district-wide in 27 public schools in Cecil County, Maryland over the course of three school years. The project uses a delayed treatment design to permit the comparative analysis of components; the benefit, if any, of providing multiple components over single components; and whether the order of component implementation matters. Annual individual-level student self-report (e.g., school climate) and records data (e.g., demographics, disciplinary incidents, suspensions), as well as individual-level staff and SRO data, will be used to determine change over time and explore subgroup differences.

***Increasing Safety in High Need: An Evaluation of Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Schools***

**Cornell University**

**\$2,975,446**

Some students are at high risk for exposure to trauma and other adverse childhood experiences. These exposures often impair the development of self-regulation and executive function, which manifest in the classroom as inattention, impulsivity, defiance, and conflicts with peers and adults. Teachers need skills and strategies that help them interact with students in ways that promote self-regulation of emotions and behavior. These skills are not often available through standard teacher training programs or current approaches to school safety. In collaboration with the Syracuse City School District (SCSD), Cornell University will evaluate the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Schools (TCI-S) program. TCI-S is an under-evaluated, trauma-informed program that provides school staff with safe, effective, and trauma-sensitive skills to manage the emotional and behavioral challenges they encounter in their daily interactions with students, such as anticipating and de-escalating disruptive behavior. A waitlist

randomized controlled trial will be conducted in 19 elementary and K-8 SCSD schools along with a longitudinal qualitative interview study of school staff. SCSD will provide administrative data on disciplinary infractions. Student and staff surveys will provide information about the use of TCI-S consistent practices as well as perceptions of school safety and climate. Qualitative interviews of school staff will explore the process of TCI-S implementation and mechanisms of change.

***Impact Evaluation of Complementarities between PBIS and Restorative Justice in Montgomery County Public Schools***

**RAND Corporation**

**\$2,970,725**

As educators have moved away from exclusion-based disciplinary methods, school districts have grappled with how to create safe schools and how to ensure that necessary discipline is applied transparently, fairly, and without bias. Two popular approaches to creating safe and productive school environments include School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies (SW-PBIS) and restorative justice (RJ) practices. These programs are increasingly being used together, and there are theoretical reasons to believe that the combination of the two are more effective than either program alone. However, only a few studies have evaluated the effectiveness of SW-PBIS+RJ on school climate and safety. In this project, the Montgomery County Public Schools and the RAND Corporation have joined together to rigorously test whether the combination of the two programs is more effective than each program alone. Using multiple randomized controlled trials including up to 21 middle schools and up to 48 elementary schools, the proposed project will determine the impact of each program separately and in combination on school climate, safety, attendance, achievement, and disciplinary expulsions. Analyses will also unpack important questions, such as the differential effects from launching the programs sequentially versus concurrently, and the differences in school staff's initial enthusiasm for the programs. Multiple methods will be used to gather data on implementation and outcomes, including student and school staff surveys, staff logs of program use, observations, interviews, focus groups, and school administrative data.

***Examining the Efficacy of Restorative Circles on School Safety and Student Outcomes in Boston Public Schools***

**American Institutes for Research**

**\$2,737,815**

Violence in schools can affect school climate and school culture in ways that shape learning experiences in schools. It creates challenges for classroom management and adult-student relationships and interferes with the educational environment. One approach to creating real change in both school safety and the use of exclusionary discipline practices is to change the culture of the school by using circles and restorative practices to transform student-teacher relationships, peer relationships, and staff culture. American Institutes for Research, in partnership with Boston Public Schools and the Suffolk University Center for Restorative Justice (CRJ), will examine the effectiveness of the Circle Forward, a whole-school restorative practices intervention on school safety and student outcomes in high-risk, high-need communities in Boston. These schools serve low-income families, are located in high-crime neighborhoods,

have high rates of suspension, are underperforming, and have persistently low rates of graduation. The intervention will be delivered over a three-year period in 30 middle and high schools (grades 6-12) using a cluster randomized controlled trial design. Data will be collected on the context within each school, implementation fidelity, and the intervention's influence on student and teacher perceptions of school climate, student personal and interpersonal behavior, disciplinary incidents, arrests, and student achievement. A resource cost model method will be used to generate an estimate of program costs for all implementation activities (e.g., training and coaching by CRJ, materials and supplies).

### **CATEGORY 3: EXPANDING THE USE OF EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS THROUGH SCALING-UP**

Category 3 awards expand and evaluate the implementation of interventions that have demonstrated positive results and have a strong evidence base.

#### ***Taking Effective School Violence Prevention to Scale***

**RAND Corporation**

**\$6,867,878**

Prevention strategies and programs should follow a three-stage process: (1) development and testing in an *efficacy trial* or pilot, (2) *effectiveness trials* producing consistent effects across multiple trials in appropriate settings, and (3) a *dissemination trail/scaling-up* that may include different models of training and technical assistance to ensure that replications are implemented with fidelity so they continue to produce desired results. The Good Behavior Game (GBG), a classroom behavior management approach emphasizing positive reinforcement, has been rigorously tested in multiple settings and countries, with different populations, and even across multiple generations. There is ample evidence that it is ready to be scaled up, but research on how this can be done effectively and efficiently without weakening program outcomes is limited. RAND, along with our partners at the American Institutes for Research and the Nebraska Department of Education, will study how practitioners can most effectively and efficiently scale up GBG. A randomized controlled experiment will be conducted in 30 schools in Nebraska to test implementation fidelity. Further, data will be collected from a nationally representative survey of elementary school teachers to understand the national landscape of schools' readiness for program implementation, which will inform our recommendations about which forms of training and technical assistance are the most appropriate for our country's schools.

#### ***Scaling-up School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) Framework in Rural Settings through the Idaho Rural Implementation Model (I-RIM)***

**Boise State University**

**\$5,691,859**

Although more than half of school districts across the country are rural, little is known about school climate and safety in rural schools, and there are well-known challenges to implementation of programming in rural settings. This project will examine the scale-up of the evidence-based School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (SW-PBIS) approach,

specifically focusing on rural schools in Idaho. The Idaho Rural Implementation Model (I-RIM) is an already-developed approach, designed to help support the scale-up of SW-PBIS, via improving implementation in rural schools. The I-RIM approach has been designed specifically to address these challenges through strategies such as capacity-building, regional coordination, online learning platforms and community supports, and technical assistance support that is tailored to the needs of rural schools and districts. In this project, we will begin by finalizing the I-RIM materials, with testing and revision based on the results of a pilot study in three districts (Year 1). We will then conduct a randomized controlled trial in 40 schools: 20 schools will be randomly assigned to the I-RIM condition, and 20 will receive SW-PBIS training and supports as usual. Over two years (during project Years 2-4), we will examine the implementation and outcomes of this program, including extensive process and outcome measures. Outcomes will include school and staff implementation measures. Student-level outcomes will include behavior, perceived climate and safety, social-emotional outcomes, and academic achievement on the standardized state test.

#### **Category 4: RESEARCH ON SCHOOL SAFETY**

Category 4 awards support research with implications for school safety practice and policy with project periods that are two to three years.

##### ***Investigating the Effectiveness of the School Security Climate on Student Connectedness and School Performance***

**Yeshiva University**

**\$1,000,000**

Schools today use a number of safety policies and practices to maintain and improve safety for students and school personnel with the objective of promoting a nurturing educational environment conducive to learning and development. Current school safety research rarely considers the school security climate (i.e., authoritarian, hybrid, or educational/therapeutic). The purpose of this study is to investigate different school security climates to identify effective climates and examine student growth within these climates. This multi-year project attempts to meet two goals: (1) identify the most effective types of school security climates, and (2) determine how the school security climate affects individual students. The study will take place with a cohort of 9th grade students ( $n = 5,000$ ) within all public high schools ( $n = 16$ ) in the Newark Public School District in Newark, N.J. A three-phase longitudinal, quasi-experimental design will be conducted, which will examine and characterize different types of school security climates (Phase 1). A cohort of ninth-grade students will be followed over the course of two years. Students will be matched using demographic information before they are exposed to their school's security climate to identify and compare student development in schools with different types of security climates (Phases 2 and 3).



***Improvement of School Climate Assessment in Virginia Secondary Schools***  
**Rector and Visitors of the University of Virginia**  
**\$999,802**

An authoritative school climate characterized by both high student support and high expectations is associated with higher student engagement, less student aggression toward peers and teachers, lower risk behavior, and higher academic achievement. In partnership with the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services and Virginia secondary schools, this project will be conducted in 328 public middle schools and 314 public high schools to help school communities understand and make better use of school climate data so that it can be incorporated into school improvement and safety planning. In Phase 1, we will conduct a mixed-methods assessment of how administrators, students, parents, teachers, school resource officers (SROs), and other school staff understand and make use of school climate data. In Phase 2, we will incorporate findings from Phase 1 and develop a new online system with improved scoring procedures and report format. In Phase 3, we will investigate a series of key longitudinal research questions using a school climate database containing four rounds of surveys per school. Outcomes will include how school climate improvements are linked to reduced racial/ethnic disparities in student outcomes (especially suspension rates and dropout rates), how the SRO's role in the school is associated with school safety, and student outcomes as perceived by administrators, teachers, support staff, and students.

***Comprehension of Emergency Operations Protocols: Do Students and Staff Know What to Do During a Violent Emergency?***  
**Research Triangle Institute (RTI)**  
**\$932,662**

Although there has been increasing national attention on the prevalence and quality of school emergency operations plans (EOPs) for responding to violent attacks (e.g., shootings), less is known about comprehension of EOPs among students and staff or whether they act according to protocols when violent emergencies occur. This study will employ within-school surveys, interviews, and focus groups with students, staff, district officials, and first responders to examine comprehension of EOPs, identify effective modes of EOP communication, understand lessons learned from recent drills or emergencies, and identify school- and individual-level correlates of EOP comprehension. Surveys will be conducted in 10 U.S. middle and high schools with a random sample of students and all staff members within each school. In Phase I, we will conduct EOP evaluations for 10 schools. In Phase II, we will administer surveys to students and staff to assess their understanding of EOP protocols. In Phase III, we will lead focus groups with students, staff, and first responders to understand the nuances and challenges of EOP planning. In-depth interviews will be conducted with staff members and district officials to understand lessons learned from recent drills or emergencies and how district mandates influence emergency preparedness in schools. In Phase IV, we will analyze results and develop research-informed recommendations for assessing, evaluating, and improving EOP comprehension within schools.

***A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Interventions to Decrease Cyberbullying Perpetration and Victimization***

**Development Services Group, Inc.**

**\$498,322**

Cyberbullying perpetration and victimization is a pervasive and persistent school safety problem. It has the potential to present significant and lasting social, adjustment, and academic problems for perpetrators and victims. To help students reach their potential, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers have attempted to reduce cyberbullying through school-based interventions, but programs that target cyberbullying have shown varying effects. Recent meta-analyses have failed to synthesize all available literature or compare programming characteristics to determine best practices to reduce cyberbullying. The purpose of this study is to conduct a large-scale systematic review and meta-analysis of studies that measure the impacts of school violence, bullying, and targeted cyberbullying prevention programming on cyberbullying perpetration and victimization outcomes, school performance indicators, and in-person bullying perpetration and victimization. We will use comprehensive literature searches, thorough coding practices, and state-of-the-art meta-analysis techniques. Findings will be presented at multiple national and interdisciplinary conferences that engage academic researchers, policymakers, and practitioners. In addition, we will develop a website, write policymaker-oriented briefs, conduct a webinar designed to engage practitioners, and publish the findings in peer-reviewed academic journals. Finally, in association with our technical working group, we will develop a rubric to identify promising or ineffective programs and program characteristics that policymakers can use to determine funding priorities. The results of this study will provide clear, meaningful, and actionable suggestions that have the potential to create pervasive change for students, school systems, and the individuals dedicated to improving school safety.

***Making Schools Safer and/or Creating a Pipeline to Prison: A Study of North Carolina Schools***

**Research Foundation of State University of New York – University at Albany**

**\$498,265**

There is a growing awareness that some school disciplinary policies might unintentionally build a "school to prison" pipeline for students who misbehave in school. The need to reduce violence while not irreparably harming students creates a tension that is not well understood by current research. This project seeks to advance the research in this area by combining the efforts of a senior criminologist with expertise in sentencing and a promising young education policy scholar who has a substantive understanding of the North Carolina public school system. This project will link extensive administrative data from the North Carolina public school system with publicly available data from the North Carolina adult criminal justice system to examine the school disciplinary histories of young inmates, the role that schools play in driving criminal justice involvement, and whether school disciplinary policies affect students' behavior and the likelihood of future incarceration. The primary objective of this project is to document the short- and long-term implications of school disciplinary systems.

***A Longitudinal Study of Teacher Victimization at Schools: Prevalence, Predictors, and Negative Consequences***

**\$364,469**

**University of Texas San Antonio**

Limited academic or school administrative attention has been given to violence against teachers and its negative consequences, despite early findings that violence against teachers by students is common within school systems and has detrimental negative consequences on victimized teachers. This longitudinal study will build upon an ongoing longitudinal study to examine teacher victimization, using a sample of 1,628 teachers from 130 middle and high schools in San Antonio, Texas. The extension of the research project will replicate the key parts of the original questionnaires in collecting information on seven different types of teacher victimization, characteristics of incidents, school responses to teacher victimization, and negative consequences among victimized teachers. This extension will also allow us to investigate the prevalence of repeat teacher victimization and risk factors for each of seven different types of repeat victimization, and these findings will further inform policymakers and school administrators in developing and implementing comprehensive intervention and counselling programs, particularly those aimed specifically at repeatedly victimized teachers. Additionally, we will gain valuable information in understanding how school administrations respond to teacher victimization: whether any substantial differences between schools exist in their handling of teacher victimization, and whether victimized teachers are satisfied or dissatisfied with the outcome due to identifiable elements of the administrative intervention, particularly within the context of procedural justice.

**Category 5: UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL SAFETY IN TRIBAL SCHOOLS**

Category 5 supports funding to assess school safety issues as they affect American Indian/Alaska Native students and schools.

***Understanding School Climate for American Indian Youth: A CBPR Case-Study Approach***

**Child Trends Incorporated**

**\$811,125**

Schools must be safe places where youth can grow, learn, connect, and thrive — learning the lessons that will help them transition to successful adults. However, there is evidence that some groups of students — including American Indian and Alaska Native students — are less likely to experience schools as safe and supportive learning environments and are more likely to have negative academic, social, and health outcomes. Child Trends and the Center for Native American Youth, in partnership with the Gila River Indian Community and Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, propose to conduct a three-year, rigorous community-based participatory research program in the greater Phoenix area, a community with large populations of American Indian and Hispanic youth. The goal of this study is to address two critical gaps in the field: (1) understanding how American Indian students perceive the climates and safety of their schools and the factors that contribute to such perceptions; and (2) examining how such perceptions compare with other youth of color's experiences. To achieve

this goal we will conduct semi-structured focus groups and interviews and analyze the administrative data. All aspects of this project will be conducted using a community-based participatory research approach to ensure the process and ultimate recommendations are culturally relevant.

## **RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND EVALUATION OF TECHNOLOGIES TO IMPROVE SCHOOL SAFETY**

This category supports funding for projects that (1) demonstrate and evaluate existing technologies or (2) develop, demonstrate, and evaluate innovative technologies that can improve the safety of schools and students across the nation.

### ***Assessment of National and State Tip Line Technology as a Strategy for Identifying Threats to School Safety***

**Research Triangle Institute (RTI)**

**\$1,813,631**

Many schools and districts have adopted various strategies for preventing and responding to crime, including adding different technologies to help enhance school safety. Tip lines, designed to allow for a safe, confidential way to report information about threats, have been identified as a promising technological approach. They are relatively low cost, collect information directly from students, and can handle multiple problems relevant to school safety and student well-being. Yet little is known about how widely they are used, the nature of tip lines in place, models for effectively responding to tips, their impact on student disciplinary and safety outcomes, and their cost-effectiveness. To strengthen our knowledge and create practical solutions, RTI will partner with the Oregon State Police and the Oregon School Safety Tip Line Program, a recently launched statewide program. The purpose of this study is to conduct a comprehensive, multidisciplinary assessment of tip line technology as a potential real-world solution that could have a substantial impact on public safety. The study will include (1) a nationally representative, web-based survey of middle and high school administrators about the prevalence and use of tip lines; (2) a national evaluation of the association between tip lines and student discipline and safety outcomes using publicly available data from the Department of Education; and (3) a statewide case study that will analyze extensive tip line data already maintained by the state of Oregon to learn more about tip line implementation, outputs, and costs from a state at the forefront of tip line implementation. Final products will include toolkits for practitioners, reports on tip lines, and scholarly journal articles.

### ***Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Say Something Anonymous Reporting System to Improve School Safety***

**Regents of the University of Michigan**

**\$999,679**

Anonymous tip line technologies can be a cost-effective approach to improve school safety by providing secure multi-modal reporting systems and enabling a coordinated response between schools, law enforcement, and crisis responders. However, school and youth engagement are

critical to ensuring widespread technology adoption and use. The Say Something Anonymous Reporting System (SS-ARS), developed and implemented by the Sandy Hook Promise Foundation, trains youth, parents, and schools to recognize warning signs in writing, speaking, or web content that could lead to harmful behaviors and safely report potential threats. It has potential to improve school safety but lacks rigorous evaluation. The University of Michigan will partner with Miami-Dade County Schools to evaluate the effectiveness of SS-ARS in improving the recognition of mental duress and violence and its effectiveness in preventing future violent, criminal, and other risk behaviors among youth. The project will include a cluster randomized control trial using 30 middle or high schools, and it will examine changes in violence in school communities (e.g., fights, bullying) and in students' criminal justice involvement, identify key factors associated with program fidelity, and perform a cost/effectiveness analysis. Pre- and post-data will be collected from students, teachers, and administrators in both the intervention and the control schools, and participants will be followed longitudinally for 18 months.

***Identifying Cost-Effective Security Barrier Technologies for K-12 Schools: An Interdisciplinary Evaluation***

**Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Inc.**

**\$769,890**

In 2014, following the Sandy Hook elementary school shooting, the School Safety Infrastructure Council issued a report that recommended schools use an emergency response time analysis approach when designing a physical security system. Emergency response time analysis examines the time it takes law enforcement to arrive at a school during an emergency, and then uses that information to select the appropriate physical security design to delay an attacker's access to classrooms. Although this report recommended schools use emergency response time analysis, it did not provide a framework for selecting the appropriate physical security technologies to sufficiently delay an attacker long enough for law enforcement to arrive. Researchers from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University will collaborate to gather data regarding the delay times of various security barrier technologies to help facilitate the use of emergency response time analysis to design physical security in schools. The research will consist of four parts: (1) surveying student and staff perceptions of security, (2) physically touring schools to identify which security technologies are in use, (3) comparing student and staff perceptions of security with those of security experts, and (4) penetration testing of commonly used security barriers. The ultimate goal of this research is to create a guidebook that school administrators, law enforcement, and security practitioners can use when designing or upgrading security measures in schools.

**UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACTS OF POLICING STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES (BEYOND CRIME REDUCTION)**

The application for the project below was funded through CSSI but was submitted to a different NIJ solicitation with the title above. Awards under this solicitation involve research and/or evaluation projects to examine the impacts of policing strategies and practices using outcome

measures that consider crime reduction as well as other possible positive and negative impacts on individuals, neighborhoods, communities, and the policing organizations.

***Evaluating Impacts of the Philadelphia Police School Diversion Program: An Alternative to Arrest Policing Strategy***

**Drexel University**

**\$1,281,046**

Throughout the past two decades, school districts have added and expanded school police officer programs in an attempt to improve school safety. Some research suggests that the increases in school police officers have increased public perceptions of schools as dangerous places and have increased opportunities for youth to come into contact with the justice system. In response to this research, many have called for alternatives to school-based arrests. In order to provide alternatives and keep students from becoming involved with the justice system, in 2014, the Philadelphia Police Department developed and implemented a pre-arrest diversion program for all schools. Initial evaluation results are promising, suggesting that the program has substantially reduced the number of school-based arrests across the city. However, before replicating this program, it is important to first evaluate the long-term impacts of this program on youth, school communities, and school police officers. Drexel University will collaborate with the Philadelphia Police Department, the School District of Philadelphia, and the Philadelphia Department of Human Services to conduct an evaluation of the long-term effects of the Diversion Program. Final products will include practitioner-friendly reports, research briefs, and scholarly publications.