



The 2024 Virginia School Safety Audit State and Regional Comparison

Since 1997, Virginia law has required all public schools to conduct annual school safety audits (*Code of Virginia* [§ 22.1-279.8](#)). The audit process assists schools and divisions in identifying and evaluating physical safety concerns and patterns of student and staff safety perceptions.

The Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (VCSCS), in consultation with the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), is responsible for developing the list of items to review and evaluate as part of the school safety audit required by the *Code of Virginia*. Additionally, VCSCS has established a standardized report format for school safety audits, reporting criteria, and procedures for report submission.

Since 2005, VCSCS has collected and shared school safety data for the annual School Safety Audit Program. The audit process is reviewed and updated regularly to maintain the data's relevance.

Two components of the School Safety Audit are the school and division safety survey(s), which are intended to provide schools, divisions, and DCJS with information on how best practices for school safety are being implemented across Virginia. The results of these surveys provide valuable information on training and resources needed across the state. These surveys are adjusted to reflect current trends and best practices and to gather data to inform policymakers.

Based on the results of the School Safety Audit, schools and divisions can develop responses and solutions to identify vulnerabilities. These may include recommendations for structural adjustments, changes to safety procedures, and/or revisions to the standards of student conduct. All data from the School Safety Audit is available to school divisions to assist with informing their practices and guiding decisions related to student and staff safety.

Further information regarding the components of the School Safety Audit, as well as copies of the survey instruments, can be found on the [DCJS website](http://www.dcms.virginia.gov/virginia-center-school-and-campus-safety/virginia-school-safety-audit-program) at www.dcms.virginia.gov/virginia-center-school-and-campus-safety/virginia-school-safety-audit-program.

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This report compares state and regional data collected from the 1,946 traditional K-12 public schools operating in Virginia during the 2023–2024 school year. These schools comprise the 131 public school divisions that completed the division safety survey. According to the VDOE [Fall Membership database](#), there were 1,262,011 students enrolled in public schools during the 2023–2024 school year. All divisions and schools participated in the 2024 School Safety Audit.

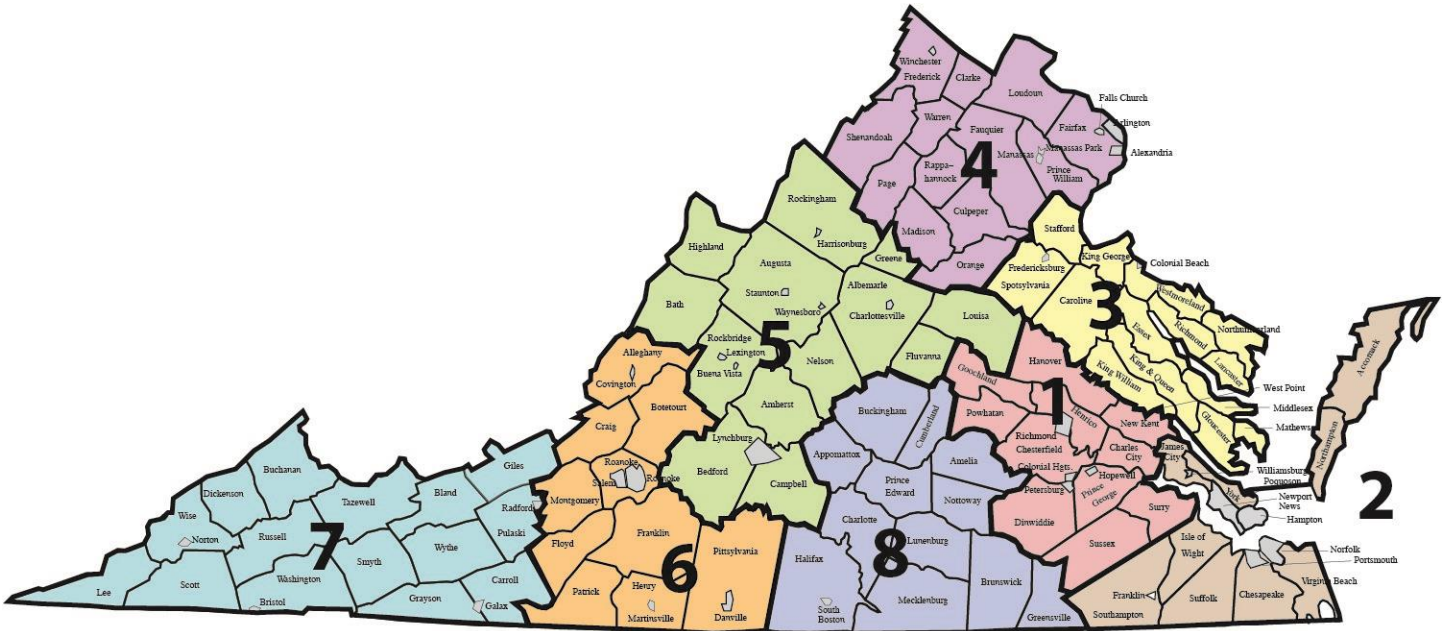
Note: This report is intended to provide examples of the data collected to provide insight and comparisons for school leadership, school divisions, policymakers, and other school safety and security personnel. These are excerpts, as the entirety of the 2024 School Safety Audit is not available for public inspection to protect the confidentiality of sensitive information and potential security vulnerabilities per the *Code of Virginia* [§ 22.1-279.8](#). Additional reports summarizing state-level results by item can be found on the [DCJS website](http://www.dcms.virginia.gov).

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Regions are based on the eight [Virginia Department of Education Superintendent's Regions](#). See the map below.

Number participating	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Divisions	131	15	15	17	19	20	14	19	12
Schools	1,946	277	368	121	574	200	183	167	56

Virginia Department of Education Superintendent's Regions



Region 1 – Central Virginia	Region 2 – Tidewater	Region 3 – Northern Neck	Region 4 – Northern Virginia	Region 5 – Valley	Region 6 – Western Virginia	Region 7 – Southwest	Region 8 – Southside
Charles City Chesterfield Colonial Heights Dinwiddie Goochland Hanover Henrico Hopewell New Kent Petersburg Powhatan Prince George Richmond City Surrey Sussex	Accomack Chesapeake Franklin City Hampton Isle of Wight Newport News Norfolk Northampton Poquoson Portsmouth Southampton Suffolk Virginia Beach Williamsburg James City York	Caroline Colonial Beach Essex Fredericksburg Gloucester County King George King and Queen Lancaster Mathews Middlesex Northumberland Richmond Stafford Westmoreland West Point	Alexandria Arlington Clarke Culpeper Fairfax Falls Church Fauquier Frederick Loudoun Madison Manassas Manassas Park Orange Page Prince William Rappahannock Shenandoah Warren Winchester	Albemarle Amherst Augusta Bath Bedford Buena Vista Campbell Charlottesville Fluvanna Greene County Harrisonburg Highland Lexington Louisa Lynchburg Nelson Rockbridge Rockingham Staunton Waynesboro	Alleghany Botetourt Covington Craig Danville Floyd Franklin Henry Martinsville Montgomery Patrick Pittsylvania Roanoke City Roanoke Salem	Bland Bristol Buchanan Carrroll Dickenson Galax Giles Grayson Lee Norton Pulaski Radford Russell Scott Smyth Tazewell Washington Wise Wythe	Amelia Appomattox Brunswick Buckingham Charlotte Cumberland Greensville Halifax Lunenburg Mecklenburg Nottoway Prince Edward

School Security

Percent of school divisions with each type of safety/security personnel, 2023-2024 school year, statewide and by region.

*Respondents were instructed to select all; therefore, percentages will not equal 100%.

Percent of divisions with security personnel N= 131	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
SRO	97%	100%	100%	100%	95%	85%	100%	100%	100%
SSO	47%	73%	87%	35%	74%	25%	21%	26%	42%
Private Security	7%	0%	0%	6%	26%	0%	0%	5%	17%
None	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	10%	0%	0%	0%

Schools where someone from the building has attended a DCJS SRO and Administrator Basic Course.

% of schools N= 1,946	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
No, no one from this building has attended	37%	26%	35%	55%	28%	48%	57%	38%	41%
Someone from this building has attended	29%	32%	29%	39%	18%	30%	31%	52%	34%
Do not have SROs	34%	42%	36%	7%	54%	22%	11%	10%	25%

Division policy on allowing School Security Officers who meet all the requirements under the *Code of Virginia* [§ 22.1-280.2:1](#) to be armed.

% of divisions N= 131	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
SSOs are not allowed to be armed in division schools, and we are not considering changing this policy in the near future.	34%	53%	73%	35%	53%	15%	21%	11%	17%
SSOs are allowed to be armed in division schools.	12%	13%	13%	0%	21%	10%	0%	16%	25%
We do not currently allow SSOs to be armed but are considering allowing it.	3%	7%	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%	17%
Do not have SSOs	50%	27%	13%	65%	21%	75%	79%	74%	42%

Emergency Planning, Drills, and Response

Divisions using the following protocols.

*Respondents were instructed to select all; therefore, percentages will not equal 100%.

% of divisions N= 131	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Standard Response Protocol (SRP)	56%	60%	60%	47%	53%	40%	79%	68%	42%
Standard Reunification Method (SRM)	47%	47%	60%	18%	53%	40%	71%	58%	25%

Percent of schools that activated some portion of their Crisis Management Plan during the 2023–2024 school year.

% of schools N= 1,946	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Yes	38%	42%	38%	42%	39%	43%	36%	28%	36%
No	61%	58%	63%	58%	61%	58%	64%	71%	64%
Virtual schools – question not asked	0%	1%	0%	0%	<1%	0%	1%	1%	0%

Percent of schools receiving safety-related communication determined to be a hoax, such as a bomb threat, swatting call, or other concerning information in 2023–2024.

% of schools N= 1,946	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Yes	10%	8%	10%	16%	11%	6%	11%	5%	13%
No	90%	91%	89%	84%	88%	94%	88%	94%	88%
Virtual schools – question not asked	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%

Percent of schools having Naloxone (Narcan) available for incidents of opioid use.

% of schools N= 1,946	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Yes	76%	71%	42%	87%	92%	77%	84%	87%	75%
No	24%	28%	58%	13%	8%	23%	16%	12%	25%
Virtual schools – question not asked	<1%	1%	0%	0%	<1%	0%	1%	1%	0%

Percent of schools using security technology.

*Respondents were instructed to select all, so the percentages will not equal 100%.

% of schools N= 1,946	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Bus cameras	98%	96%	99%	100%	99%	99%	99%	99%	96%
Hand-held two-way radios	98%	98%	99%	98%	98%	100%	99%	94%	100%
Surveillance cameras	95%	97%	99%	99%	86%	98%	97%	99%	96%
Mass notification system	93%	91%	93%	95%	94%	98%	94%	90%	82%
Electronic card access reader system	82%	81%	71%	93%	90%	75%	87%	80%	68%
Visitor electronic ID checks	80%	87%	84%	84%	91%	77%	80%	27%	80%
Panic buttons	62%	52%	61%	79%	71%	70%	54%	48%	38%

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% of schools N= 1,946	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Bus tracking systems for parents	57%	61%	77%	71%	81%	18%	37%	3%	13%
Anonymous reporting app	52%	54%	49%	53%	61%	46%	48%	38%	46%
Electronic app connecting to first responders	34%	37%	30%	37%	29%	32%	48%	41%	11%
Security scanning equipment (metal/ weapons detection)	31%	38%	59%	45%	13%	23%	22%	22%	61%
Hurricane or ballistic security window film	24%	8%	19%	20%	34%	34%	22%	25%	13%
Electronic hall passes	19%	13%	20%	32%	20%	16%	26%	8%	20%
Vape detection system	14%	14%	4%	15%	8%	15%	22%	40%	39%
Student RFID-enabled ID cards	10%	28%	13%	10%	4%	4%	3%	4%	9%

Percent of divisions having policies on incidences of antisemitism, anti-religious bigotry, or ethnic violence.

% of divisions N= 131	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Yes	45%	53%	40%	29%	79%	50%	50%	32%	17%
No	55%	47%	60%	71%	21%	50%	50%	68%	83%

Percent of divisions with completed digitally mapped floor plans for their schools.

% of divisions N= 131	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Yes, all.	95%	100%	100%	94%	95%	95%	93%	89%	100%
Yes, some.	4%	0%	0%	6%	5%	5%	7%	5%	0%
No, none.	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	5%	0%

Percent of divisions having electronic key card access to school exterior doors.

% of divisions N= 130	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Yes	95%	100%	93%	100%	100%	85%	100%	94%	92%
No	5%	0%	7%	0%	0%	15%	0%	6%	8%

Percent of divisions with electronic locking systems that can be engaged during an emergency.

% of divisions N= 130	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Yes, at all schools	41%	13%	53%	41%	63%	35%	21%	50%	42%
Yes, at some schools	18%	33%	13%	12%	5%	25%	29%	17%	8%
No, at none of our schools	42%	53%	33%	47%	32%	40%	50%	33%	50%

Percent of divisions having cameras with the ability to give remote access to first responders during an emergency.

% of divisions N= 130	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Yes	71%	60%	87%	65%	79%	65%	79%	78%	50%
No	29%	40%	13%	35%	21%	35%	21%	22%	50%

Training & Threat Assessments

Schools participating in the “Handle With Care First Responder—School Trauma-Informed Communication System.”

% of schools N= 1,946	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Yes	37%	30%	29%	49%	36%	48%	31%	57%	32%
No	63%	70%	71%	51%	64%	52%	69%	43%	68%

Schools who feel they were able to provide sufficient mental health support for students and staff.

% of schools N= 1,946	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Yes	67%	61%	61%	53%	77%	67%	64%	74%	61%
No	33%	39%	39%	47%	23%	34%	36%	26%	39%

Schools with staff that have been trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid.

% of schools N= 1,946	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Yes	38%	32%	30%	36%	39%	45%	42%	56%	39%
No	62%	68%	70%	64%	61%	55%	58%	44%	61%

To whom schools have provided suicide awareness training.

*Respondents were instructed to select all; therefore, percentages will not equal 100%.

% of schools N= 1,946	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Staff	70%	76%	68%	60%	75%	64%	64%	71%	54%
Students	20%	30%	15%	17%	26%	14%	13%	16%	7%
Parents/Guardians	9%	13%	6%	6%	13%	5%	4%	5%	4%
None of the above	28%	23%	30%	37%	22%	36%	34%	26%	46%

Threat assessments conducted during the 2023–2024 school year.

	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
# of threat assessments	24,357	6,403	2,860	1,638	7,807	3,018	1,597	653	381
% to others only	58%	48%	71%	62%	59%	59%	63%	65%	60%
% to self only	38%	47%	25%	35%	38%	38%	31%	26%	37%
% to self and others	4%	5%	5%	3%	4%	3%	6%	9%	3%

How the reports of aberrant behavior or threats were made for the threat assessment(s) conducted.

*Respondents were instructed to respond for each group. One threat may have been reported through multiple categories.

% of threats	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Reported by staff member	65%	71%	66%	71%	56%	67%	72%	61%	85%
Reported by student	41%	33%	50%	36%	47%	35%	39%	45%	38%
Reported by parent or guardian	5%	4%	7%	6%	5%	5%	4%	9%	4%
Found through social media monitoring	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%	4%	5%
Reported anonymously	2%	4%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	<1%	1%

Safety Audit Review

Top 10 issues identified through a review of Audit components by divisions.

*Respondents were instructed to select all; therefore, percentages will not equal 100%.

% of divisions N= 131	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Absenteeism/tardiness/skipping	79%	80%	73%	82%	63%	100%	71%	68%	92%
Parent involvement	54%	47%	60%	53%	47%	50%	57%	53%	75%
Disrespectful behavior	51%	73%	93%	35%	26%	45%	64%	42%	42%
Mental health	42%	40%	40%	53%	37%	45%	50%	37%	33%
Cell phones	34%	20%	53%	29%	37%	25%	29%	37%	42%
Behavior management/student aggression	33%	27%	53%	59%	21%	25%	29%	21%	33%
Appropriate social media use	32%	20%	27%	35%	21%	30%	50%	42%	33%
Camera coverage	29%	27%	20%	18%	26%	40%	36%	26%	42%
Student engagement	29%	20%	20%	24%	26%	40%	36%	26%	42%
Substance use	29%	20%	13%	18%	32%	50%	43%	26%	25%

Top 10 resources needed by divisions to address safety and climate concerns.

*Respondents were instructed to select all; therefore, percentages will not equal 100%.

% of divisions N=131	STATE	REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3	REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6	REGION 7	REGION 8
Funding	63%	60%	67%	65%	68%	70%	43%	68%	58%
Mental health resources	63%	53%	67%	53%	53%	70%	86%	63%	58%
Training/Professional development	44%	53%	60%	47%	26%	40%	50%	32%	50%
Cameras/Camera system upgrades	35%	47%	33%	18%	21%	40%	43%	42%	42%
Time	35%	27%	40%	35%	26%	35%	36%	37%	50%
Additional counseling staff	34%	33%	40%	35%	37%	35%	29%	32%	25%
Alternatives to suspension	30%	47%	47%	41%	5%	25%	36%	16%	33%
Building repairs/upgrades	27%	27%	27%	18%	26%	30%	36%	32%	17%
Additional security personnel	25%	27%	40%	24%	26%	35%	0%	21%	25%
Replacement locks/Door repair	24%	20%	27%	18%	21%	40%	14%	21%	25%