

**U.S. Department of Justice**  
Office of Justice Programs  
*National Institute of Justice*



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# **The Comprehensive School Safety Initiative: FY 2017 Report to Congress**

**May 2018**

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## **Introduction**

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (Pub. L. 114-113) provided \$75 million for the Comprehensive School Safety Initiative (CSSI, or the Initiative) and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Pub. L. 115-31) provided \$50 million for CSSI. Senate Report 114-57 and Senate Report 114-239<sup>1</sup> instruct the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) to provide a report on the continued development of a strategy and model for comprehensive school safety. This report satisfies the reporting requirement for both FY 2016 and FY 2017.

The Initiative, administered by NIJ, was launched in FY 2014. NIJ carries out this important initiative in collaboration and through consultation with subject matter experts from multiple relevant disciplines, including other executive branch agencies and Congress. NIJ has produced a report to Congress on CSSI in each fiscal year since its inception.

CSSI is designed to improve the safety of schools and students nationwide by developing, supporting, and rigorously evaluating school safety programs, practices, and strategies. An important part of the initiative is the partnerships between school professionals and researchers to develop and test approaches that address the real-world safety needs and priorities of America's schools and students. This research-focused, practically-oriented approach is intended to produce knowledge with wide utility and applicability beyond the specific schools that are directly involved in the CSSI.

This report describes the goals, guiding principles, activities, and accomplishments for CSSI, and reports on grants awarded in FY 2016 and FY 2017.

## **Goals**

- Improve the safety of schools and students nationwide by developing, supporting, and rigorously evaluating school safety programs, practices, and strategies.
- Develop and test a comprehensive school safety model or framework for K-12 schools that has broad practical applicability and is based on research evidence.
- Increase scientific knowledge about the incidence and root causes of school violence and other threats to school safety.

## **Guiding Principles**

- Support school safety activities with a commitment to generating knowledge and research findings relevant to the priorities of a wide range of schools and school districts.

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<sup>1</sup> S. Rpt. 114-239 is the Senate Appropriations committee report accompanying the fiscal year 2017 Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, S. 2837.

- Emphasize and demonstrate the value of close coordination between researchers and school safety professionals, educators, and other practitioners.
- Address a wide range of practically-oriented research questions using the most appropriate and rigorous research methods available.
- Recognize that schools are, first and foremost, places of learning that operate with limited resources and exist within communities to carry out an essential function of society.
- Take steps to protect students, who as children are an inherently vulnerable population, from possible unintended negative consequences of efforts to promote safety or study school safety issues.
- Recognize that although students may commit violence or otherwise become threats to school safety and that they must be held accountable in ways that are appropriate to their behavior, schools must not adopt overly severe or exclusionary disciplinary policies that unnecessarily remove students from schools and place them into the juvenile or criminal justice systems.

### **FY 2016-2017 Activities and Accomplishments**

#### FEDERAL PARTNERS – INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP

In FY 2016 and FY 2017, NIJ continued to work with an interagency working group within the executive branch to provide advice on the Initiative. The federal partners improve the quality of solicitations and projects, and identify priority issues, subject matter experts in the field, and peer reviewers. Representatives include:

##### Department of Justice:

- Bureau of Justice Statistics
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- Civil Rights Division
- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- Office of Community Oriented Policing Services

##### Department of Education:

- Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
- National Center for Education Statistics

##### Department of Homeland Security:

- U.S. Secret Service

##### Department of Health and Human Services:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- National Institutes of Health (NIH)/National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
- NIH/National Institute on Drug Abuse
- NIH/National Institute of Mental Health
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

## **FY 2016 FUNDING CATEGORIES**

The four funding categories in FY 2016 were<sup>2</sup>:

- (1) Developing knowledge about what works to make schools safe;
- (2) Identifying causes and consequences of school violence;
- (3) Facilitating shorter term studies on school safety; and
- (4) Developing longitudinal studies of school safety.

### (1) Developing Knowledge About What Works to Make Schools Safe

This funding category supports demonstrations and evaluations of programs, practices, policies, and strategies designed to enhance school and student safety. Funded projects in this category focus on a limited range of specific, locally implemented, interventions and include robust research designs capable of producing scientific evidence regarding the efficacy, effectiveness, and cost-benefit of these interventions. Funded projects feature close partnerships among State Education Agencies (SEAs) or Local Education Agencies (LEAs - including public charter schools that are recognized as LEAs) and a researcher or research organization that has considerable experience conducting research and evaluation in school settings. NIJ funded 12 projects in this category in FY 2016 totaling \$51,245,807.

### (2) Causes and Consequences of School Violence

This funding category supports 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. Funded projects in this category focus on foundational research that has the potential to produce advances in theory, methodology, and understanding of important constructs with clear potential implications for policy or practice related to school and student safety. These studies answer questions about why school violence occurs, where and when it occurs, who is involved, and how schools and people are affected. NIJ funded four projects in this category in FY 2016 totaling \$2,393,120.

### (3) Shorter Term Studies on School Safety

This funding category supports research projects designed to produce findings with implications for school safety practice and policy with project periods that are no longer than 24 months. Unlike projects funded in other categories that may have

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendices A and B for a listing and descriptions of projects funded under CSSI in FY 2016.

project periods that range from three to five years, projects in this category are designed to produce findings more quickly with studies that can be completed within one or two school years. NIJ funded seven projects in this category in FY 2016 totaling \$3,749,007.

(4) Longitudinal Studies of School Safety

This funding category supports longitudinal research projects to understand the localized and interrelated factors that influence school and student safety and violence in high crime communities. Funded projects in this category analyze potential root causes of school violence that exist at the school, family, individual, and community levels. These studies address those factors that increase the risk of school violence and protective factors that buffer against risk. They also examine multiple violence outcomes beyond school violence to assess the interconnectedness of multiple forms of violence. NIJ funded two projects in this category in FY 2016 totaling \$9,880,829.

## **FY 2017 FUNDING CATEGORIES**

In FY 2017, NIJ released two solicitations under CSSI. One was focused specifically on school safety technologies, and the other was a modified version of the more general CSSI solicitation that NIJ released in prior years. NIJ also made a single award using CSSI funding to support a school safety project that was submitted under NIJ's Policing Strategies and Practices solicitation. This project was funded at \$1,281,046.<sup>3</sup>

The FY 2017 solicitation titled Research, Development, and Evaluation of Technologies to Improve School Safety supported projects that: (1) demonstrate and evaluate the application of existing technologies to improve school safety; or that (2) develop, demonstrate, and evaluate innovative, new technologies that can improve the safety of schools. NIJ funded three projects under this solicitation in FY 2017 totaling \$3,583,200.

The more general CSSI solicitation in FY 2017 included an expanded emphasis on developing knowledge about what works to make schools safe. It integrated a "tiered evidence" approach based on a continuum of evidence that builds from early stage evaluations of innovative programs to highly rigorous evaluations of programs that are ready to scale-up. This solicitation also included a new funding category focused on understanding school safety issues in tribal schools. This solicitation included the following five funding categories in FY 2017:

- (1) Developing novel and innovative school safety programs, practices, and strategies;
- (2) Demonstration, evaluation and validation tests for school safety;
- (3) Expanding the use of effective interventions through scaling-up;
- (4) Research on school safety; and
- (5) Understanding school safety in tribal schools.

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendices C and D for a listing and descriptions of projects funded using CSSI appropriations in FY 2017.

- (1) Developing Novel and Innovative School Safety Programs, Practices, and Strategies  
This funding category supports new and innovative programs, practices or strategies that have not yet undergone evaluation. Funded projects involve early-stage or exploratory research and evaluation projects that support the development and pilot testing of interventions. NIJ funded two projects in this category in FY 2017 totaling \$1,989,545.
- (2) Demonstration, Evaluation and Validation Tests for School Safety  
This funding category supports demonstrations and evaluations of programs, practices, policies, and strategies designed to enhance school and student safety. It closely resembles the “Developing Knowledge about What Works to Make Schools Safe” category from previous CSSI solicitations. However, in keeping with the focus on funding research based on a continuum of evidence, funded projects in this category include rigorous evaluations of interventions that have already undergone some evaluation and have demonstrated promise for enhancing school and student safety. NIJ funded six projects in this category in FY 2017 totaling \$17,655,274.
- (3) Expanding the use of Effective Interventions through Scaling-up  
This funding category aims to expand and evaluate the implementation of interventions that have demonstrated positive results and have a strong evidence base. Funded projects in this category represent the final tier of evidence on the continuum of evidence. They feature evaluations of interventions that are ready for scale-up and have existing strong evidence of effectiveness based on multiple efficacy or effectiveness studies. NIJ funded two projects in this category in FY 2017 totaling \$12,559,737.
- (4) Research on School Safety  
This funding category supports research to improve our understanding of the potential root causes and related factors that contribute to school violence, as well as the impact and consequences of school violence. Funded projects are selected for their potential to produce advances in theory, methodology, and/or understanding of important constructs with clear potential implications for policy or practice related to school and student safety. This category accomplishes the same purposes as two funding categories from previous CSSI solicitations: “Causes and Consequences of School Violence” and the “Shorter Term Studies on School Safety.” NIJ funded six projects in this category in FY 2017 totaling \$4,293,520.
- (5) Understanding School Safety Issues in Tribal Schools  
This funding category supports research to assess school safety issues as they affect American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) students, tribal schools, or schools with high populations of AI/AN students. NIJ funded one project in this category in FY 2017 totaling \$811,125.

## **Ongoing Activities**

Since FY 2014, the Comprehensive School Safety Initiative has been provided with \$275 million and has funded 93 multi-year research and pilot projects that support the development and evaluation of school safety interventions in over 3,100 schools across the Nation. With the enactment of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018, school safety resources will shift from research and evaluation to the purposes outlined in the Stop School Violence Act of 2018, including the purchase of equipment to harden schools, evidence-based training and technical assistance, the development of anonymous reporting systems, school safety assessments, and intervention teams.

As currently funded CSSI-projects come to completion, NIJ will shift emphasis to dissemination of research findings. This will be done in a variety of ways. Principally, NIJ will focus on trusted outlets and communication methods that are already in widespread use by targeted audiences. Specific communication methods will include traditional research reports and fact sheets, as well as more practitioner-oriented articles, infographics, webinars, videos, training and educational materials, and social media messaging.

NIJ will also work to identify opportunities to disseminate best practices to the field. Findings will be made available to target audiences that include federal partner agencies, such as the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Department of Education, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. At the state, local, and tribal levels, NIJ will target dissemination of research findings and best practices to policy makers, school administrators, teachers, mental health professionals, and school resource officers. NIJ will conduct independent reviews of program evaluation projects completed through CSSI and post profiles of promising and effective school safety programs and practices on its CrimeSolutions.gov website.

The Bureau of Justice Assistance FY 2018 solicitations related to the STOP School Violence Act encourage the use of evidence based practices. The solicitation documents include references and links to NIJ's Comprehensive School Safety Initiative and OJP's CrimeSolutions.gov websites as resources applicants may use to obtain more information on evidence-based programs.

NIJ is currently collecting preliminary findings from ongoing CSSI projects, with intentions to release a report in the summer of 2018. In the coming years, NIJ will also explore options for producing a large summary publication that includes findings and lessons learned from projects across the entire initiative. Throughout these activities, NIJ will continue to coordinate with its federal partners on the interagency working group as appropriate. In particular, NIJ will support the Federal Commission on School Safety, led by the Secretary of the Department of Education. NIJ anticipates supporting this Commission by providing findings from CSSI projects as they become available, synthesizing information from other existing school safety research, and drafting and commenting on Commission reports as requested.



**APPENDIX A**  
**FY 2016 CSSI Funded Project List**

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
<b>Category 1. Developing Knowledge about What Works to Make School Safe</b>	
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
<b>Category 2. Causes and Consequences of School Violence</b>	
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
<b>Category 3. Shorter Term Studies on School Safety</b>	
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
<b>Category 4. Developing and Evaluating A Comprehensive School Safety Framework</b>	
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
<b>Total, FY 2016 CSSI Funded Projects</b>	<b>\$67,268,763</b>

**APPENDIX B**  
**FY 2016 CSSI Funded Project Summaries**

**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 (eight in Louisiana, and eight 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 (CRCSD), 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 CRCSD. 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)  
Seattle, WA - \$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/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 the State of Washington. 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 as 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 **S**afety, **E**quity, **C**aring, **U**nderstanding and **R**esilience. 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 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 fourth and fifth 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 percent 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 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 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). The Nevada Department of Education 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 four-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 Cooperation (Arlington, VA) - \$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, there is a 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, Washoe, 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 - \$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 (RTI) (Washington, DC) - \$682,794

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 , Juvenile Justice, and Education, 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: Longitudinal Studies of School Safety**

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 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, D.C.) - \$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.

**APPENDIX C**  
**FY 2017 CSSI 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>



**APPENDIX D**  
**FY 2017 CSSI Funded Project Summaries**

**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 Sonoma County Probation Department will study an innovative approach to improve school climate and safety and reduce truancy among at-risk 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 California. 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, reengage 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 school police department and the 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 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, 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, that 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), SDP, Devereux Center for Effective Schools, North Carolina State University, 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 and 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 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 intervention, will be implemented in eight intervention high schools and compared to eight control high schools, with combined enrollment totaling about 33,000 students. The CCRBI intervention 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 environmental fit for culturally diverse students. A fidelity assessment will be conducted and implicit biases will be assessed among staff. Outcomes will include disproportionality and overall school discipline referrals, suspensions, expulsions, 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 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 SRO performance: 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 with 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 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, there 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 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 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, countries, with different populations, and even across multiple generations. There is ample evidence that it is ready to be scaled up, but limited research on how this can be done effectively and efficiently without weakening program outcomes. 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 (SWPBIS) 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 SWPBIS, 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, where 20 schools will be randomly assigned to the I-RIM condition, and 20 will receive SWPBIS 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, New Jersey. A three-phase longitudinal, quasi-experimental design will be conducted, and will examine and characterize different types of school security climates (Phase 1). Then follow a cohort of ninth grade students over the course of two years. Students will be matched across 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 one, we will conduct a mixed-methods assessment of how administrators, students, parents, teachers, school resource officers, and other school staff understand and make use of school climate data. In phase two, we will incorporate findings from phase one and develop a new online system with improved scoring procedures and report format. In phase three, 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 school resource officer'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 per 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 particular 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 likelihood of future incarceration. The primary objective of this project is to documenting the short and long-term implications of school disciplinary systems.

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

University of Texas San Antonio - \$364,469

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 on-going 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 policy makers 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 AI and Hispanic youth. The goal of this study is to address two critical gaps in the field: 1) understanding how AI 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 administrative data. All aspects of this project will be conducted using a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach to ensure the process and ultimate recommendations are culturally relevant.

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

Supports funding for projects that (1) demonstrate and evaluate existing technologies; or that (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 publically available data from the Department of Education; and 3) A statewide case study 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 through 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. University of Michigan will partner with Miami Dade County Schools to evaluate the effectiveness of SS-ARS in improving the recognition of mental duress, violence and its effectiveness in preventing future violent, criminal and other risk behavior among youth. The project will include a cluster randomized control trial using 30 middle or high schools, and will examine changes in violence in school communities (e.g., fights, bullying), changes in student 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 intervention and 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, 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 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 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 has increased public perceptions as schools as dangerous places, and has 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 arrest 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.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of CSSI is to create safer schools and communities for the children of this nation, advance school safety practice and policy, and build scientific knowledge to provide objective and independent answers to difficult school safety challenges. NIJ administers this initiative and partners with other federal agencies, experts, professionals, and stakeholders to improve public safety and support the effective and efficient use of tax payer dollars. As currently-funded CSSI projects come to conclusion, NIJ will make findings available and work to translate findings into practice.