



**FINAL REPORT OF THE
VIRGINIA COMMISSION ON YOUTH**

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**

School Resource Officers

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
2019**

MEMBERS OF THE VIRGINIA COMMISSION ON YOUTH

Virginia House of Delegates

Richard P. "Dickie" Bell, Chair
Emily M. Brewer
Jerrauld C. "Jay" Jones
Mark L. Keam
Christopher K. Peace
Todd E. Pillion

Senate of Virginia

David W. "Dave" Marsden, Vice-Chair
Charles W. "Bill" Carrico, Sr.
Barbara A. Favola

**Gubernatorial Appointments
from the Commonwealth at Large**

Avohom B. Carpenter
Deirdre S. "Dede" Goldsmith
Christian Rehak

Commission on Youth Staff

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I. Authority for Study

Section 30-174 of the *Code of Virginia* establishes the Commission on Youth and directs it to “study and provide recommendations addressing the needs of and services to the Commonwealth’s youth and their families.” This section also directs the Commission to “encourage the development of uniform policies and services to youth across the Commonwealth and provide a forum for continuing review and study of such services.” Section 30-175 of the *Code of Virginia* outlines the powers and duties of the Commission on Youth and directs it to “undertake studies and to gather information and data ... and to formulate and report its recommendations to the General Assembly and the Governor.”

The Virginia Commission on Youth solicited suggestions from members at the end of 2017 for study topics to add to the 2018 Commission on Youth work plan. Senator Dave Marsden suggested that the Commission on Youth learn more about the utilization of school resource officers (SROs) in schools in Virginia.

At the Commission on Youth’s June 6, 2018, meeting, the Commission heard presentations on SROs and school safety from Virginia Tech and the Department of Criminal Justice Services. The Commission also adopted a study plan to monitor the House Select Committee on School Safety and provide updates to Commission members.

II. Members Appointed to Serve

The Commission on Youth is a standing legislative commission of the Virginia General Assembly. It is comprised of twelve members: three Senators, six Delegates, and three citizens appointed by the Governor.

Members of the Virginia Commission on Youth are:

Delegate Richard P. “Dickie” Bell, Staunton, Chair
Delegate Emily M. Brewer, Smithfield
Delegate Jerrauld C. “Jay” Jones, Norfolk
Delegate Mark L. Keam, Vienna
Delegate Christopher K. Peace, Mechanicsville
Delegate Todd E. Pillion, Abingdon
Senator David W. “Dave” Marsden, Burke, Vice-Chair
Senator Barbara A. Favola, Arlington
Senator Charles W. “Bill” Carrico, Sr., Galax
Avohom B. Carpenter, Chester
Deirdre S. “Dede” Goldsmith, Abingdon
Christian Rehak, Radford

III. Executive Summary

The Virginia Commission on Youth solicited suggestions from members at the end of 2017 for study topics to add to the 2018 Commission on Youth work plan. Senator Dave Marsden suggested that the Commission on Youth learn more about the utilization of school resource officers (SROs) in schools in Virginia.

At the Commission on Youth's June 6, 2018, meeting, the Commission heard presentations on SROs and school safety from Virginia Tech and the Department of Criminal Justice Services. The Commission also adopted a study plan to monitor the House Select Committee on School Safety and provide updates to Commission members. At the June 6, 2018, meeting, Commission members directed staff to develop recommendations related to three areas:

- Threat Assessment and Follow-up Treatment for At-Risk Youth
- Training for School Resource Officers
- Best Practices on School Discipline

Subsequent to the June 6 meeting, the Governor's Children's Cabinet formed a work group on school safety.

At the Commission on Youth's November 20, 2018, meeting, Commission staff presented draft recommendations on school safety and school resources officers related to the three areas listed above based on the work of the House Select Committee on School Safety and the Governor's Children's Cabinet.

After a presentation of the draft recommendations at the Commission on Youth's November 20, 2018, meeting, and receipt of public comment, the Commission approved the following recommendations at its December 4, 2018, meeting. Unless otherwise noted, the Commission on Youth adopted to support recommendations put forward by either the House Select Committee on School Safety or the Governor's Children's Cabinet.

Recommendations on Threat Assessment and Follow-up Treatment for At-risk Youth

1. Amend the *Code of Virginia*, the Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act (VJCCCA), so that community services can be provided to juveniles before they are brought before the court on a complaint or petition.
2. Request the Department of Education identify opportunities to increase access to trauma-informed care within schools and communities, and expand access to trauma-informed training for school, mental health, and law enforcement professionals.
 - a. Promote increased access to telehealth services that will enable students to receive access to care during school hours.

- b. Identify funding streams that may be utilized to achieve this goal.
 - c. Support the placement of behavioral interventionist positions in schools. These positions should promote whole-child education and the social and emotional wellbeing of all students, but especially our most at-risk students. These roles should serve as an intermediary between classrooms and administration.
- 3. Support legislation defining “behavioral interventionist.” (Not a recommendation of the House Select Committee on School Safety or the Governor’s Children’s Cabinet.)
- 4. Request that the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, in conjunction with the Department of Health, Department of Criminal Justice Services, Department of Education, and advocacy organizations, coordinate and promote educational campaigns and trainings that will help school professionals, students, parents, and caregivers recognize behaviors that could indicate the potential for self-harm, or harm to others.
 - a. Promote student-driven, peer-to-peer communication campaigns focusing on suicide prevention, recognizing when a peer may be in need of additional support, and “See Something, Say Something” principles. Particular emphasis should be placed on educating students, parents or caregivers, school professionals, and others on how to report information and to whom information should be reported.
 - b. Local school divisions may consider adopting an anonymous reporting mechanism.
 - c. Develop school-appropriate guidance for school, mental health, and law enforcement professionals on which questions should be asked in order to assess a student’s risk-level for harm to self or others.
- 5. Introduce a budget amendment to dedicate funding to the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety under the Department of Criminal Justice Services to develop cross-disciplinary trainings for schools, law enforcement, and mental health professionals; improve data collection; and enhance information-sharing within the threat assessment team, as well as between threat assessment teams and their partners, including across school divisions. This additional funding is allocated to:
 - a. Provide technical assistance to local school divisions on the school climate survey, school safety audit, threat assessment teams, and other public safety practices.
 - b. Increase the availability of cross-disciplinary threat assessment training for all involved stakeholders (including community mental health partners) that encompasses key principles from each of the disciplines involved in threat assessment.
 - c. Authorize and fund the Center to conduct a single school climate survey in consultation with the Virginia Department of Education (DOE) and the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) that encompasses safety, education, and health interests. Survey students and staff in secondary schools (grades 6-12) on an annual basis. This would reduce burden on schools, eliminate duplicative efforts, and

provide statewide data to assist schools in addressing school climate issues and better direct their efforts.

6. Amend the *Code of Virginia* to enable the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety under the Department of Criminal Justice Services to adopt and implement a case management tool for threat assessment teams to ensure that schools are able to collect important data, monitor outcomes, and track information over time.

Recommendations on Training for School Resource Officers

1. Amend the *Code of Virginia* to require that all school divisions employing school resource officers have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the employing law enforcement agency consistent with the Model MOU from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services. MOUs should be regularly reviewed and updated.

Additionally, the Chair of the Commission on Youth will send a letter of support to the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security, the Secretary of Public Education, and the Speaker of the House of Delegates with the following recommendation to be included in the legislation: A local school district's MOU shall be reviewed between and signed off by a designated school administrator and the newly added SRO each time a SRO is assigned to a school. This will ensure everyone knows what is in the MOU.

2. Amend the *Code of Virginia* to require every school resource officer to receive SRO training approved by the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety before beginning their assignment in a local school, with exceptions permitted for training availability and staffing exigencies. Encourage school administrators to attend this training with their assigned SRO. (Legislation submitted by the Commission on Youth)

Recommendations on best Practices on School Discipline

1. Amend the *Code of Virginia* to create a Commission on Student Mental Health. Recognizing that student mental health is a growing and multifaceted issue and that policy-making should be informed by adequate evidence and subject-matter expertise, direct the newly created Commission on Student Mental Health to study, among other topics, the:
 - a. Current school counselor-to-student ratio and whether the proposed realignment of counseling responsibilities is improving the delivery of direct student services;
 - b. Feasibility and affordability of enhanced wrap-around mental health services in schools through partnerships with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, the Department of Medical Assistance Services, and Community Services Boards;

- c. Effectiveness of de-escalation and alternative disciplinary policies when interacting with students suffering from mental health challenges; and
 - d. Value of additional teacher training requirements on student mental health, such as mental health first aid.
2. Request the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety under the Department of Criminal Justice Services to develop online training on critical school and student safety issues that can be accessed by teachers (including provisional teachers), law enforcement, and school support staff who may not be able to attend in-person trainings. Training could include cultural competency, supporting special populations, the role of SSOs/SROs, mental health awareness, Threat Assessment Teams, etc.
 - a. Require at least one school administrator from each school to attend a comprehensive school safety training developed or approved by the Center.
 - b. School divisions may require that teachers participate in certain trainings or modules as part of their in-service or re-certification requirements.

Additionally, the Chair of the Commission on Youth will send a letter of support to the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security and the Secretary of Public Education with the following recommendation for the training being developed: Encourage DCJS to include a self-exam component to accompany the training.

IV. Study Goals and Objectives

The Virginia Commission on Youth solicited suggestions from members at the end of 2017 for study topics to add to the 2018 Commission on Youth work plan. Senator Dave Marsden suggested that the Commission on Youth learn more about the utilization of school resource officers (SROs) in schools in Virginia.

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A. BACKGROUND

School Resource Officers (SROs)

- “School resource officer” is defined in § 9.1-101 of the *Code of Virginia* as “a certified law-enforcement officer hired by the local law-enforcement agency to provide law-enforcement and security services to Virginia public elementary and secondary schools.” SROs are supervised by local law enforcement agencies and work in partnership with local schools. Ninety-three percent of middle and high schools in Virginia have either a full- or part-time SRO.
- In 2013, the Office of the Governor published the Final Report of the Task Force on School and Campus Safety. This report generated a number of recommendations including the restoration of funding to the SRO Incentives Grant Fund.

School Security Officers (SSOs)

- School security officers are employed by local school boards and are primarily charged with maintaining order and discipline in schools. SSOs are not law enforcement officers.
- In 2017, the General Assembly passed and the Governor signed HB 1392, which allows schools to hire retired police officers as SSOs.

B. IDENTIFIED ISSUES

- Schools are required to report any student referrals to school resource officers to the U.S. Department of Education (DOE). However, the method of how schools report to local law enforcement is not specified. Using DOE data, a 2015 report by the Center for Public Integrity (CPI) found that Virginia ranked highest in the nation for student referrals to law enforcement, at 16 per 1000 students. The national average is 6 per 1000.
- CPI’s findings raised concerns about whether SROs in Virginia were contributing to the “school to prison pipeline.” The school to prison pipeline refers to the assertion by some advocates that the presence of SROs in schools increases the number of students who enter the justice system, in particular minority and disabled students.
- To investigate these concerns, two National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice grants-funded studies were undertaken by Virginia Tech (principal investigator Dr. Gerald Lawson).
- In its initial findings, Virginia Tech reported that there were problems and inaccuracies with the CPI report. They noted that the CPI report did not examine the number of student referrals that resulted in court involvement. When Virginia Tech examined referral outcome data, they found that only 2.3 per 1000 students in Virginia actually appeared before court intake officers. In addition, appearing before a court intake officer does not necessarily result in prosecution, as intake officers have the flexibility to dismiss a

complaint or divert a student to non-judicial interventions such as counseling, mentoring, or mental health services.

- In its initial findings, Virginia Tech also reported that minority students and students with disabilities are being referred to law enforcement at a rate that is out of proportion to their demographic representation in Virginia schools.

B. STUDY ACTIVITIES

The Commission’s approved study plan includes the following activities:

- Invite members of the Select Committee on School Safety to hear presentations by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services and Virginia Tech on school resource officers.
- Following the meeting presentations, forward all information regarding school resource officers to the Select Committee on School Safety.
- Commission on Youth staff will monitor the Select Committee on School Safety and provide updates to Commission members as needed. The select committee and subcommittees are set to meet several times during 2018.

V. Adopted Recommendations

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School Resource Officers in Virginia



1



Introduction & Background



2



Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety

School Safety Statistics

*2014-15

National Center for Education
Statistics



3



Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety

What is increasing in schools?

- Security personnel and SROs increasing since 2005.
- Schools are aware and prepared. Percentage of schools that had a plan in place in the event of shooting increase from 79 to 92 percent.



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Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety

What is decreasing?

- Less likely to be murdered in school but suicide is 2nd leading cause of death among youth.
- 20 of 1,168 homicides of school age students occurred at school.
- 9 suicides at school compared with 1,785 total suicides for school aged youth.



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Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety

What is decreasing?

- Students who reported being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property
- Gangs at school are decreasing, from 20 to 11 percent.
- Hate related graffiti decreased.
- Bullying decreased from 28 to 21 percent.



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Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety

What else is decreasing?

- Physical fighting decreased from 16 to 8 percent.
- Students who reported carrying weapons decreased from 12 to 4 percent.
- Students who reported having access to gun decreased from 7 to 4 percent.



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Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety

- Students feel safe at school. Students who reported being afraid of attack or harm at school decreased from 12 to 3 percent.
- BUT.....
- SROs and security personnel increasing. Is there a connection?



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Intro & Background

Virginia SRO Program

- SROs were placed in Virginia schools beginning in mid 1980s.
- DCJS began funding SROs through Byrne funding in mid 1990s and offering SRO training.
- Provide law enforcement services to K-12 public schools.



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Intro & Background

1999 - Columbine

2000

- Established the Virginia Center for School Safety (VA Code § 9.1-184)
- Placed at the VA Department of Criminal Justice Services
- Provide services to K-12 public schools



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Legislation



Virginia Department of
Criminal Justice Services
www.dcjs.virginia.gov

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Legislation

§ 9.1-184: Center is responsible for:

- Providing **training** for all school personnel.
- Serving as a **resource and referral center** and providing technical assistance for Virginia school divisions.
- Facilitating the annual **school safety audit** pursuant to Va. Code § 22.1-279.8.
- **Maintaining and disseminating information** to local school divisions on effective school safety initiatives in Virginia and across the nation.
- Encouraging **development of partnerships** to promote school safety in Virginia.



Virginia Department of
Criminal Justice Services
www.dcjs.virginia.gov

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Legislation

- **§ 9.1-110. School Resource Officer Grants Program and Fund.**
- \$1.5 million appropriated.
- Funds SROs/SSOs position salaries in elementary, middle and high schools.
- Match based on composite index.
- Awards limited to \$50,000 per SRO position, \$22,500 per SSO position.



Legislation

- Additional mandates added to Center responsibilities over time as applicable.
- School security officer training and certification - 2004.
- School safety audits – 2005.
- Funding for the SRO Grant Program ended in 2008



Legislation

2012 – December – Sandy Hook 2013 – School and Campus Safety Task Force

- Plethora of changes to include:
 - Renamed the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety
 - Mandated K12 Threat Assessment teams to serve each public school
 - Critical Incident Response Curriculum
 - Emergency Managers in each school division
 - Model Threat Assessment Policies and Procedures
 - Lockdown drills

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Legislation

2015 – Center for Public Integrity - Governor's Children's Cabinet

- School- Law Enforcement Partnership Guide and Model MOU

2017

- SSO legislation changed to allow armed SSO positions if
 - Retired from law enforcement within last 10 years
 - Provides proof of active shooter, threat assessment, and emergency evacuation training.

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Legislation

§ 9.1-101 defines a SRO **FOR purposes of grant funding:**

- A certified law-enforcement officer
- Hired by local law-enforcement agency
- Provides law-enforcement and security services to public elementary and secondary schools
- Police Departments and Sheriff's Offices can place any officer in a school as they deem appropriate.
- There is not a separate certification for SROs



Legislation

§ 9.1-101 defines a **School Security Officer:**

- Employed by local school board.
- Maintains order and discipline, prevents crime, investigates violations of school board policies.
- Detains students violating the law or school board policies on school property or at school-sponsored events.
- Ensures safety, security, and welfare of school students, faculty, staff and visitors.



Legislation

§ 22.1-280.2:1

- within 10 years immediately prior to being hired by the local school board he was an active law-enforcement officer as defined in § 9.1-101 in the Commonwealth;
- school board grants him the authority to carry a firearm
- retired or resigned from his position as a law-enforcement officer in good standing;



Legislation

- meets the training and qualifications described in subsection C of § 18.2-308.016;
- provided proof of completion of a training course that includes training in active shooter emergency response, emergency evacuation procedure, and threat assessment to DCJS



Legislation

- local school board solicits input from the chief law-enforcement officer of the locality regarding the qualifications of the school security officer and receives verification from such chief law-enforcement officer that the school security officer is not prohibited by state or federal law from possessing, purchasing, or transporting a firearm;



Legislation

School Resource Officer	School Security Officer
1. Law enforcement agency employee	1. School employee
2. Complying with federal, state and local statutes	2. Complying with/guided by local school policies and regulations
3. Under direction of law enforcement command	3. Under direction of local school principal or designee
4. Assigned to school and community activities	4. Primarily assigned to school campus activities
5. Responsible for enforcing state law	5. Responsible for enforcing school policy
6. Responsible for custody and arrest in conformance with law	6. Responsible for detaining individuals
7. Search must be in accordance with State and Federal law	7. Can search students and others based upon reasonable suspicion
8. Laws and custody requirement procedures apply	8. May detain and question students
9. Act under the standards of law	9. Act in absence of parents (<i>in loco parentis</i>)
10. Use of force permissible as guided by department policy	10. Use of force should be limited and only used in accordance with local school policy





Virginia Data on School Resource Officers



Virginia Department of
Criminal Justice Services
www.dcjs.virginia.gov

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Virginia Data

- Facilitate the annual school safety audit pursuant to Va. Code § 22.1-279.8
- Audit data provides picture of school safety in Virginia to drive best practices and improve school safety for school administrators and first responders.

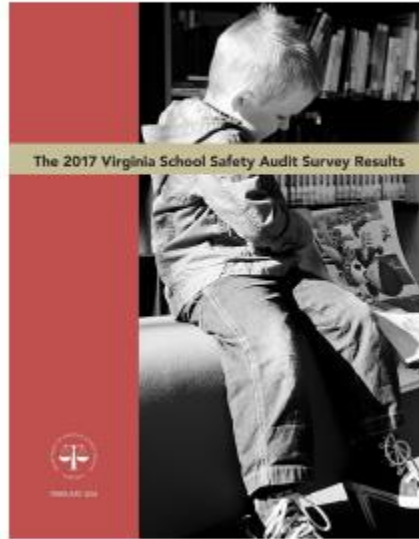


Virginia Department of
Criminal Justice Services
www.dcjs.virginia.gov

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Virginia Data



Schools in Virginia 2015-2017



Type of School	2015	2016	2017
Elementary	1,106	1,111	1,104
Middle	341	337	338
High	319	315	317
Other	194	198	197
Total Schools	1,960	1,961	1,956

Source: DCJS 2017 Statewide School Safety Audit Survey



Total Number of Schools with Full-Time School Resource Officers

Type of School	2015	2016	2017
Elementary	34 (3%)	43 (4%)	37 (3%)
Middle	248 (72%)	246 (73%)	231 (68%)
High	271 (85%)	266 (84%)	250 (79%)
Other	57 (29%)	62 (31%)	66 (34%)
Total Schools	610 (31%)	617 (31%)	584 (30%)



Source: DCJS 2017 Statewide School Safety Audit Survey

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Total Number of Schools with Part-Time School Resource Officers

Type of School	2015	2016	2017
Elementary	326 (29%)	342 (31%)	334 (30%)
Middle	58 (17%)	67 (20%)	58 (17%)
High	29 (9%)	29 (9%)	28 (9%)
Other	52 (27%)	51 (26%)	43 (21%)
Total Schools	465 (24%)	489 (25%)	463 (24%)



Source: DCJS 2017 Statewide School Safety Audit Survey

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Total Number of Schools with FT and PT School Resource Officers

Type of School	2015	2016	2017
Elementary	358 (32%)	381(34%)	371 (34%)
Middle	305 (89%)	305 (91%)	286 (85%)
High	298 (93%)	291 (92%)	276 (87%)
Other	106 (55%)	109 (55%)	107 5(4%)
Total Schools	1067 (54%)	1086 (55%)	1040 (53%)

Source: DCJS 2017 Statewide School Safety Audit Survey

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Total Number of Schools with Full-Time School Security Officers

Type of School	2015	2016	2017
Elementary	64 (6%)	71 (6%)	58 (5%)
Middle	97 (28%)	89 (26%)	85 (25%)
High	141 (44%)	135 (43%)	124 (39%)
Other	38 (20%)	43 (22%)	38 (19%)
Total Schools	340 (17%)	338 (17%)	305 (16%)

Source: DCJS 2017 Statewide School Safety Audit Survey

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Total Number of Schools with Part-Time School Security Officers

Type of School	2015	2016	2017
Elementary	29 (3%)	35 (3%)	38 (3%)
Middle	10 (3%)	9 (3%)	6 (2%)
High	15 (5%)	11 (3%)	14 (4%)
Other	8 (4%)	9 (5%)	7 (4%)
Total Schools	62 (3%)	64 (3%)	65 (3%)



Source: DCJS 2017 Statewide School Safety Audit Survey

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SRO Role in Virginia K12 Threat Assessment Teams

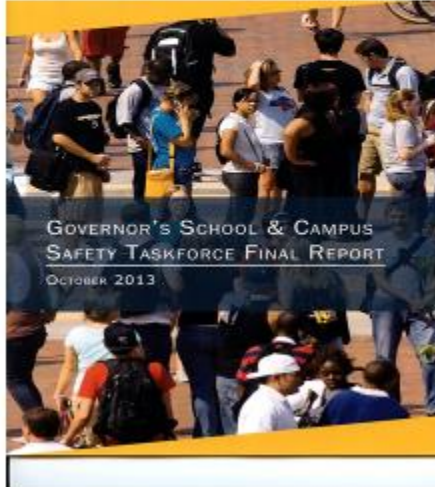


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How Did We Get Here?

*Summary of 2013 Governor's School and
Campus and General Assembly Actions*



Threat Assessment

Threat Assessment is a preventative system, not punitive, meant to intervene with individuals posing a risk of harm to self or others and get them off of a pathway to violence.





Threat Assessment

VIRGINIA CARES FOR SCHOOLS & CAMPUSES

C.A.R.E.S. involves communities working together to build:

Caring & Connection

Awareness

Recognition

Engagement

Support



What is Threat Assessment?

A systematic process that is designed to:

- 1 • **IDENTIFY** situations / subjects of concern
- 2 • **INQUIRE/INVESTIGATE** & gather information
- 3 • **ASSESS** situation
- 4 • **MANAGE** the situation / mitigate risk



Virginia Department of
Criminal Justice Services
www.dcls.virginia.gov



Threat Assessment

Virginia law (§ 22.1-79.4) requires threat assessment teams for public schools:

- Each local school board shall adopt policies for the establishment of threat assessment teams
 - Including the assessment of and intervention with **individuals** whose behavior may pose a threat to the safety of **self or others**
 - Consistent with the model policies developed by the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety in accordance with § 9.1-184.
 - Such policies must include procedures for referrals to community service boards and health providers where appropriate.

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Threat Assessment

The superintendent of each school division shall establish a threat assessment team for each school.

- Each team shall include persons with expertise in:
 - Counseling
 - Instruction
 - School administration
 - **Law enforcement**
- Threat assessment teams may serve more than one school (as determined by the superintendent).

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Threat Assessment

Each threat assessment team shall:

- Provide guidance to students, faculty, and staff on recognizing threatening /aberrant behavior that may represent a threat to the community, school, or self;
- Identify members of the school community to whom threats should be reported;
- Implement policies adopted by school board for threat assessment;
- Report quantitative data on its activities according to guidance developed by the Department of Criminal Justice Services.

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Threat Assessment

Upon a preliminary determination that a **student** poses a threat of violence or physical harm to **self or others**, the team shall:

- Immediately report its determination to the division superintendent or designee.
- The division superintendent or designee shall immediately attempt to notify the student's parent or legal guardian.
- Nothing in this subsection shall preclude school division personnel from acting immediately to address an imminent threat.

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Threat Assessment

2016-17 Data

- Nearly two-thirds of schools (1,285, 66%) reported conducting one or more threat assessments in 2016–2017.
- These schools conducted a total of 9,238 threat assessments, most of which involved students currently enrolled at the schools (9,087, 98%).



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Threat Assessment

2016-17 Data

- **Half of the threats from current students involved threats against self only** (suicide, self harm), 45% involved threats against others only, and 5% involved threats against others and self.



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Threat Assessment

- Threats involving current students
- The schools that reported threat assessments involving students currently enrolled in their school were asked to identify the type of threat made by the student(s). The 1,161 schools that conducted 8,168 threat assessments involving these students reported the following:

• Threatened self only	4,085 cases
(50%)	
• Threatened other(s) only	3,640 cases
(45%)	
• Threatened other(s) and self	443 cases
(5%)	

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Threat Assessment

- SROs are a vital link between the schools and community and can provide valuable resources to assist the family and connect them to services.
- LEOs/SRO's are intimately familiar with the ECO process as well as CPS and can facilitate those connections as appropriate

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Threat Assessment

- LEOs/SROs are experienced in dealing with youth in crisis and can be a stabilizing influence.
- Some students will find SRO's safer to open up with than MHP in schools or school administrators.



Trainings and Conferences



Trainings and Conferences

Annually the Center delivers:

- 6-8 conferences
- 150 -200 training events
- 6,500- 8,500 constituents



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Trainings and Conferences

Constituencies

- 132 public school superintendents
- 2,200 school administrators
- 4,500 assistant school administrators
- 120,000 teachers and school staff
- 69 colleges and universities
- 42 campus law enforcement agencies
- 367 law enforcement agencies
- 23,000 law enforcement officers
- 780 School Resource Officers
- 1,200 School Security Officers
- 600 Campus Security Officers



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Trainings and Conferences

K12 Conferences: Specifically in support of SROs/ SSOs/ school administrators:

1. The Briefings (April 2018)
2. School and Campus Safety Training Forum (August 2018)
3. School Safety Symposium (August 2018)
4. Strengthening Connections (November 2018)



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Trainings and Conferences

School Safety

- School Resource Officer and School Administrator Training
- Adult Sexual Misconduct in Schools
- Bomb Threat Management in Schools
- Human Trafficking for Schools
- K12 Threat Assessment
- Legal and Liability Considerations in School Safety
- Disability Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers



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Trainings and Conferences

School Safety

- High in Plain Sight: Recognition and Awareness of Current Drug Trends
- Next Steps in Crisis Management Planning
- Critical Incident Response
- Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events
- Gang Awareness for School Personnel
- Title IX Investigations and the Role of the Office for Civil Rights
- So What's Wrong with Kids These Days? An Exploration of What We Can Do to Support Children in a Complicated World".



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Trainings and Conferences

School Safety

- Managing Difficult Situations with Parents and Students
- De-escalation Training
- Social Media for Educators
- Title IX Investigations and the Role of the Office for Civil Rights
- Trauma Informed Discipline Practices
- Restorative Justice Practices
- Impact of Implicit Biases
- Autism Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers



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Resources



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Resources

Virginia
School-Law Enforcement
Partnership Guide

May 2017



Virginia
School-Law Enforcement
Partnership Model
Memorandum of
Understanding (MOU)

May 2017





Resources



Critical Incident Response for
School Faculty and Staff



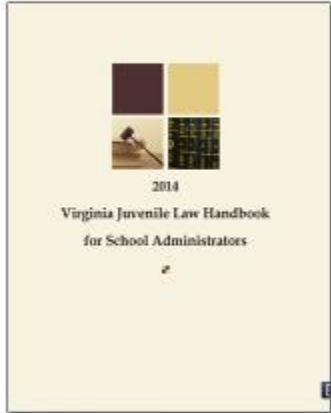
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Resources



The Virginia Educator's Guide for
Planning and Conducting School Emergency Drills



2014
Virginia Juvenile Law Handbook
for School Administrators

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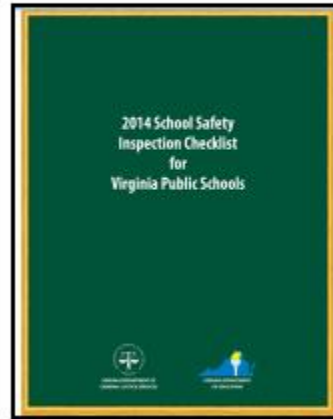
Resources



- Guidance documents for all resources and legislation



Resources

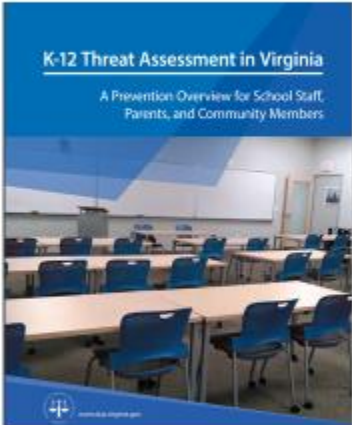




Resources




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- K12 Threat Assessment Prevention Manual & Video



Resources



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- John More, Response Law
- Multiple workshops and trainings over the next year, including
 - SAbE
 - K 12 Threat Assessment: Legal Aspects of Threat Assessment Teams



Resources

Virginia specific curriculums:

- SRO, School Administrator, and SSO curriculum
- K12 Threat Assessment
- Disability Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers Training Curriculum
- Autism Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers
- Adult Sexual Misconduct

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Research

- **DCJS Research Team**
- National Institute of Justice (NIJ) Grant on School Climate (University of VA (UVA))
- **NIJ Grant on School to Prison Pipeline (VA Tech)**
- NIJ Grant on School Threat Assessment (UVA)
- **NIJ Grant to Study SROs (VA Tech)**
- College Threat Assessment Study

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VA Center for School and Campus Safety Organizational Chart



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QUESTIONS?

We are here to help!
www.dcjs.virginia.gov

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What the Data Tell Us: Influences on Keeping Kids in the Classroom, and Out of the Courtroom

Gerard Lawson, Ph.D. & Laura Welfare, Ph.D.
Virginia Tech School of Education



Keeping Kids in Classrooms not Courtrooms

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The research team includes Gerard Lawson, Laura Welfare, Kami Patrizio, and Yasuo Myazaki with assistance from Patrick Rowley, Kazuki Hori, Mary Norris, Kevin Krost, and Ghadir Asadi.

Lawson & Welfare, 2018



Keeping Kids in Classrooms not Courtrooms

Our research was able to combine and analyze the Discipline Crime and Violence (DCV) Dataset (DOE), School Safety Audits and School Climate Data (DCJS), Juvenile Referrals and Intakes (DJJ).

We have also analyzed MOUs between Law Enforcement and School Districts, to assess whether and how processes and procedures impact the use of exclusionary discipline and referrals to LE.



Keeping Kids in Classrooms not Courtrooms

First some context...

CPI's findings of 15.8 students referred to "police or courts". They report using the US DoE Office of Civil Rights reporting, which in turn appears to have imported the "checkbox" in Virginia's DCV dataset:

Was this incident reported to Law Enforcement?

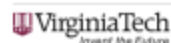


Keeping Kids in Classrooms not Courtrooms

For the Combined Years 2013-14 & 2014-15

	N=	Rate per 1000 Students
Checkbox	39,411	15.8
Potential Matches	10,668	4.2
True Match	5,715	2.3

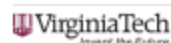
2,488,217 students in Virginia schools in
2013-14 & 2014-15



Keeping Kids in Classrooms not Courtrooms

Our data show that, of the “true matches” which appeared at intake associated with a school based offense, 48.0% resulted in a petition, and another 10.1% a petition with a detention order.

The remaining never appeared before a Juvenile Court judge.



Keeping Kids in Classrooms not Courtrooms

Research Questions

What are the influences of cultural factors on the STPP in Virginia?

Incidents of exclusionary discipline and referrals to law enforcement are higher among minority students and those with a disability.



Keeping Kids in Classrooms not Courtrooms

Cultural Differences in Exclusionary Discipline (per 1000)

	ST	LT	365	Permanent
White students	<i>M</i> = 76.0	<i>M</i> = 1.1	<i>M</i> = .19	<i>M</i> = .05
Black students	<i>M</i> = 176.3*	<i>M</i> = 3.2*	<i>M</i> = .36**	<i>M</i> = .14***
Hispanic students	<i>M</i> = 76.0	<i>M</i> = 1.4	<i>M</i> = .11	<i>M</i> = .06



Keeping Kids in Classrooms not Courtrooms

Cultural Differences in Reports to LE (per 1000)

Appeared at Intake

White students	$M = 1.04$
----------------	------------

Black students	$M = 1.21$
----------------	------------

Hispanic students	$M = .16$
-------------------	-----------

2013-14 School Year



Keeping Kids in Classrooms not Courtrooms

	Commonwealth Schools' Demographics	Actual Referrals to Intake Officer
White students	52.4%	42.5%
Black students	23.0%	49.4%
Hispanic students	13.1%	6.5%
Asian Students	6.4%	0.7%
Other	5.2%	0.1%



Keeping Kids in Classrooms not Courtrooms

Exclusionary Discipline based on Disability Status (per 1000 students)

	ST	LT	365	Permanent
Overall	$M = 82.46$	$M = 1.84$	$M = .251$	$M = .079$
Students with a Disability	$M = 347.85^*$	$M = 3.41^*$	$M = .377^{**}$	$M = .141$

* Significant at $p < .001$
 ** Significant at $p = .034$



Keeping Kids in Classrooms not Courtrooms

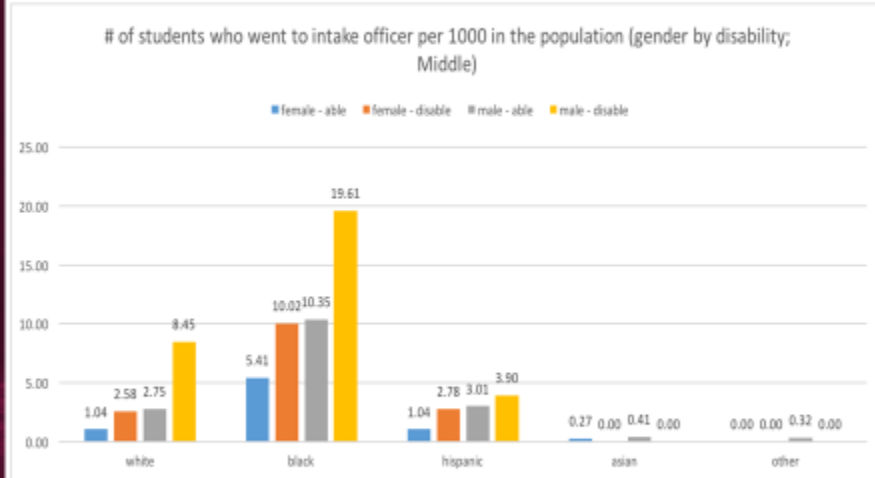
Appearances at Intake based on Disability Status (per 1000 students)

Appeared at Intake	
Overall	$M = 2.45$
Students with a Disability	$M = 5.60$

2013-14 School Year



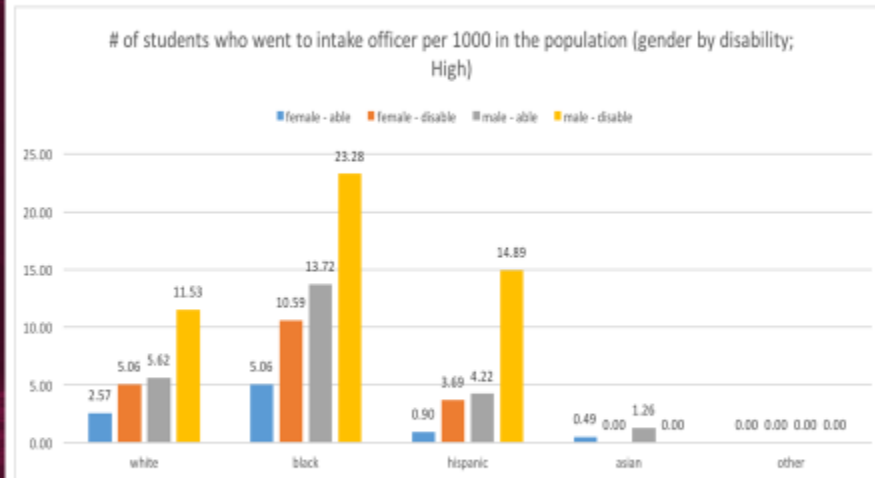
Keeping Kids in Classrooms not Courtrooms



2013-14 School Year



Keeping Kids in Classrooms not Courtrooms



2013-14 School Year



Keeping Kids in Classrooms not Courtrooms

Thank You!

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glawson@vt.edu



An Investigation of
School Resource and
Safety Programs Policy
and Practice in Virginia

GERARD LAWSON, PHD AND LAURA E. WELFARE, PHD
VIRGINIA TECH SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

VIRGINIA TECH.

*The National Institutes of Justice
Award 2016-CK-BX-0021*

- This project was supported by the National Institutes of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Justice.
- The research team includes Gerard Lawson, Laura Welfare, Kami Patrizio, and Cherie Edwards with assistance from Kazuki Hori, Alison Bowers, and Tom Bluestein.

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VIRGINIA TECH.

Overview

- **Well-structured School Resource Officer (SRO) and School Security Officer (SSO) programs with clear policies, procedures, roles, and responsibilities seem more likely to achieve positive outcomes (Cray & Weiler, 2011), but there is limited empirical support for this assertion. This study explores variables related to Virginia SRO and SSO training, policy, and procedures.**

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Quantitative Data

- **New Surveys**
 - 265 SROs (of \approx 700 invited)
 - 60 SRO Law Enforcement Supervisors (of 136 invited)
 - 45 SRO School-Based Liaisons (of 93 invited)
 - 163 SSOs (of \approx 600 invited)
 - 9 SSO Supervisors (of 57 invited)
- **2017 School Safety Audit**
 - \approx 2000 schools
 - \approx 1000 schools had BOTH an SRO and/or an SSO

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SRO Demographics

- Age range 24 – 70 with an average age of 43 years
- 83% Male, 17% Female
- 84% White, 7% Black, 4% Hispanic, 2% American Indian or Alaska Native, 2% Asian, 1% Multiracial

Earned GED or Equivalent	.5%
Earned a High School Diploma	12.5%
Completed Some College	35.5%
Earned an Associate's Degree	17.5%
Earned a Bachelor's Degree	25.5%
Completed some Graduate School	5.0%
Earned a Master's Degree	3.5%

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SSO Demographics

- Age range 27 – 71 with an average age of 52 years
- 63% Male, 37% Female
- 53% Black, 47% White, 3% Hispanic, 2% Multiracial

Completed Some High School	2.8%
Earned a High School Diploma	13.0%
Completed Some College	28.7%
Earned an Associate's Degree	14.8%
Earned a Bachelor's Degree	29.6%
Completed Some Graduate School	3.7%
Earned a Master's Degree	7.4%

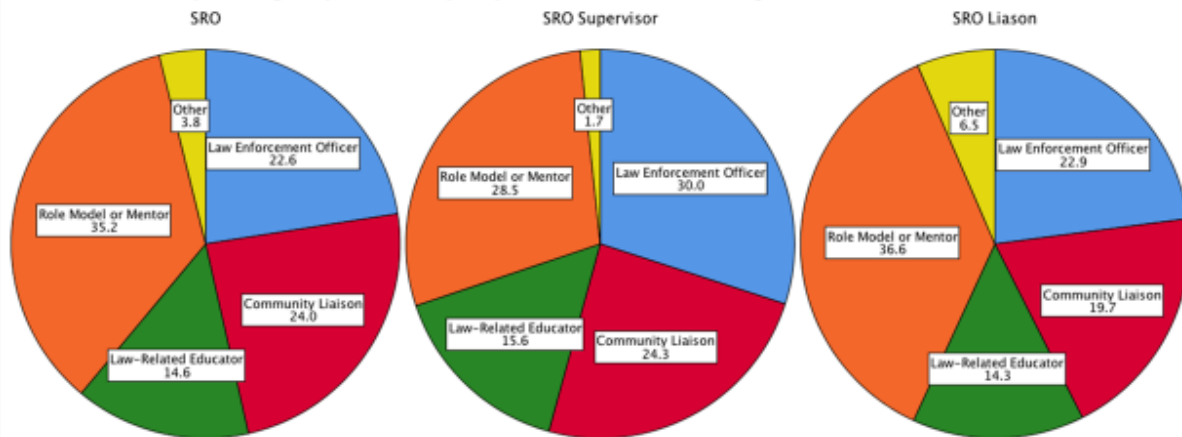
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SRO and SSO Duties & Training

- How are SROs and SSOs trained to operate in K-12 public schools in the Commonwealth of Virginia?
- On what topics do they receive training?
- How does their training compare to their actual duties?

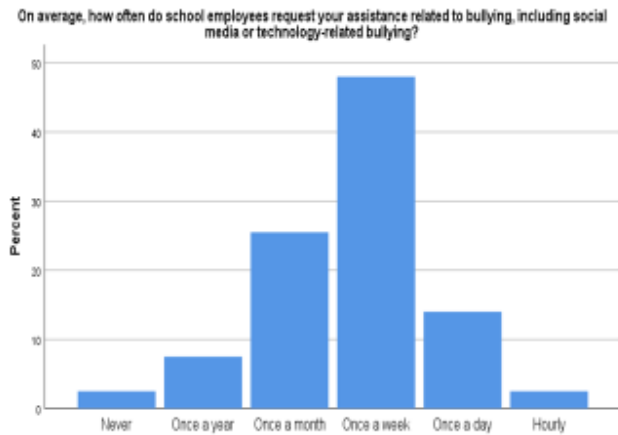
SRO Duties

What percentage of your time do you spend on each of the following tasks? (Total must sum to 100)



SROs: Duties

- 65% of SROs said school employees request assistance related to bullying, including social media or technology-related bullying hourly, daily, or weekly.

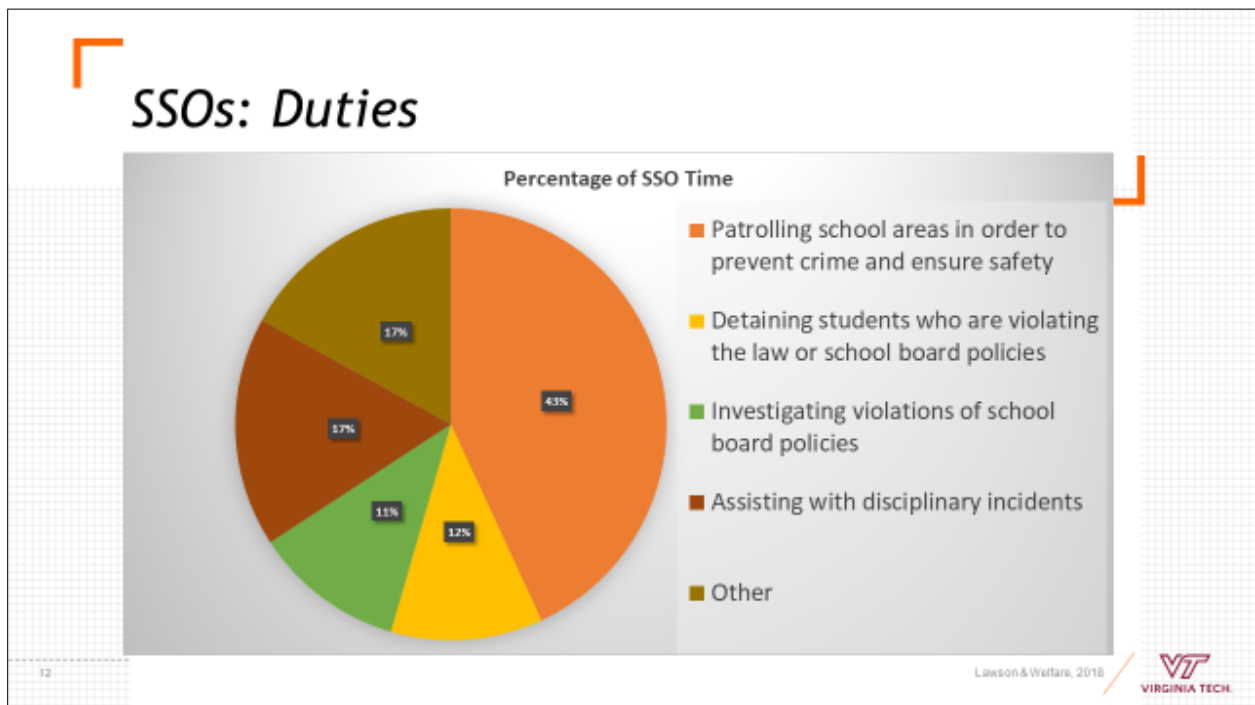
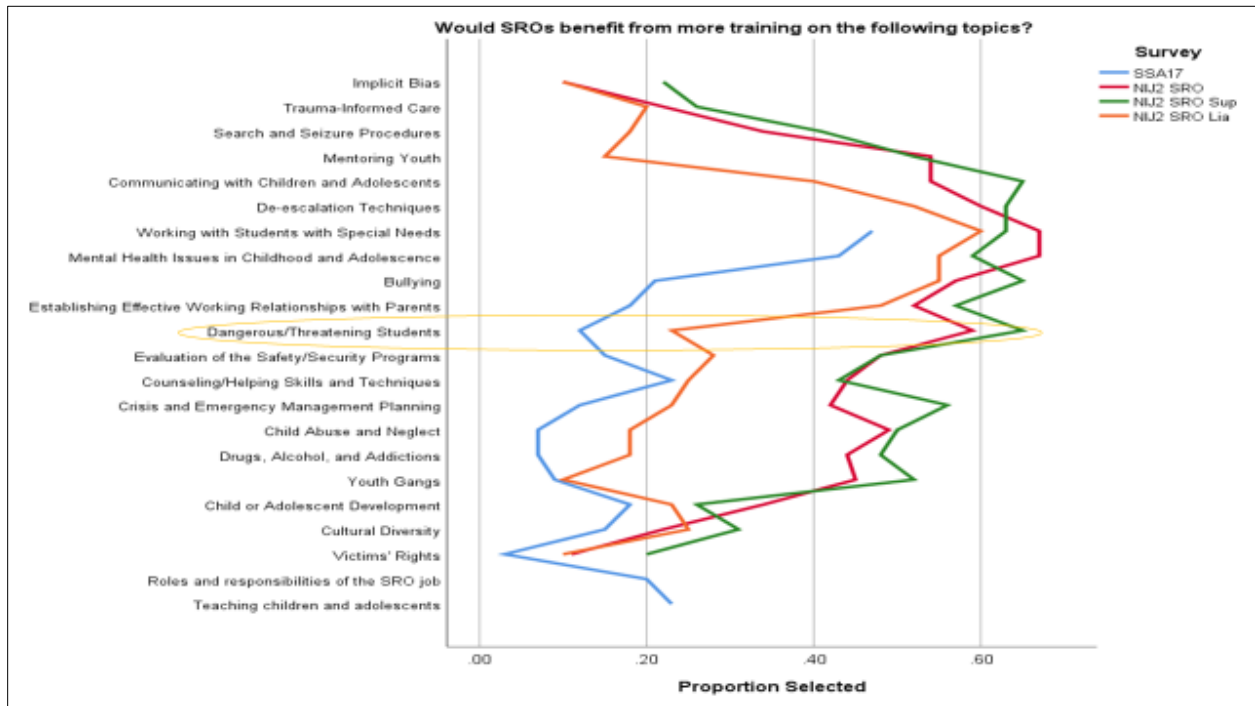


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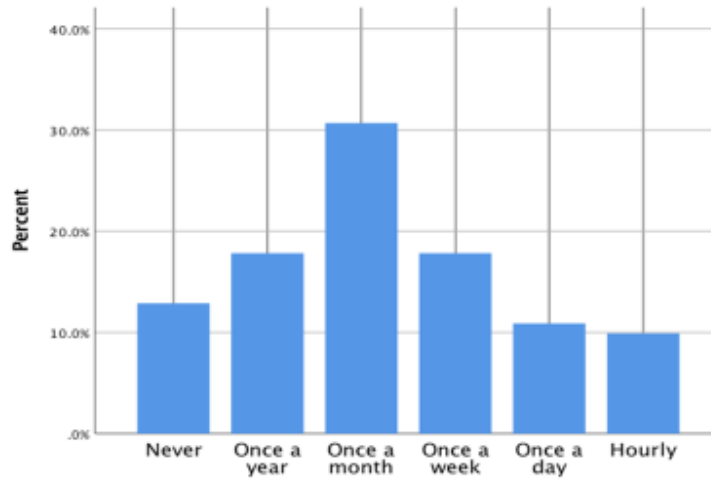
SROs: More Training is Needed

1. Working with Students with Special Needs
2. Mental Health Issues in Childhood and Adolescence
3. Dangerous/Threatening Students
4. Bullying
5. Establishing Effective Working Relationships with Parents

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SSOs: Duties



On average, how often are you requested to intervene in physical altercations between students?

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SSOs: More Training is Needed

1. Dangerous/Threatening Students
2. **Mental Health Issues in Childhood and Adolescence**
3. De-escalation Techniques
4. **Working with Students with Special Needs**
5. Bullying
6. Evaluation of the Safety/Security Programs
7. Communicating with Children and Adolescents
8. Youth Gangs
9. Counseling/Helping Skills and Techniques
10. Search and Seizure Procedures

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SSOs: Other Findings about Training

- 41% of SSO respondents reported previous experience as law enforcement officers (sheriff or police)
- 57% of SSO respondents reported training in de-escalation techniques such as Mandt or Handle With Care
- 78% of SSO respondents agreed or strongly agreed that SSOs need more training in the role of an SSO.

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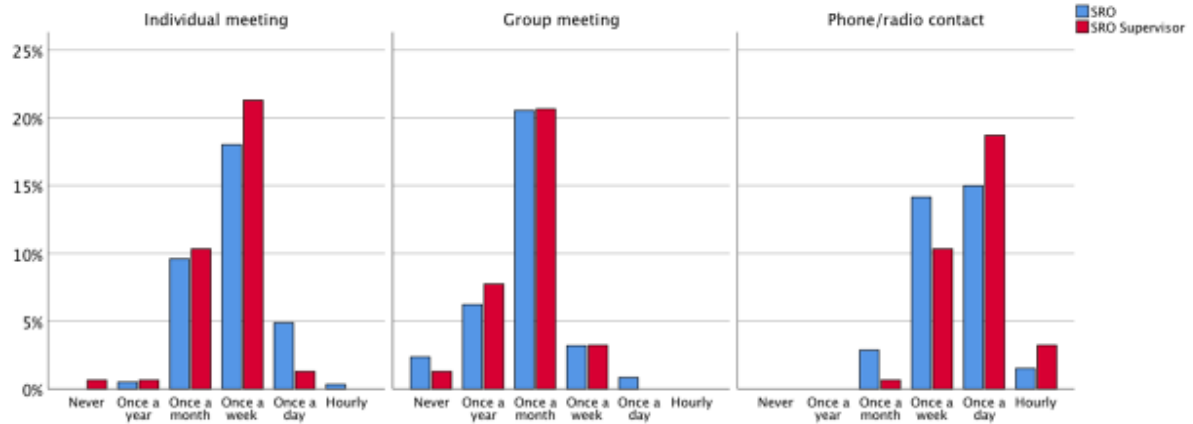
SRO & SSO Supervision

- **How are SROs and SSOs operating in schools supervised by their own department and/or by the school(s) in which they operate?**

16

SROs: Supervision with Ranking LEO

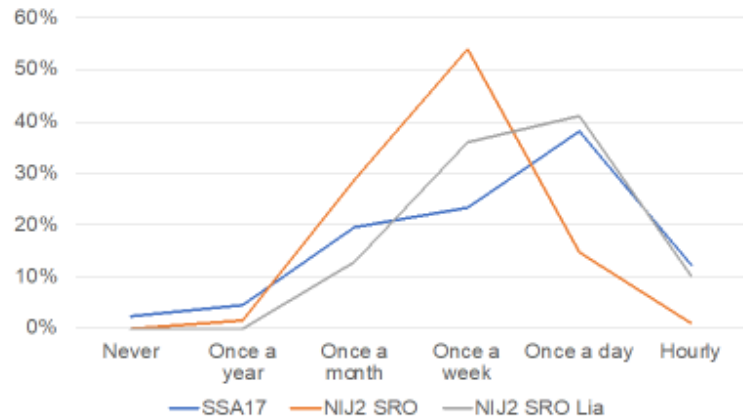
How often do you have the following types of contact?



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SROs: Contact with School Liaisons

Individual meeting

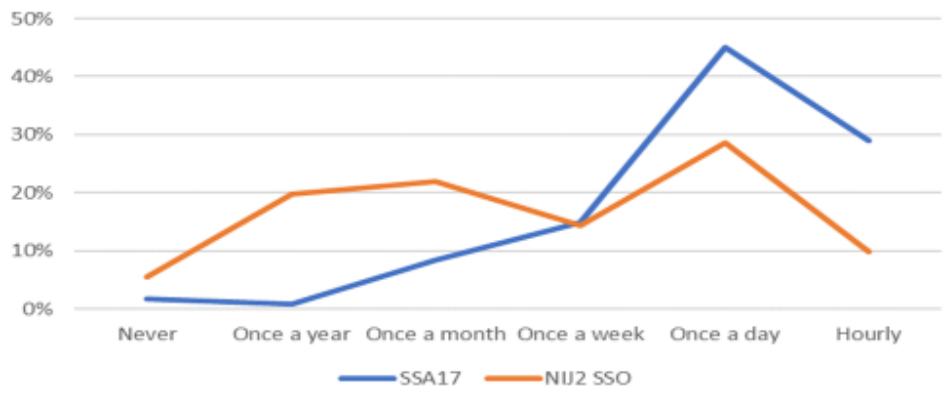


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SSOs: Supervision

Individual meeting

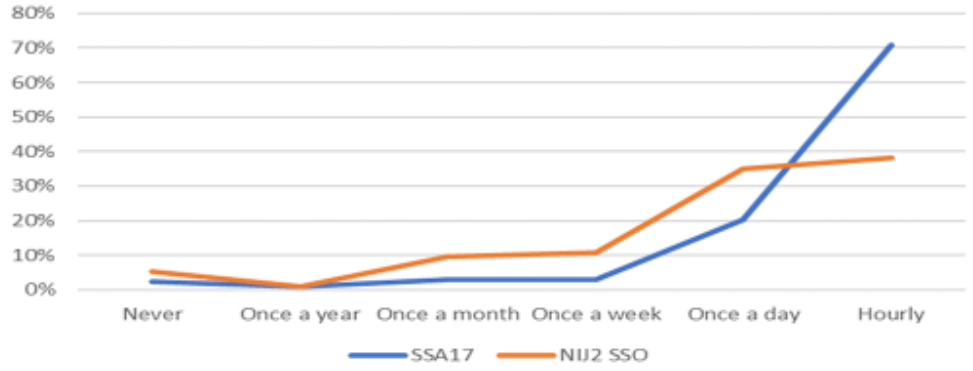


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SSOs: Supervision

Phone/radio contact



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Involvement in School Discipline

- To what extent are SROs and SSOs involved in addressing school disciplinary matters that do not rise to the level of criminal activity?
- How are these situations initiated and handled?
- What does the SRO or SSO do in these situations?
- Why is the SRO or SSO involved in these situations?

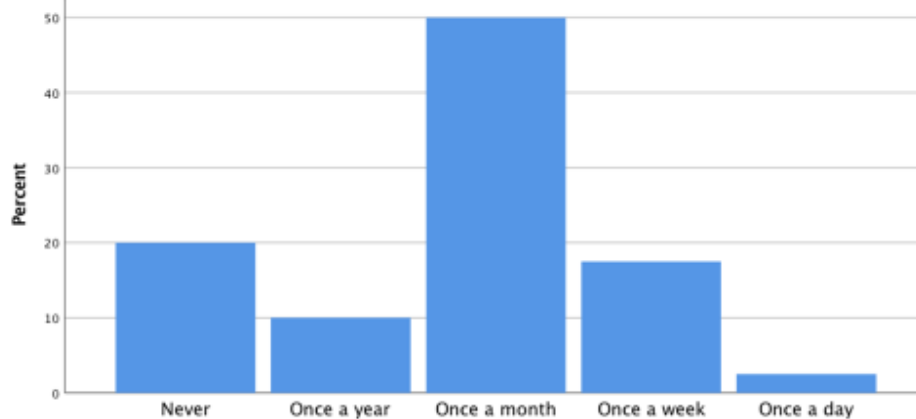
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SROs: Liaisons' Perspective on School Discipline

On average, how often do school employees request SRO assistance with school disciplinary incidents that do not involve criminal activity or threaten public safety?



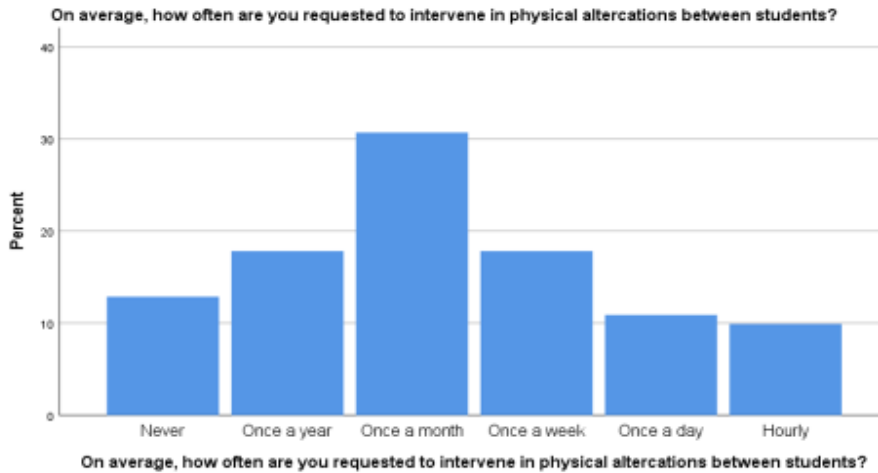
On average, how often do school employees request SRO assistance with school disciplinary incidents that do not involve criminal activity or threaten public safety?

22





SSOs: School Discipline

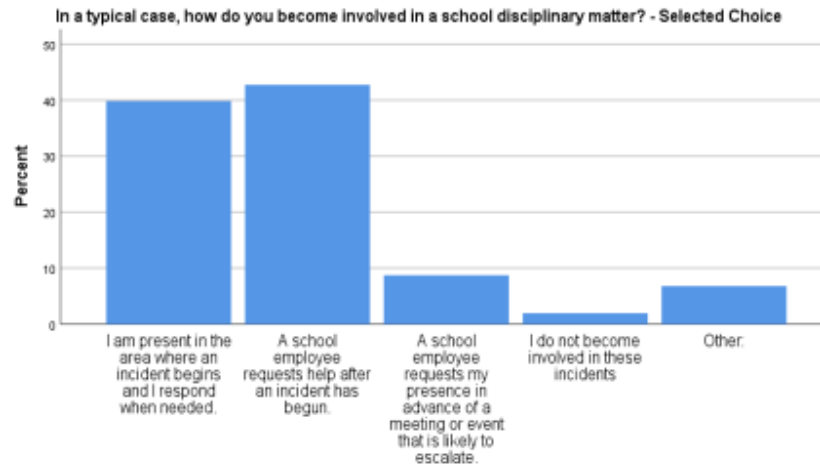


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SSOs: School Discipline



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SROs Feel Valued by the School

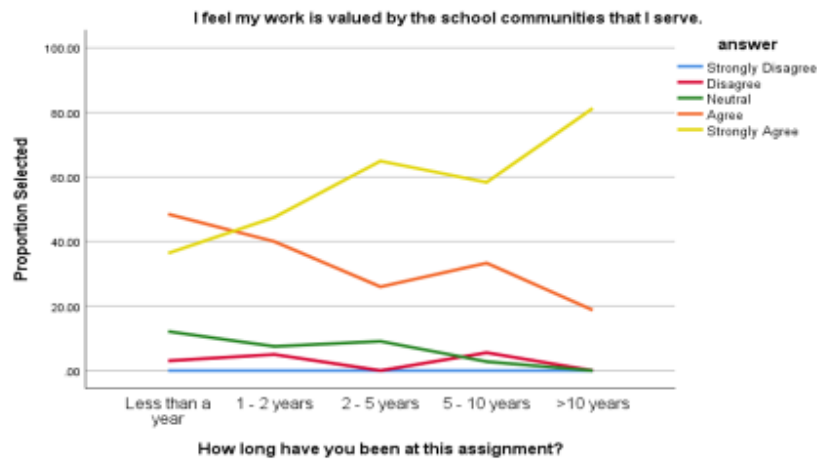


- Do SROs believe that their work is valued by Law Enforcement and Schools?

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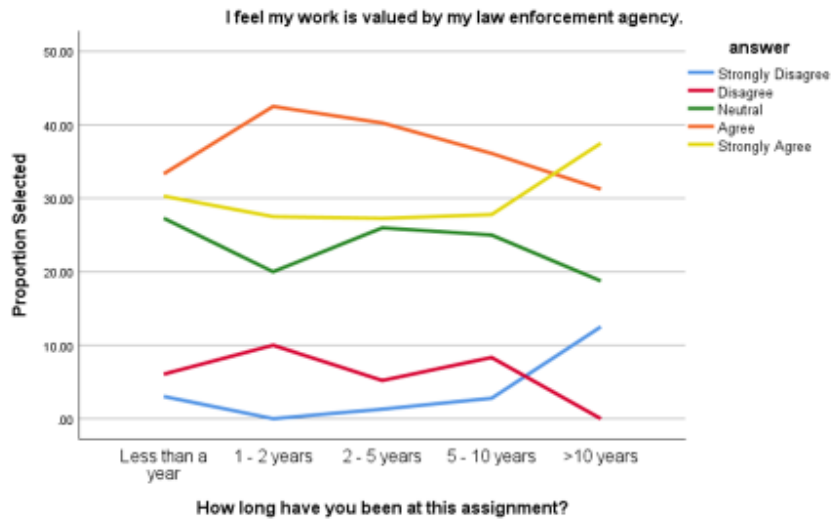


SROs Feel Valued by the School



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SROs Feel Valued by Law Enforcement



Thank you!

Any questions, comments?

Contact:

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glawson@vt.edu