Document Title: The Impact of School Police Reform on Student Safety and School Experiences

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The Impact of School Police Reform on Student Safety and School Experiences

Final Summary Report

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Executive Summary

Background

Following widespread calls for police reform in 2020, school districts across California made critical decisions about school policing. This study examined what happened when districts removed police from schools—the first comprehensive research of its kind. Using rigorous quasi-experimental methods, WestEd compared 60 schools from 6 districts that removed police during 2019–2021 with 120 matched comparison schools from 30 districts that retained police, tracking outcomes through the 2021–22 school year.

Key Findings

Schools that removed police saw significant improvements in how students experienced their school environment. Students reported stronger caring relationships with staff and more meaningful participation in school. Both effects represent medium but substantively important impacts on student well-being. Contrary to concerns, removing police did not lead to increases in violence victimization, harassment or bullying, substance use, delinquency, or suspension rates (overall or by race/ethnicity). Finally, schools with higher student-to-counselor ratios (averaging 488:1, nearly double the recommended 250:1) that retained police showed higher rates of student-reported violence. However, schools that removed police were protected against this negative effect, regardless of counselor ratios.

Implementation Highlights

Interviews with district staff revealed that successful approaches, regardless of reform decisions, shared common elements including clear protocols defining when police involvement is appropriate, multi-layered support systems including restorative justice practices, partnerships with community-based organizations for violence intervention, and investment in positive school climate and staff-student relationships.

Districts that removed police emphasized the importance of having alternatives in place before removing officers, including school safety teams, district-level crisis support lines, and clear incident response protocols. Challenges included staff needing ongoing support to implement new protocols and community resources being stretched thin. Districts retaining police noted

benefits of positive student-officer relationships and quick response times, but emphasized the need for better integration of mental health crisis response and consistent guidance on appropriate police utilization.

Implications

This research provides the first rigorous evidence that removing police from schools can improve student-staff relationships and student engagement without compromising safety. The findings suggest that school police are not the determining factor in school safety—rather, comprehensive support systems, mental health resources, and positive school climate are essential regardless of police presence. As districts face budget constraints and policy decisions about school safety, this study offers early evidence that both approaches can work when implemented thoughtfully with adequate resources and support systems in place. For policymakers and practitioners, the key takeaway is that the quality of implementation— whether establishing alternatives to police or integrating officers effectively—matters more than the presence or absence of police alone.

Summary of the Project

WestEd conducted a mixed methods quasi-experimental study to examine the impact of school police reform resulting in the removal of school police on student outcomes.

This study examines the impact of school police reform resulting in the removal of school police on student outcomes. The study takes advantage of recent widespread school police reforms in California and extant survey and administrative data and uses a quasi-experimental study to compare school districts that removed school police during 2019–20 or 2020–21 with a matched comparison group of districts that did not remove school police. These reforms were largely driven by coalitions and other entities (e.g., student groups) and decided on by local school boards. These policies also did not always result in police being fully removed from schools. Thus, the study examines the impact of such policies on middle and high school students' reported safety (violence victimization, harassment/bullying victimization), behavior (substance use, delinquency), and well-being (school connectedness, caring staff-student relationships, student meaningful participation, academic motivation) as well as administrative disciplinary data (suspensions). This study also examines whether school police reform has differential impacts depending on the level of schools' mental health (MH) supports (student-to-counselor ratio). Finally, we conducted interviews with a sample of administrators and partnering community-based providers to identify the reasons for, and impact of, removing or retaining school police as well as policies and practices implemented as alternatives. There are no impact studies, to our knowledge, that examine the impact of removing school police. This study's findings are critical to our understanding of how the presence of police in schools relate to student outcomes.

Goals and Objectives

The purpose of this study is to document and disseminate rigorous research on the impact of school police reform on student safety, behavior, and well-being. The goal of the study is to fill a critical gap in the current empirical literature on school police as documented by National Institute of Justice's (NIJ) 2022 report to Congress on school policing programs, specifically the recommendation that "funded research should focus on better understanding what impacts the removal of police from schools might have on students, schools, and communities at large" (McKenna & Petrosino, 2022) and be responsive to NIJ's *FY22 Research and Evaluation on School Safety* funding solicitation (O-NIJ-2022-171188).

The study had four objectives. The first objective was to document school police policy changes

across the top 100 school districts in California by school enrollment. The second objective was to apply rigorous quasi-experimental methods to evaluate the impact of school police policy changes resulting in the removal of school police on student safety, behavior, and well-being and disciplinary outcomes. The third objective was to contextualize the findings through a purposeful sampling of school district and police leadership to document the reasons for local policy changes related to school police and the perceived impact of the reform on the school district community. The fourth and final objective was to disseminate the findings from the study to a broad set of stakeholders through several mediums (e.g., webinars, briefs, blogs, journals, conferences) to ensure findings are useful and accessible to professional and academic audiences. Overall, these objectives are aimed at contributing to the ongoing discussion of whether school police serve as a deterrent for student behavioral infractions or a contributing factor to students' perceptions of safety and well-being in school, or both.

Research Questions

The research questions (RQs)[1] listed below (Table 1) guided the overall study:

Table 1. Research Questions

Primary Impact Study Research Questions	
RQ1	Does the policy of removing school police impact student safety, behavior, and well-being?
RQ2*	Does the policy of removing school police impact exclusionary discipline (i.e., suspensions)?
Exploratory Research Questions	
RQ3	Does the student-to-counselor ratio within schools moderate school police impacts on student safety, behavior, and well-being?
RQ4*	Does the student-to-counselor ratio within schools moderate school police impacts on exclusionary discipline?
RQ5	Do the statistical findings for RQs 1–4 vary for districts that utilize a school district police department structure in comparison to districts that utilize other policing structures (e.g., contracted school resource officers [SROs])?
Implementation Study Questions	
IQ1	To what extent was research and evidence used to inform police reform decisions?
IQ2	What are the key strengths and challenges for school safety within districts based on their decision to remove or retain police?
IQ3	What alternatives to school police were established?

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[1] The research questions presented here reflect some modification to the originally proposed questions due to lack of data necessary to examine (a) student discipline, specifically, referrals to law enforcement; and (b) how schools' restorative justice practices moderate school police impacts.

| IQ4 | What is the sustainability of the police reform decisions moving forward? |

*Due to the changes in data sources, we dropped referrals to law enforcement from RQs 2 and 4 as one of the study outcomes.

Research Design, Methods, Analytical and Data Analysis Techniques

This study included an impact study and an implementation study. The impact study applied quasi-experimental techniques to assess the effects of school police policy changes, focusing on student safety, behavior, well-being, and discipline. The qualitative implementation study supplemented the impact study, using a case study approach within two districts that differed in their implementation of policy changes resulting in police removal from schools. The implementation study sought to understand the range of experiences following these policy decisions. The research design, methods, and analysis for these study components are described further below.

Impact and Exploratory Study

We sampled the top 100 school districts in California, based on student enrollment, and limited the sample to traditional grades 6/7–8 middle schools and grades 9–12 high schools. The top 100 districts in the state represented over 50% of the total student enrollment in the state and allowed the research team to focus on a similar initial sample of school districts. The sample was limited to traditional middle and high schools given the prevalence of student safety and disciplinary incidents and presence of school police are greatest among these schools relative to elementary schools. Within this initial sample, WestEd matched schools where district school police policy changes resulted in removing school police with schools in districts where school police were not removed based on school and student characteristics using Euclidean distance matching (described below). The QED examined changes in student outcomes between the baseline 2018–19 and 2021–22 school years.

The research team utilized a list compiled by *Education Week* to identify school districts that ended their contracts with school police officers or disbanded their own police department during the 2019–20 or 2020–21 school years (Riser-Kositsky et al., 2021). We then conducted an environmental scan and combed through news articles and district websites as well as called and emailed school and district staff to finalize the treatment and comparison groups. This resulted in seven treatment districts, 79 potential comparison districts, and eight districts that were excluded from the study. The eight school districts were removed from the study because: (a) the school districts removed school police but then restored them during study's time period (i.e., the 2019–20, 2020–21, and 2021–22 school years); (b) Los Angeles Unified School District and San Diego Unified School District were excluded from the study because, as the two largest districts in California, they are anomalies and would be difficult to find matched

comparison schools for outside of these districts; or (c) the school district never implemented school police.

Using this initial list of school districts to potentially include in the study, the study team worked to identify the study's sample of schools. The two inclusion criteria were: 1) schools were traditional middle or high schools, and 2) the schools had school enrollment and outcome data from the baseline and outcome years. As a result, 394 schools (60 treatment schools from 6 treatment districts and 334 potential comparison schools from 40 districts) were included in matching process.

Drawing on this initial sample of schools, the study team conducted school-level matching using scaled Euclidean distance matching with Stata 18. We used scaled Euclidean distance matching because it works well with small sample sizes and can more heavily weight the baseline outcome variable (Judkins, 2013). We used nearest neighbor matching with replacement (Stuart, 2010). That is, the non-treatment schools with the closest scaled Euclidean-distance scores to the treatment schools were selected as matches. The school-level 2018–19 baseline covariates used in the matching included the main outcome (suspension rate), percent free- or reduced-price meals, percent African American or Black, and the school stability rate (the percent of students who are continuously enrolled at the school over the academic year). Using a 2:1 ratio resulted in 120 comparison and 60 treatment schools (from 30 comparison districts and 6 treatment districts).

To examine the baseline differences between the groups, we used regression analyses with cluster-robust standard errors. We used Hedge's g to calculate effect sizes while accounting for cluster-level assignment, with the cut-off of 0.25 to judge equivalence (What Works Clearinghouse, 2022). The groups were equivalent at baseline (Table 2).

Table 2. Baseline Equivalence of Treatment and Comparison Schools

	Treatment				Comparison				Treatment vs. Comparison		
	N	M	SD		N	M	SD		Diff.	p value	ES
Suspension rate	60	0.08	0.05		120	0.08	0.05		-0.01	0.62	-.09
% Free-or-reduced price meals	60	0.72	0.19		120	0.71	0.18		0.01	0.85	0.04
% African American or Black	60	0.16	0.15		120	0.11	0.07		0.05	0.32	0.23
Stability rate	60	0.87	0.07		120	0.86	0.05		0.01	0.67	0.07

N = sample size. M = mean. SD = standard deviation. Diff. = Difference. ES = effect size.

The study team then conducted a series of multilevel regression models (i.e., hierarchical linear modeling [HLM]) with schools nested within districts to examine outcomes. We produced effect

sizes using standardized beta coefficients (Lorah, 2018). The HLMs included fixed effects for the treatment status, baseline measure of the outcome, and covariates used in the matching process with effect sizes larger than 0.05 (i.e., suspension rate, percent African American or Black, and stability rate), controlling for district effects.

The impact and exploratory RQs relied on administrative data from the California Department of Education (CDE) and extant survey data available through WestEd's California School Climate, Health, and Learning Survey (CalSCHLS) System: Secondary California Healthy Kids survey (CHKS) Core Module. Schools' baseline CHKS measures were either from 2017–18 or 2018 – 19, depending on whichever more recent year of data were available. The following italicized survey measures assess the student outcomes of interest: student safety (*Violence Victimization* and *Harassment/Bullying Victimization*), student behavior (*Substance Use at School* and *Delinquency*), and student well-being (*School Connectedness*, *Caring Staff-Student Relationships*, *Student Meaningful Participation*, and *Academic Motivation*). Additionally, the CHKS data includes demographic information (e.g., race/ethnicity).

Implementation Study

The implementation study employed interviews to gather examples from the field and insights into the districts' experiences following policy decisions regarding school police. In total, eight district level staff were interviewed across two districts. To select districts to interview, WestEd calculated for each of the treatment and comparison schools their average change scores for each of the impact study's outcomes. Then for each of the outcome measures, WestEd identified the top five schools with the largest change scores in the favorable direction (e.g., biggest decreases in *violence victimization*) and the top five schools with the largest change scores in the adverse direction (e.g., biggest decreases in *caring staff-student relationships*). WestEd identified an initial set of treatment and comparison districts with schools that demonstrated both favorable and adverse changes as the initial group of districts to conduct outreach for the interviews. This sampling approach ensured that selection of treatment and comparison districts for the implementation study was not biased.

From fall 2024 to winter 2025, WestEd reached out to school and district staff from treatment and comparison districts via email and phone calls to invite their participation in interviews. WestEd identified these staff by searching district websites for staff who worked in the areas of school safety, student discipline, restorative justice, and student support services. The virtual interviews ranged from 30 to 60 minutes and were conducted between October 2024 to February 2025. At the end of each interview, WestEd asked the interviewee if they had any recommendations for additional district staff who could potentially speak about the study's topic areas.

Expected Applicability of the Research

This study is the first comprehensive examination, as far as we know, on the impact of policy decisions to remove school police officers from school grounds. The study will contribute to the research literature as well as policy decision-making by testing two competing theories. The first theoretical perspective, which includes deterrence theory and routine activity theory, construes school police serving as capable guardians who dissuade delinquent behavior. In contrast, the criminalization of student misconduct theory asserts that the presence of school police has a criminalization effect on students. The study's findings, as described below, shed light on the relationship between the presence of school police and a broad array of student experiences in school.

The findings from the study will not only advance empirical knowledge on the role of school police, but also inform critical policy discussion related to school reform. In the current post-COVID-19 era, school districts face massive budget deficits and are forced to make difficult decisions about where to invest their resources to best support all students. Policymakers need credible and rigorous evidence to develop policies and inform practices. The findings from this study provide Californians and districts across the country with rigorous and objective evidence on what happens to students when police are removed from schools, which is necessary to determine whether a divestment in school police is appropriate.

Changes in Approach from Original Design

The study originally planned to use publicly available administrative data from the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR) Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) to examine incidents of student discipline (such as the nature of the incident, disciplinary action, and student characteristics) as well as measures related to the number of sworn officers on campus and other student support personnel, including counselors. However, the release of OCR data was delayed. At the time of this report, data from the 2021–22 outcome year had not yet been released. Instead, WestEd used CDE data that include school-level counts for exclusionary discipline and staffing counts for MH-related staff, such as psychologists, counselors, and social workers. Due to the change in data sources, we dropped referrals to law enforcement from RQs 2 and 4 as one of the study outcomes.

Additionally, the study originally had an exploratory research question that asked, "Do students' experiences with restorative justice practices moderate school police impacts on student safety, behavior, and well-being?" The analysis plan was to create a measure of restorative practices using the CHKS data based on a study that used the same construct to examine the impact of restorative justice practices on student experiences in California. However, upon receiving the CHKS data, we discovered that the survey questions were embedded in an optional module in the survey dataset, and only 16% of study schools had baseline data and 13% of study schools had outcome year data. Therefore, we had to drop this

exploratory research question.

Finally, the implementation study was originally planned to be a multi-site case study including four school districts (two treatment and two comparison districts). However, after multiple outreach attempts, staff from only two school districts (one treatment and one comparison district) agreed to participate in interviews. The final interview sample included two comparison district staff and six treatment district staff. Although two districts is lower than the originally planned four districts, we do not believe this affects confidence in the qualitative findings, as they should not be generalized beyond those districts. Rather, the interviews provide insights and examples from the field.

Results

Primary Impact Study Results

Student Safety, Behavior, and Well-Being

Regarding RQ1, school police removal had positive statistically significant impacts on two school-level measures of student well-being—*caring staff-student relationships* and student *meaningful participation* (p = .001 for both; Table 3). The effect sizes were 0.55 and .60 respectively, which are considered medium but substantively important impacts (Hill et al., 2008). The differences between the treatment and comparison schools for the other six measures of student safety, behavior, and well-being– student safety (*Violence Victimization* and *Harassment/Bullying Victimization*), student behavior (*Substance Use at School* and *Delinquency*), and student well-being (*School Connectedness* and *Academic Motivation*)–did not reach statistical significance. Altogether, RQ1's findings suggest that school police reform has positive effects on student well-being, particularly *caring staff-student relationships* and *student meaningful participation.* The tables in Appendix A provide the full HLM results for all RQs' measures.

Table 3. HLMs Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student Well-Being Measures

	Caring Staff-Student Relationships				Student Meaningful Participation		
	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.		Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.55	0.17	**		0.60	0.18	**
Baseline outcome	0.54	0.07	***		0.30	0.06	***
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.02	0.07	-		0.07	0.07	-

2018–19 % African American or Black	0.13	0.08	†	0.06	0.08	-
2018–19 Stability rate	0.02	0.08	-	-0.04	0.07	-
Intercept	-0.27	0.09	**	-0.31	0.09	**
sd(District)	0.23	0.10	*	0.28	0.08	***

N = 180 schools. - Not statistically significant; † *p* < .10; * *p* < .05; ** *p* < .01; *** *p* < .001

Suspensions

Regarding RQ2, school police removal did not have a statistically significant impact on school-level suspension rate (Table 4). Removing school police did not have any statistically significant effects—positive or negative—on school suspension rate.

Table 4. HLM Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Suspension Rate

	Suspension Rate		
	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	-0.15	0.20	-
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.59	0.07	***
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.21	0.08	*
2018–19 Stability rate	-0.04	0.07	-
Intercept	0.11	0.10	-
sd(District)	0.35	0.09	***

N = 180 schools. - Not statistically significant; * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

Exploratory Study Results

Student-to-Counselor Ratio and Student Safety, Behavior, and Well-Being

To answer RQs 3 and 4, we calculated schools' baseline ratio of enrolled students to full-time MH school staff. The average ratio for the study sample was 488 students-to-1 MH staff. This is well above the 250-to-1 ratio recommended by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) but is similar to California's average of 464-to-1 in 2022–23 (ASCA, 2024).

Regarding RQ3, the interaction term between treatment status and the student-to-MH staff

ratio was statistically significant for *violence victimization* (*p* = .03; Table 5). Comparison schools with higher student-to-MH staff ratios had higher student-reported *violence victimization*, whereas treatment schools' student-to-MH ratios were not associated with *violence victimization* (Figure 1). The interaction term was not statistically significant for the other survey outcomes (i.e., *harassment/bullying victimization, substance use at school, delinquency, school connectedness, caring staff-student relationships, student meaningful participation*, and *academic motivation*). Taken together, these results suggest that school police reform seems to buffer against the adverse association between student-to-MH ratio and student-reported *violence victimization* that was found for comparison schools.

Table 5. HLM with Treatment Status and Student-to-Mental Health Staff Ratio Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Violence Victimization

	Violence Victimization		
	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.07	0.19	-
2018–19 Student-to-MH staff ratio	0.26	0.12	*
Treatment X student-to-MH staff ratio	-0.31	0.14	*
Baseline violence victimization	0.62	0.05	***
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.13	0.06	*
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.00	0.07	-
2018–19 Stability rate	0.29	0.06	***
Intercept	0.05	0.09	-
sd(District)	0.33	0.06	***

N = 169 schools. - Not statistically significant; * *p* < .05; ** *p* < .01; * *p* < .001**

Figure 1. Treatment Status and Student-to-Mental Health Staff Ratio Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Violence Victimization
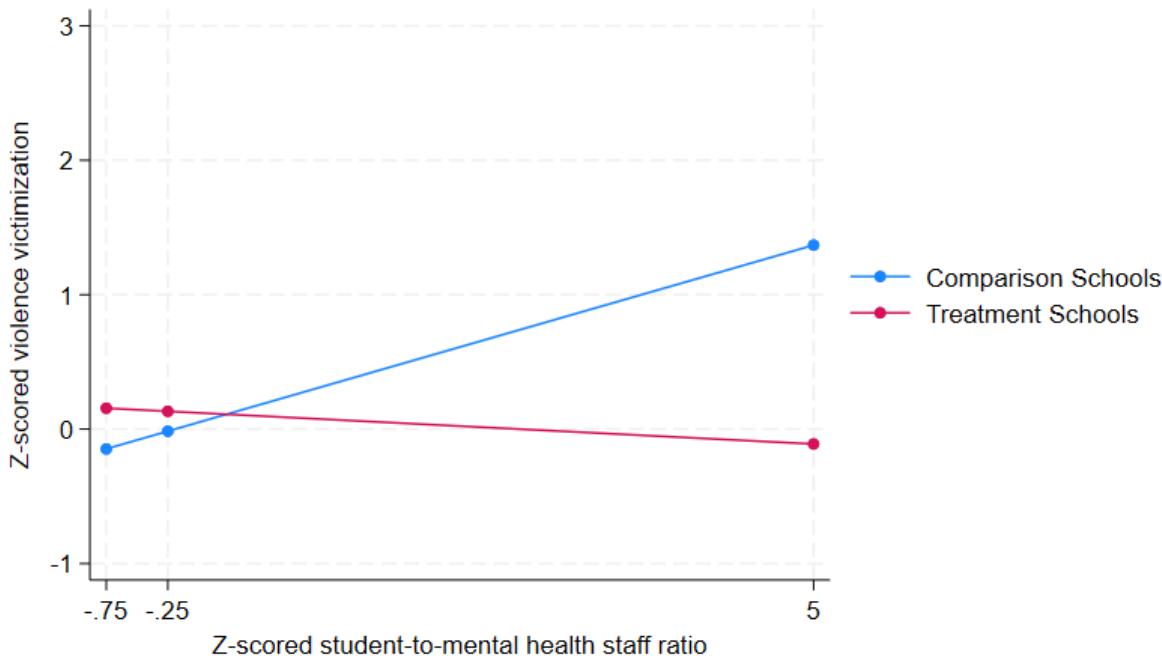
N = 169 schools.

Student-to-Counselor Ratio and Suspensions

For RQ4, the interaction term between treatment status and the student-to-MH staff ratio did not reach statistical significance for predicting suspension rate (Table 6). This suggests that the relationship of each variable (school police reform and student-to-MH staff ratio) with school suspension rate is the same regardless of the level of the other variable.

Table 6. HLM with Treatment Status and Student-to-Mental Health Staff Ratio Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Suspension Rate

	Suspension Rate		
	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	-0.21	0.20	-
2018–19 Student-to-MH staff ratio	-0.11	0.15	-
Treatment X student-to-MH staff ratio	0.17	0.17	-
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.62	0.07	***
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.27	0.09	**
2018–19 Stability rate	0.00	0.07	-

Intercept	0.17	0.10	†
sd(District)	0.32	0.10	**

N = 169 schools. - Not statistically significant; † *p* < .10; * *p* < .05; ** *p* < .01; * *p* < .001**

School Policing Structure

To answer RQ5, we categorized schools that had district school police departments (n = 23 treatment and 27 comparison schools) and schools that used other policing structures (n = 37 treatment and 93 comparison schools). We created a dichotomous variable for school policing structure (1 = district school police department; 0 = other policing structures) for analytic purposes. The interaction was not statistically significant for the full sample across any of the survey outcomes. When examining suspensions, the interaction between treatment status and school police structure was not statistically significant for the full sample. Taken together, RQ5's findings suggest that the relationship of each variable (school police reform and school policing structure) with the survey outcomes and school suspension rate is the same regardless of the level of the other variable.

Implementation Study Results

Table 7 provides example excerpts for each of the implementation study questions. Due to the small number of interview participants (six treatment district staff and two comparison district staff) from two districts (one treatment and one comparison), we present example statements and quotes, and exclude details such as staff roles and titles to protect the interviewees' confidentiality.

Table 7. Implementation Study Questions' Example Excerpts

Implementation Study Questions		Example Excerpts
IQ1	To what extent was research and evidence used to inform police reform decisions?	"The district leadership had good conversations with multiple parties. The Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent had intentional conversations with city leadership and met with other superintendents and asked how they were addressing SROs on campus. They had conversations with the County Office of Education. I can't speak about if they looked at specific research, but it was intentional and a lot of voices were part of that decision-making process."
IQ2	What are the key strengths and challenges for school safety within districts based on their decision to	School district that removed school police: • Strength: "The reform forced us to practice change. We are conditioned in our society that police equal safety. But there's a whole other realm of safety that is not addressed and this forced us to do that. What other policies and resources should we have in place for our community to go to? Professionals who conduct threat assessment, restorative justice practices, mental health work, counselors to help to get ahead of

	remove or retain police?	something before it escalates. There are other means for addressing situations. It wasn't easy but it forced us out of our comfort zone."
		• Challenge: "Implementation [of alternatives to school police] is hard. We developed it [school safety protocol with school police alternatives], now it's the implementation. What I will say is that everyone understands that calling police shouldn't be the first thing that we do. That's a good starting point. […] Before, folks would call police and there weren't checks and balances on it. At least now they're calling someone to get clarification on who to get help from."
		School district that retained school police:
		• Strength: "There are specific schools in the district with a lot of fights and gangs. There is a feeling of it being unsafe if an SRO isn't there. Or if a school administrator is out, the principal is calling me and asking for support because they're missing a supervising body. If the SRO is there, they're not only a supervising entity, they have a presence of being a cop."
		• Challenge: "The impact the school police have on the daily is good. But when involved in student situations, it's dependent on how the administrator is using them. I hope it's the way I'm describing them—the SROs are the ally. They are not enforcing school rules."
IQ3	What alternatives to school police were established?	"We are all trained in restorative justice. Which means that we know how to ask the questions and coach students through the conversations to help them resolve conflicts. We also have a restorative justice staff member."
		"Our staff got trained on threat assessments… It's not just one person doing assessments but it's a team approach. That's been a big shift. Not every threat needs a call to law enforcement."
IQ4	What is the sustainability of the police reform decisions moving forward?	"I don't see us as going back to having a police service. I don't think we need it. I think most people don't think we need it. But the alternative, what we've come up with right now, it's not perfect and could inform some data-driven changes."
		"We get a little worried about funding. That's probably the only barrier I see. How many SROs we have now—is it sustainable?"

Implementation Study Question 1: To what extent was research and evidence used to inform school police reform decisions?

In general, interviewees did not know if research was used to inform school police reform decisions. Instead, the reform decision was mainly due to a longer-term effort from community members that coincided with the larger social-political context that finally resulted in the removal of school police in the 2020–21 school year. Interviewees also spoke about the school district's budget and the cost of school police as additional contributing factors to removing school police.

Implementation Study Question 2: What are the key strengths and challenges for school safety within districts based on their decision to remove or retain police?

Strengths from school police removal

For the school district that removed school police, the interviewees described strengths

resulting from the reform such as adopting a holistic approach to student safety, behavior, and well-being; clear, consistent messaging around how police should and should not be used; and less fights on campus and less calls to police. The holistic approach to student safety included restorative justice practices, building positive school climate and culture, prevention and intervention programs, and leveraging resources from the community (e.g., the district partnered with community-based organizations (CBOs) and county agencies to work with youth on campus or to provide referrals to additional services). As the quote below demonstrates, the district believed in the importance of having alternative, holistic supports in place to adequately support students and staff.

"Not just in the school site themselves, but also the district—how are we centrally supporting school sites when they come across challenges and need extra support? Because if we don't have alternatives in place, then people automatically fall back into calling law enforcement for support. That's not to say there's no need for law enforcement, but we must make sure that our structures and supports are in place so that we're not conditioned to depend on law enforcement."

Additionally, one of the first tools the district provided staff at the beginning of the school police reform was a protocol that clearly and concisely outlined the types of situations that school staff were expected to be able to handle as well as situations where school staff legally were required to call police. This document was widely shared with staff across the district so that everyone had it as a resource to refer to when needed.

Lastly, interviewees described that one positive outcome of the reform was that anecdotally there was less criminalization of youths because of fewer calls to law enforcement. Interviewees described less fights on campus, and even in instances when police did have to come to campus, the police would "sit in circles with the students." One interviewee described, "I think that was a great thing because it would help break down that blue wall, so to speak, and students could see police as regular human beings and police could see students as younger people not worthy of violence."

Challenges from school police removal

For the school district that removed school police, the interviewees described challenges to the reform related to implementation of the reform, alternatives to school police being under-

resourced, and some staff still wanting school police.

The district developed new practices and policies as part of the reforms, including school-level safety teams that include a broad array of school site staff (e.g., a staff who conducts threat assessments, a community-based partner) and the aforementioned incident response protocol document that was shared with all staff. Interviewees described principals needing on-demand, one-on-one support on how to navigate the incident response protocol for student situations on campus. One interviewee described the hands-on support needed to implement the fairly new protocol across the district: "Everyone understands that they shouldn't be calling the police, but they don't know whether they're implementing the reform correctly. But at least they're calling to check."

Another challenge with implementing the district's alternative to school police was finding the time to implement the alternatives well. Ideally the school safety teams meet regularly to discuss school safety and behavior issues and to organize as a team. However, school staff wear many hats and the school safety team was an additional responsibility on top of their regular role, so finding the time to do this work was challenging. One interviewee explained, "People are taking on extra work to be part of the safety team. All of this is sort of foundational work, so it takes a lot of time, energy, and experimentation to figure out what's working and not working."

The school district partnered with county agencies and CBOs to leverage their expertise and services related to violence intervention and prevention. However, interviewees described that these alternatives to school police were understaffed, under resourced, or stretched thin at times. For example, school staff may call the Mental Health Crisis Line but learn that they do not have the staffing capacity and refer the school staff to the police. Although the police are no longer school staff's first call, if the first and second alternatives do not work out, school staff may ultimately have to call law enforcement.

One interviewee expressed that some school leaders wished they could call police for specific situations. School staff and school police had built relationships, and some of the school police had built relationships with students. For example, the interviewee believed that prior school police were better equipped for 5150 situations (temporary, involuntary psychiatric holds when someone is deemed a danger to themselves or others) compared to calling the city police department, as the school police "understood [more] what that was and what it meant for the student."

Strengths from retaining police

For the school district that retained school police, the interviewees described strengths resulting from the reform such as positive SRO-student relationships, staff collaboration with SROs, fast SRO response time, decrease in student fights on and off campus, and increased sense of school safety. One reported benefit of having SROs regularly on campus was that it positively changed students' relationships and perceptions of them. Their presence was no

longer perceived as "something was wrong" on campus, and students began seeing SROs as part of the school staff.

School staff also leveraged SROs' expertise to help with school safety issues, such as how to manage hot spots for student fights. Staff collaborated with SROs in investigations and how to approach tense situations. One interviewee highly valued SROs' fast response time to situations and the real-time information they had on safety situations that were happening nearby off campus.

According to the interviewees, another positive outcome of SROs was a decrease in fights on campus and off campus after school. The interviewee explained that the decrease in fights contributed to a sense of safety for all students: "If you have fights on campus, it makes students who weren't involved feel unsafe. You see it posted all over social media. The SRO presence makes everyone feel safer."

Challenges from retaining police

For the school district that retained school police, the interviewees described challenges related to implementation—specifically how school staff were utilizing SROs—and alternative safety plans for days when SROs are not on campus. On interviewee stated that how SROs are being leveraged and used differ from school administrator to school administrator. For example, some school administrators leverage the SROs as a resource and ask for their input on school safety issues or specific situations; whereas some school administrators were not in regular communication with their SROs or did not have regular meetings with them.

Another challenge was for schools to have alternative safety plans for days when SROs are not on campus. According to an interviewee, both administrators and students notice the days when SROs are not on campus. The interviewee suggested having more campus safety aides or for school staff to have different rounds or routines on the days SROs are not on campus.

Implementation Study Question 3: What alternatives to school police were established?

The school district that removed school police implemented multiple layers of supports and response processes. At the school level, they implemented school safety teams that included a variety of school staff roles (e.g., someone in charge of conducting threat assessments, suicide risk assessments, someone skilled at de-escalation, an afterschool program coordinator, school security staff, and a partner community agency or CBO staff). Each school safety team member plays a distinct role, and they meet regularly to discuss students' issues that may rise to violence as well as school wide issues.

At the district level, there were additional layers of supports for student safety. First, there was a phone number (informally described as the "district 911") that individuals could call during and outside of school hours instead of calling law enforcement. Second, school staff could

request assistance from a district team of behavioral health managers to help with de-escalation, assessments, and decision making if needed. Lastly, the district created the aforementioned police incident response protocol document that was shared with all school staff. The one-page document succinctly summarized the following:

- Situations that ideally are handled by school staff and district staff if needed;
- Situations that staff are required by law to report to law enforcement but are not emergency situations;
- Emergency situations that staff are required by law to call 911;
- A list of agencies that are not law enforcement that can provide support to students (e.g., Child Protective Services); and
- Instructions if a student was experiencing a mental health crisis.

Additionally, interviewees from both the treatment and comparison district spoke of the following trainings, programs, and practices that were implemented to help address student safety and behaviors:

- **Threat assessment training.** These trainings emphasized that not every threat requires a call to law enforcement. Instead, for example, staff may reach out to other staff who know the family of the student to further determine the risk. In addition to the training, the treatment district indicated forming teams to assess and respond to threats after removing police. The comparison district also had indicated having multidisciplinary teams in place to address threats.

- **Community-based violence interrupters**. Both the treatment and comparison district partnered with county agencies and CBOs to leverage violence interrupters and credible messengers to help understand the root causes of students' behaviors and to help students navigate issues inside and outside of schools. These CBOs were already doing violence prevention work in the community and have staff who are from the community and are familiar the students' families.

- **Restorative justice practices.** Both districts employed restorative justice facilitators and practices (e.g., community building circles, repairing harm meetings, Tier 1 practices, mindfulness trainings for staff).

- **Alternatives to suspension for lower-level behaviors.** Interviewees from both districts described protocols and practices focused on reducing exclusionary discipline. One interviewee described a discipline and intervention matrix that was used as a tool to minimize suspensions and to ensure that school administrators were implementing discipline in a more standardized manner.

Implementation Study Question 4: What is the sustainability of the police reform decisions moving forward?

Interviewees from the school district that removed school police believed that the reform is sustainable for two reasons. The first, practical reason was the state of the district's budget and the cost of school police services. Multiple interviewees expressed that school police were just too expensive to bring back and that newly formed teams were made up of existing staff already on payroll. The second reason was the reform's widespread support from the community. Interviewees explained that though they could foresee some changes to the reform's implementation based on an examination of what is and is not working, they did not believe the reform will be rescinded unless there was a large change in district leadership.

Interviewees from the school district that retained police believed that SROs were sustainable, as planning discussions between district leadership indicated that SROs were being integrated more at the schools. However, looking long term, maintaining the number of SROs may not be sustainable depending on funding. One interviewee explained that SRO funding is split between the district, the police department, and the cities and that the district would need to apply for additional grants to maintain the level of SROs.

Limitations

As described in the "Changes in Approach from Original Design" section, the implementation study was originally planned to be a multi-site case study including four school districts (two treatment and two comparison districts). Ultimately, the implementation study included eight interviewees total from one treatment and one comparison district. Although the interviews provide examples from the field and insights into the districts' experiences following policy decisions regarding school police, the findings may not be generalizable beyond these districts.

The research team relied on publicly available information to create the treatment and comparison groups for the study. We first used the list compiled by *Education Week* to identify school districts that ended their contracts with school police officers or disbanded their own police division during the 2019–20 or 2020–21 school years (Riser-Kositsky et al., 2021). We also searched news articles, district websites, school newsletters, and school board meeting notes as well as conducted direct outreach to school and district staff to finalize the treatment and comparison districts. However, the research team was not privy to non-public information. For example, while conducting interviews with the comparison district staff, the research team learned that the school district had temporarily removed SROs but reinstated them. This information was not made public. Thus, one limitation of the study is the possible mis-categorization of schools to the treatment or comparison group if school police reforms were undertaken and not captured by the news media and district websites.

Finally, this study examined school level effects of a district-level policy; however, district-level comparisons were not a focus of the study. Given the variability among schools within a district

and the level at which these policies are assigned, it is important for future research to examine the district-to-district differences in school police-related policy implementation as well as other district policies that impact these student outcomes.

Conclusion

The recent widespread school police reforms across California offer a unique, timely opportunity to examine the issue of school police policy changes resulting in police removal and to add to the theoretical and policy debate on whether school police serve as a deterrent to delinquent student behaviors or whether their presence further perpetuates the criminalization of student behaviors. This study's findings begin to fill these gaps and contribute to the discussion on how best to complement school policing programs through mental health supports within schools that choose to maintain a police presence.

Outcome Study Insights

The findings from the outcome study suggest that school police reform has positive effects on student well-being, particularly student reports of *caring staff-student relationships* and *student meaningful participation*. Furthermore, school police reform seems to buffer against the adverse association between student-to-MH staff ratio and student-reported *violence victimization* that was found for comparison schools (i.e., comparison schools with higher student-to-MH staff ratios had higher student-reported *violence victimization*, whereas treatment schools' student-to-MH staff ratios were not associated with *violence victimization*). Studies have found that MH resources at schools (i.e., lower student-to-counselor ratios) can decrease student disciplinary problems (Carrell & Carrell, 2006), and that students felt safer in school and had better relationships with school staff in schools with more fully implemented school counseling programs (Lapan et al., 2001). Although this study did not find that school police reform had effects on student discipline (namely, suspensions), student-reported behavior, and perceptions of school safety, the study findings support that the policies resulting in the removing police from schools have a positive effect on students' relationships with school staff, their meaningful engagement and participation in school, and buffers against the negative outcomes associated with high student-to-MH staff ratios.

Reflections from the Implementation Study

The findings from the implementation study illustrate the importance of implementation—whether it be the implementation of the school police reform or the implementation of school police. School police is just one piece of the puzzle for addressing student safety, behavior, and well-being. According to the interviewees, for school safety work to be done well—with or without police—there needs to be a holistic, multi-layer approach that includes teams, protocols, and trainings. Challenges and barriers to reform implementation include limited staff availability for the new school safety team meetings, a shortage of community resources that

serve as alternatives to school police, and the need for on-demand one-on-one support for school administrators to navigate the district's police-free response protocol. The findings from this study also identified school and community resources that support student safety and behavior, such as written documents and processes that staff can refer to when dealing with safety and behavioral issues on the ground, consistent messaging around how school staff should and should not involve law enforcement, and school staff leveraging the expertise of SRO or community violence intervention partners to address school safety.

The implementation study also highlighted many similarities between the district that underwent school police reform and the district that retained school police. Both districts implemented a multi-layer, holistic approach to student safety, well-being, and behavior that included restorative justice practices, building positive school climate, positive staff-student relationships, violence prevention and intervention programs, and leveraging resources in the community. Staff from both districts also underscored the rising issue of student mental health. One staff member from the district that retained school police expressed, "It's important to state we have a lot of work to do with SROs and mental health and how do you respond to children who are having a mental health crisis. There have been a lot of conversations about that. But now that I am interacting with it more, I see that it's a need… Oftentimes we send youth home, and we see in the news that they go home and things turn around. That's something that's missing from school policing that merits attention." As the quote illustrates, school police can be an effective component of a district's approach to school safety; however, a more holistic approach to school safety and student well-being is needed to ensure the safety of students.

Artifacts

Table 8 highlights the conference presentations resulting from this study. Additional artifacts, including blog posts and articles will be produced after the close of the grant period.

Table 8. List of conference presentations

Type	Presentation Title	Conference
Presentation	Asking Better Questions: New Research on Policing in Schools	International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) 2024 Annual Conference
Presentation	Impact of School Police Reform on Student Safety, Behavior, Well-Being, and Disciplinary Outcomes in	American Society of Criminology (ASC) Annual Meeting

	California	2024
Presentation	The Impact of School Police Reform on Student Safety and School Experiences	American Education Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting 2025

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Appendix A

Table A1. HLMs Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Violence Victimization

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.05	0.18	0.78
Baseline outcome	0.61	0.05	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.16	0.06	0.007
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.06	0.07	0.42
2018–19 Stability rate	0.32	0.06	< 0.001
Intercept	0.06	0.09	.49
sd(District)	0.33	0.06	< 0.001

N = 180 schools.

Table A2. HLMs Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Harassment/Bullying Victimization

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	-0.27	0.22	0.22
Baseline outcome	0.35	0.06	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.24	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.14	0.09	0.11
2018–19 Stability rate	0.46	0.07	< 0.001
Intercept	0.24	0.11	0.03
sd(District)	0.38	0.08	< 0.001

N = 180 schools.

Table A3. HLMs Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Substance Use at School

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.07	0.25	0.77
Baseline outcome	0.31	0.08	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.09	0.08	0.27
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.00	0.10	0.99
2018–19 Stability rate	-0.02	0.09	0.85
Intercept	0.04	0.12	0.74
sd(District)	0.43	0.12	< 0.001

N = 180 schools.

Table A4. HLMs Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Delinquency

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.06	0.26	0.81
Baseline outcome	0.27	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.28	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.17	0.09	0.06
2018–19 Stability rate	0.27	0.07	< 0.001
Intercept	0.08	0.12	0.50
sd(District)	0.48	0.10	< 0.001

N = 180 schools.

Table A5. HLMs Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported School Connectedness

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.21	0.18	0.25
Baseline outcome	0.71	0.06	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.08	0.06	0.20
2018–19 % African American or Black	-0.16	0.07	0.03
2018–19 Stability rate	-0.04	0.07	0.60
Intercept	-0.16	0.09	0.08
sd(District)	0.30	0.07	< 0.001

N = 180 schools.

Table A6. HLMs Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Caring Staff-Student Relationships

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.55	0.17	< 0.001
Baseline outcome	0.54	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.02	0.07	0.79
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.13	0.08	0.10
2018–19 Stability rate	0.02	0.08	0.84
Intercept	-0.27	0.09	0.002
sd(District)	0.23	0.10	0.02

N = 180 schools.

Table A7. HLMs Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Student Meaningful Participation

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.60	0.18	0.001
Baseline outcome	0.30	0.06	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.07	0.07	0.28
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.06	0.08	0.49
2018–19 Stability rate	-0.04	0.07	0.57
Intercept	-0.31	0.09	0.001
sd(District)	0.28	0.08	< 0.001

N = 180 schools.

Table A8. HLMs Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Academic Motivation

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.13	0.27	0.62
Baseline outcome	0.42	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.09	0.08	0.25
2018–19 % African American or Black	-0.15	0.10	0.13
2018–19 Stability rate	-0.09	0.09	0.29
Intercept	-0.20	0.13	0.12
sd(District)	0.48	0.11	< 0.001

N = 180 schools.

Table A9. HLM Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Suspension Rate

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	-0.15	0.20	0.47
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.59	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.21	0.08	0.01
2018–19 Stability rate	-0.04	0.07	0.55
Intercept	0.11	0.10	0.28
sd(District)	0.35	0.09	***

N = 180 schools.

Table A10. HLM with Treatment Status and Student-to-Mental Health Staff Ratio Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Violence Victimization

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.07	0.19	0.70
2018–19 Student-to-MH staff ratio	0.26	0.12	0.04
Treatment X student-to-MH staff ratio	-0.31	0.14	0.03
Baseline violence victimization	0.62	0.05	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.13	0.06	0.03
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.00	0.07	0.99
2018–19 Stability rate	0.29	0.06	< 0.001
Intercept	0.05	0.09	0.60
sd(District)	0.33	0.06	< 0.001

N = 169 schools.

Table A11. HLM with Treatment Status and Student-to-Mental Health Staff Ratio Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Harassment/Bullying Victimization

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	-0.27	0.22	0.22
2018–19 Student-to-MH staff ratio	0.19	0.16	0.23
Treatment X student-to-MH staff ratio	-0.13	0.18	0.47
Baseline harassment/bullying victimization	0.34	0.06	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.25	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.11	0.09	0.22
2018–19 Stability rate	0.44	0.07	< 0.001
Intercept	0.22	0.11	0.046
sd(District)	0.37	0.08	< 0.001

N = 169 schools.

Table A12. HLM with Treatment Status and Student-to-Mental Health Staff Ratio Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Substance Use at School

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.01	0.25	0.96
2018–19 Student-to-MH staff ratio	0.06	0.19	0.75
Treatment X student-to-MH staff ratio	0.07	0.21	0.76
Baseline substance use at school	0.30	0.09	0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.10	0.09	0.25
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.02	0.11	0.89
2018–19 Stability rate	0.02	0.10	0.88
Intercept	0.08	0.13	0.54
sd(District)	0.42	0.13	0.001

N = 169 schools.

Table A13. HLM with Treatment Status and Student-to-Mental Health Staff Ratio Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Delinquency

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.03	0.25	0.89
2018–19 Student-to-MH staff ratio	0.09	0.16	0.60
Treatment X student-to-MH staff ratio	0.01	0.19	0.98
Baseline delinquency	0.26	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.23	0.08	0.003
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.10	0.09	0.28
2018–19 Stability rate	0.25	0.07	0.001
Intercept	0.07	0.12	0.58
sd(District)	0.46	0.10	< 0.001

N = 169 schools.

Table A14. HLM with Treatment Status and Student-to-Mental Health Staff Ratio Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported School Connectedness

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.21	0.19	0.28
2018–19 Student-to-MH staff ratio	-0.14	0.14	0.32
Treatment X student-to-MH staff ratio	0.11	0.16	0.49
Baseline school connectedness	0.73	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.07	0.06	0.25
2018–19 % African American or Black	-0.16	0.08	0.04
2018–19 Stability rate	-0.07	0.07	0.33
Intercept	-0.16	0.10	0.10
sd(District)	0.32	0.08	< 0.001

N = 169 schools.

Table A15. HLM with Treatment Status and Student-to-Mental Health Staff Ratio Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Caring Staff-Student Relationships

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.49	0.15	0.001
2018–19 Student-to-MH staff ratio	-0.19	0.15	0.20
Treatment X student-to-MH staff ratio	0.16	0.17	0.34
Baseline caring staff-student relationships	0.58	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	-0.01	0.07	0.85
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.16	0.08	0.05
2018–19 Stability rate	-0.02	0.08	0.82
Intercept	-0.23	0.08	0.008
sd(District)	0.18	0.10	0.07

N = 169 schools.

Table A16. HLM with Treatment Status and Student-to-Mental Health Staff Ratio Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Student Meaningful Participation

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.65	0.18	< 0.001
2018–19 Student-to-MH staff ratio	-0.11	0.15	0.45
Treatment X student-to-MH staff ratio	-0.06	0.17	0.73
Baseline student meaningful participation	0.31	0.06	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.08	0.07	0.23
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.07	0.08	0.37
2018–19 Stability rate	-0.07	0.07	0.30
Intercept	-0.34	0.10	< 0.001
sd(District)	0.29	0.08	< 0.001

N = 169 schools.

Table A17. HLM with Treatment Status and Student-to-Mental Health Staff Ratio Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Academic Motivation

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.22	0.25	0.38
2018–19 Student-to-MH staff ratio	-0.33	0.18	0.07
Treatment X student-to-MH staff ratio	0.24	0.21	0.24
Baseline academic motivation	0.44	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.11	0.08	0.20
2018–19 % African American or Black	-0.09	0.10	0.38
2018–19 Stability rate	-0.12	0.09	0.18
Intercept	-0.27	0.13	0.04
sd(District)	0.44	0.10	< 0.001

N = 169 schools.

Table A18. HLM with Treatment Status and Student-to-Mental Health Staff Ratio Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Suspension Rate

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	-0.21	0.20	0.28
2018–19 Student-to-MH staff ratio	-0.11	0.15	0.49
Treatment X student-to-MH staff ratio	0.17	0.17	0.34
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.62	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.27	0.09	0.002
2018–19 Stability rate	0.00	0.07	0.95
Intercept	0.17	0.10	0.097
sd(District)	0.32	0.10	0.001

N = 169 schools.

Table A19. HLM with Treatment Status and School Policing Structure Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Violence Victimization

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	-0.08	0.21	0.69
District police department structure	0.11	0.24	0.63
Treatment X district police department	0.32	0.39	0.41
Baseline violence victimization	0.61	0.05	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.16	0.06	0.006
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.04	0.07	0.57
2018–19 Stability rate	0.32	0.06	< 0.001
Intercept	0.04	0.09	0.70
sd(District)	0.31	0.06	0.001

N = 180 schools.

Table A20. HLM with Treatment Status and School Policing Structure Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Harassment/Bullying Victimization

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	-0.41	0.26	0.11
District police department structure	-0.09	0.28	0.76
Treatment X district police department	0.45	0.47	0.33
Baseline harassment/bullying victimization	0.36	0.06	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.24	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.13	0.09	0.15
2018–19 Stability rate	0.45	0.07	< 0.001
Intercept	0.24	0.11	0.03
sd(District)	0.37	0.08	< 0.001

N = 180 schools.

Table A21. HLM with Treatment Status and School Policing Structure Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Substance Use at School

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	-0.06	0.30	0.83
District police department structure	-0.09	0.32	0.78
Treatment X district police department	0.41	0.53	0.45
Baseline substance use at school	0.32	0.08	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.09	0.08	0.25
2018–19 % African American or Black	-0.01	0.10	0.91
2018–19 Stability rate	-0.02	0.09	0.85
Intercept	0.05	0.13	0.69
sd(District)	0.40	0.13	0.002

N = 180 schools.

Table A22. HLM with Treatment Status and School Policing Structure Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Delinquency

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	-0.05	0.31	0.87
District police department structure	-0.09	0.34	0.80
Treatment X district police department	0.36	0.57	0.52
Baseline delinquency	0.28	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.28	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.16	0.09	0.08
2018–19 Stability rate	0.26	0.07	< 0.001
Intercept	0.09	0.13	0.49
sd(District)	0.47	0.10	< 0.001

N = 180 schools.

Table A23. HLM with Treatment Status and School Policing Structure Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported School Connectedness

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.07	0.21	0.74
District police department structure	-0.18	0.23	0.44
Treatment X district police department	0.47	0.38	0.22
Baseline school connectedness	0.71	0.06	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.07	0.06	0.23
2018–19 % African American or Black	-0.15	0.07	0.04
2018–19 Stability rate	-0.04	0.07	0.55
Intercept	-0.12	0.10	0.20
sd(District)	0.28	0.08	< 0.001

N = 180 schools.

Table A24. HLM with Treatment Status and School Policing Structure Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Caring Staff-Student Relationships

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.42	0.18	0.02
District police department structure	-0.25	0.20	0.23
Treatment X district police department	0.42	0.33	0.20
Baseline caring staff-student relationships	0.52	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.01	0.07	0.84
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.16	0.08	0.049
2018–19 Stability rate	0.01	0.08	0.87
Intercept	-0.20	0.09	0.03
sd(District)	0.17	0.11	0.12

N = 180 schools.

Table A25. HLM with Treatment Status and School Policing Structure Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Student Meaningful Participation

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	0.44	0.21	0.04
District police department structure	-0.23	0.23	0.31
Treatment X district police department	0.58	0.38	0.13
Baseline student meaningful participation	0.30	0.06	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.07	0.07	0.32
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.06	0.08	0.47
2018–19 Stability rate	-0.05	0.07	0.48
Intercept	-0.27	0.10	0.006
sd(District)	0.26	0.08	0.002

N = 180 schools.

Table A26. HLM with Treatment Status and School Policing Structure Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Student-Reported Academic Motivation

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	-0.02	0.32	0.94
District police department structure	-0.22	0.35	0.53
Treatment X district police department	0.55	0.58	0.34
Baseline academic motivation	0.42	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.09	0.08	0.26
2018–19 % African American or Black	-0.15	0.10	0.14
2018–19 Stability rate	-0.10	0.09	0.27
Intercept	-0.16	0.14	0.24
sd(District)	0.47	0.11	< 0.001

N = 180 schools.

Table A27. HLM with Treatment Status and School Policing Structure Interaction Predicting School-Level 2021–22 Suspension Rate

	Std. Coeff.	S.E.	Sig.
Treatment	-0.23	0.24	0.34
District police department structure	-0.21	0.27	0.44
Treatment X district police department	0.34	0.44	0.44
2018–19 Suspension rate	0.59	0.07	< 0.001
2018–19 % African American or Black	0.21	0.08	0.01
2018–19 Stability rate	-0.05	0.07	0.46
Intercept	0.14	0.11	0.19
sd(District)	0.34	0.09	< 0.001

N = 180 schools.