



The 2014 Virginia School Safety Audit Survey Results



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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Legislation enacted in 2005 designated the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (VCSCS) of the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) to prescribe the audit content and reporting process for the School Safety Audit program. Accordingly, the VCSCS and DCJS Research Center conduct an annual on-line school safety survey that allows schools and school divisions to meet the *Code of Virginia* mandate to report safety audit data. Annual reports can be found on the DCJS website at www.dcjs.virginia.gov/vcss/audit/index.cfm. The survey for the 2013–2014 academic school year was conducted in August and September 2014 and covered school safety-related topics such as: crisis management plans, threat assessment teams, school climate, safety-related programs, and school security efforts.

Findings from the 2014 School Survey

There were 1,972 schools that participated in the 2013–2014 school safety survey.

Crisis Management Plans and Notification

Nearly all schools (97%) reported practicing some portion of their Crisis Management Plan (CMP). One-quarter of the schools (25%) said they activated their CMP; the rate was slightly higher among middle schools (29%) and high schools (30%) than elementary and other schools.

Of the 1,839 schools that reported having an emergency notification system (ENS), 19% said they activated the system for an emergency.

Communication with Law Enforcement

Overall, two-thirds of schools (66%) reported that school administrators have regular meetings with local law enforcement to discuss problems in and around the school. Middle and high schools had more frequent regular meetings with local law enforcement (84% and 89%, respectively) than elementary (53%) and other (68%) schools.

Fewer than half of all schools (45%) reported regularly receiving crime data reports from local law enforcement regarding crimes occurring in the area near the school. This percentage is slightly higher among middle and high schools (49% and 60%, respectively) than with elementary (40%) and other (42%) schools.

Overall, 58% of schools reported having formal processes or protocols through which their school routinely receives notification on certain offenses committed by students under certain circumstances as described in *Virginia Code §22.1-279.3:1 (Paragraph B)*. This rate was highest among high schools (68%).

Threat Assessments

Eighty-one percent of schools reported that their threat assessment team serves their school only, as opposed to serving multiple schools.

Most schools (85%) reported that members of their threat assessment team received in-service training on the threat assessment model used by the school.

Nearly two-thirds of schools (63%) reported that they had fully implemented their current threat assessment model.

A majority of schools (82%) reported that, in appropriate cases, students who were the subject of a threat assessment were evaluated by a school-based mental health professional.

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Schools were asked how many assessments were conducted by their threat assessment team. Fifty-nine percent (1,157) of schools reported conducting one or more threat assessments. However, in a follow-up survey to collect threat assessment case data from those schools, the question was asked again, as a check. In the follow-up survey, 882 reported conducting one or more threat assessments.

Threat assessment case data found that 882 schools reported conducting a total of 3,569 threat assessments during 2013–2014. Of these, most threats (98%) involved only one student; 2% of threats involved multiple students.

Bullying/Technology

The bullying prevention unit within Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS), which is also known as Effective School-Wide Discipline (ESD), was in place in nearly three-quarters of the schools, by far the most frequently used bullying prevention program.

Forty-three percent of the schools reported that one or more incidents of cyberbullying occurred at their school, with most reporting between one and ten incidents.

Most schools (80%) prohibit use of cell phones and text messaging devices during school hours. This is a decrease of seven percent from the 2012–2013 survey.

Nearly all schools (98%) limit access to social networking websites from school computers.

Security Measures

Most schools (86%) reported that all exterior entrances are kept locked during school hours. This was slightly higher among elementary schools (89%).

Overall, 39% of the schools reported having safety/security personnel working at their school full-time. This is a slight increase from the 36% reported in 2012–2013. However, when examined by school type, the percentage was much higher among middle and high schools (82% and 91%, respectively) than among elementary (11%) and other (42%) types of schools.

Of the 776 schools with full-time safety/security personnel, most (81%) reported using School Resource Officers (SROs) for safety/security. More high schools used SROs (99%) and more elementary schools used SSOs (53%).

Among schools with a full-time SRO, most (88%) said the SRO(s) had completed School Resource Officer Basic Training, 61% of schools reported having a substitute SRO to provide coverage while their regular SRO was out, and half (50%) of the schools with SROs reported that their SRO was funded by the local law enforcement agency.

Most schools (91%) reported having two-way communication between the school office and all other areas of their interior and exterior property.

Over half of schools (59%) said that school administrators are able to communicate with law enforcement/first responders via radio when they are inside the school building. This represents a 14% increase from the 2012–2013 survey.

Nearly three-quarters of the schools (73%) reported that first responders have electronic/internet-based access to current floor plans for their school, an increase of 15% from 2012–2013.

More than three-quarters of the schools (77%) reported that first responders had access to their school during a lockdown. This was higher among middle and high schools (80% and 84%, respectively).

More than three-quarters of the schools (79%) conduct background checks on volunteers (not including parent/guardians) who work with their students. High schools reported the highest percentage of background checks on volunteers (87%).

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Gangs

Most schools (96%) reported no gang-related problems or incidents during the school year. Very few schools (2%) reported any incidents of gang-related fights on campus during school hours.

Two-fifths of the schools (41%) reported having no gang prevention measures; most of these (77%) were elementary schools. Three-fifths of the schools (59%) reported having some gang prevention measures in place.

School Safety Practices and Student Discipline

Findings from the examination of links between school safety practices and student disciplinary infractions:

- Middle schools had more than twice the rate of suspensions for aggression against others (72 per 1,000 students) compared to elementary (19 per 1,000) and high schools (37 per 1,000).
- High schools had a much higher rate of alcohol, tobacco and other drug (ATOD) infractions (17 per 1,000 students) than middle schools (6 per 1,000) or elementary schools (0.4 per 1,000). Infractions related to weapons were rare and were slightly higher in middle schools and high schools than in elementary schools (2 per 1,000).
- High schools and middle schools had many more short-term suspensions of less than 10 days (about 100 per 1,000) than elementary schools (29 per 1,000). Long-term suspensions (10 days or more) were less common, but again high schools and middle schools had more long-term suspensions (4 per 1,000) than elementary schools (0.3 per 1,000).

Findings from the examination of race/ethnic differences in disciplinary responses:

- The statewide population of students consisted of 23% Black students, 52% White students, 13% Hispanic/Latino students, and 12% Other students.
- Black students were suspended at a higher rate than any other group in elementary school (4 per 100 Black students), middle school (15 per 100 Black students), and high school (13 per 100 Black students).
- Suspension rates were more similar among the other three racial groups, ranging from two to three per 100 students in elementary schools, seven to eight per 100 students in middle schools, and six to seven per 100 students in high schools.
- Black students were assigned long-term suspension at a higher rate than any other group in middle school (six per 1,000 compared to two to four per 1,000 in the other groups) and high school (six per 1,000 compared to three to five per 1,000 in the other groups). In elementary schools, long-term suspension rates were very low and similar across race/ethnic groups.
- Black students were suspended for aggression against others and disruptive behaviors at much higher rates than the other groups. Black students were also suspended at slightly higher rates for property and technology infractions, but not for drug or weapons infractions.
- The rate of White suspensions for aggression against others was 34 per 1,000 for White students, and the rate of Black suspensions was more than twice as high (86 per 1,000 Black students). The same pattern was found for disruptive behaviors, with 40 White suspensions per 1,000 White students and 94 Black suspensions per 1,000 Black students.

School Climate Survey

Findings from the Virginia Secondary School Climate Survey (VSSCS):

- The survey is designed to give secondary schools important information about the quality of their school climate and safety conditions. In 2014, the survey was completed by 48,027 students and 13,455 teachers in 323 high schools.
- Students consistently reported more teasing and bullying than teachers. Notably, a large majority of students (69%), but fewer than half of teachers (44%), agreed that students were often teased about their clothing or physical appearance.

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- Similarly, a majority of students (57%), but a minority of teachers (37%), agreed that there was a lot of teasing about sexual topics. The percentages of students and teachers who reported teasing because of race or ethnicity and because of sexual orientation were lower, but the pattern of higher student reports was similar.
- Half of students (50%) and a majority of teachers (62%) reported being the victim of an insult at least one time in the year.
- Having personal property stolen was also fairly common among both students (31%) and teachers (21%).
- About one in five students reported being physically attacked (18%) and being threatened (23%), while a much smaller percentage of teachers reported these forms of victimization (4% and 10%, respectively).
- Finally, 6% of students and 1% of teachers reported that a student had threatened them with a weapon.
- Students and teachers in schools with both high structure and high support reported the lowest prevalence of bullying and victimization, while students and teachers in schools with both low structure and low support reported the highest prevalence of bullying and victimization.

II. INTRODUCTION

Since 1997, state law has required all public schools to conduct school safety audits (§ 22.1-279.8). The purpose is to assess the safety conditions of schools, identify and develop solutions for physical safety concerns including building security issues, and identify and evaluate patterns of student safety concerns. Responses and solutions based on the audits include recommendations for structural adjustments, changes in school safety procedures, and revisions to school divisions' student code of conduct. Although the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) developed the original safety audit process, the legislature shifted responsibility for the development, standardization and analysis of the responses to the Virginia Center for School Safety (VCSS) at DCJS in 2005. The VCSS was renamed the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (VCSCS) in 2013 to emphasize its role in higher education institution safety as well as K-12 school safety. The first automated Virginia School Safety Survey was conducted by the VCSCS in 2005 using data gathered from the 2004–2005 school year.

The survey process is updated each year to maintain its effectiveness and relevance. As a result, some topics are identified as requiring further examination each year, while other questions are continued to allow for trend analyses. Recent legislation requires threat assessment teams in public schools, and DCJS has expanded data collection on the threat assessment process as a result. This will allow us to assess how these teams are developing and whether the requirement for them is preventing violence and affecting suspension, expulsions, and discipline infractions in schools. This information will better inform legislators about the impact of this law and its results.

In addition, in 2014 DCJS entered into a partnership with the University of Virginia (UVA) pursuant to a grant award from the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) to evaluate the statewide implementation and impact of using threat assessment procedures as a violence prevention strategy in Virginia public schools. This gives us a more in-depth look at threat assessment and at students who may pose a threat to themselves or others, thus providing an opportunity to assist those students and make schools safer.

III. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

In July 2014, all Virginia school division superintendents were contacted, directed to the Virginia School Safety Survey website, and instructed to inform each of their school principals about the website and survey requirements. The website provided information about the survey and support for superintendents and principals, including survey instructions, a list of terms and definitions, frequently-asked questions, a preview list of survey questions and a link to the survey. Additionally, superintendents were asked to update their contact information and to review and update a list of their division's schools.

The web-based Virginia School Safety Survey was developed and administered by the DCJS Research Center. School principals or their designees completed the web-based survey in August and September of 2014 providing information that reflected conditions during the 2013–2014 school year.

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IV. SURVEY OF VIRGINIA SCHOOLS

The Virginia School Safety Survey asked about safety-related issues and practices in individual schools. The survey included questions about the school's crisis management plan, threat assessment team, school climate, safety-related programs, and school security efforts.

All of the 1,972 public schools¹ operating in Virginia in school year 2013–2014 completed the survey. They represent all of Virginia's 132 school divisions, as well as Virginia's Academic-Year Governor's Schools, Regional Alternative Education Programs, Regional Career and Technical Programs, and Regional Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind.

School survey findings are organized by the following categories: School Identification and Demographic Information; Assessment, Planning, and Communication; Threat Assessment; School Climate and Safety-Related Programs; and School Security and Surveillance.

A copy of the survey instrument can be found in Appendix A. Appendix B contains definitions for terms used in the survey.

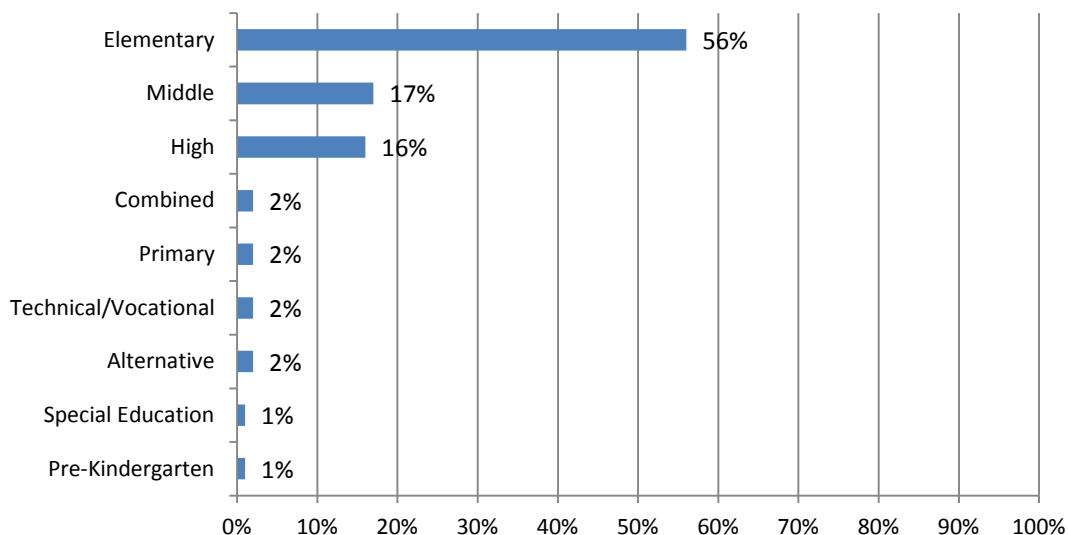
SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

School Types

Schools were asked to indicate the type of school that best described their school. As shown in Figure 1, elementary schools made up over half of all Virginia public schools, while middle and high schools made up 17% and 16%, respectively.

Other types of schools included: alternative, technical/vocational, primary, combined (each represented 2% of the total number of public schools surveyed); pre-kindergarten and special education (each made up 1%); and charter schools, magnet schools, Governor's schools, correctional education, adult education, school for the deaf and blind and other schools (each represented less than 1% of schools).

Figure 1: Types of Public Schools in Virginia, 2013-2014 School Year (N = 1,972)



NOTE: Schools types that represented less than 1% included: Governor's, Magnet, Adult Education, Charter, Correctional Education, Deaf and Blind and Other.

¹ For purposes of this survey, DCJS defined "school" as any separate physical structure that houses and instructs public school students during school hours.

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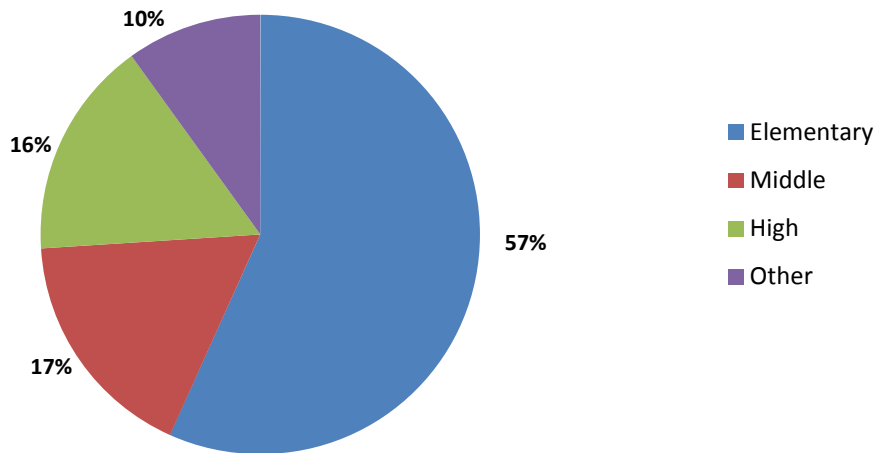
For purposes of more detailed analysis throughout this report, schools were coded as elementary, middle, high, or other. This distinction was based on their grade levels and/or purpose, as follows:

- Elementary Typically grades K–5 but may include grade 6 (if school has grades K–7, it was coded as “other”). Elementary also includes intermediate schools which are typically grades 3–5 or grades 4–6, and also includes primary schools which are typically grades K–2.
- Middle Typically grades 6–8 but may include grade 9. A few schools have grades 4–7 and a few have only grades 5 and 6, or only grades 8 and 9.
- High Typically grades 9–12 but may include grade 8.
- Other This includes all schools that do not fit into the above categories (such as combined schools) and others that have a specific purpose, such as pre-K, alternative, technical, special education, correctional education, adult education, school for deaf and blind, and other.

NOTE: Governor’s schools, magnet schools and charter schools were coded according to their grade levels.

These revised categories result in the following distribution among the 1,972 schools:

Figure 2: Types of Public Schools – Revised Categories (N = 1,972)



NOTE: The 196 schools in the “Other” category includes combined (28%), alternative (24%), technical/vocational (22%), pre-kindergarten (11%), and special education (7%). Correctional education, adult education, school for deaf and blind, and other made up the remaining 8%.

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School Enrollment

A school’s “fall membership enrollment” is the number of students that the school has enrolled on September 30 of a given year. Figure 3 displays the range of fall membership enrollment for the 2013–2014 school year. The majority of schools (74%, 1,463) had a fall membership enrollment between 251 and 1000 students. School enrollment size varies somewhat by school type. Generally, elementary schools had smaller enrollments, and enrollment size increased as grade levels increased.

Figure 3: Enrollment Range (N = 1,972)

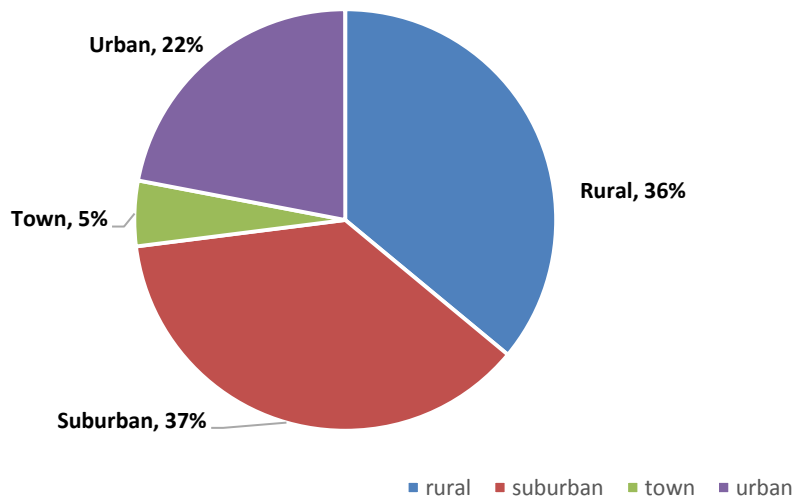
Enrollment Range	Number	Percent
0	5*	<1%
1–50	24	1%
51–250	192	10%
251–500	558	28%
501–1,000	905	46%
1,001–1,500	176	9%
1,501–2,000	72	4%
2,001–2,500	28	1%
2,501–3,000	7	<1%
3,001+	5	<1%
Total	1,972	100%

*The five schools with an enrollment of 0 are all technical centers.

Type of Region

School principals were asked to identify the type of region where most of their students live. The principals were provided with definitions for urban, suburban, town and rural based on the federal Office of Management and Budget’s *Standards for Defining Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas* (2000). (See Appendix 2 for definitions.)

Figure 4: Type of Region Where Most Students Live (N = 1,972)



There were minor changes in these percentages since last year’s 2012–2013 survey. There were slight increases in the number of schools that identified rural and suburban as where most of their students live (from 34% to 36%, and 35% to 37%, respectively), while the number that identified as urban and town declined (from 25% to 22%, and 6% to 5%, respectively).

ASSESSMENT, PLANNING, AND COMMUNICATION

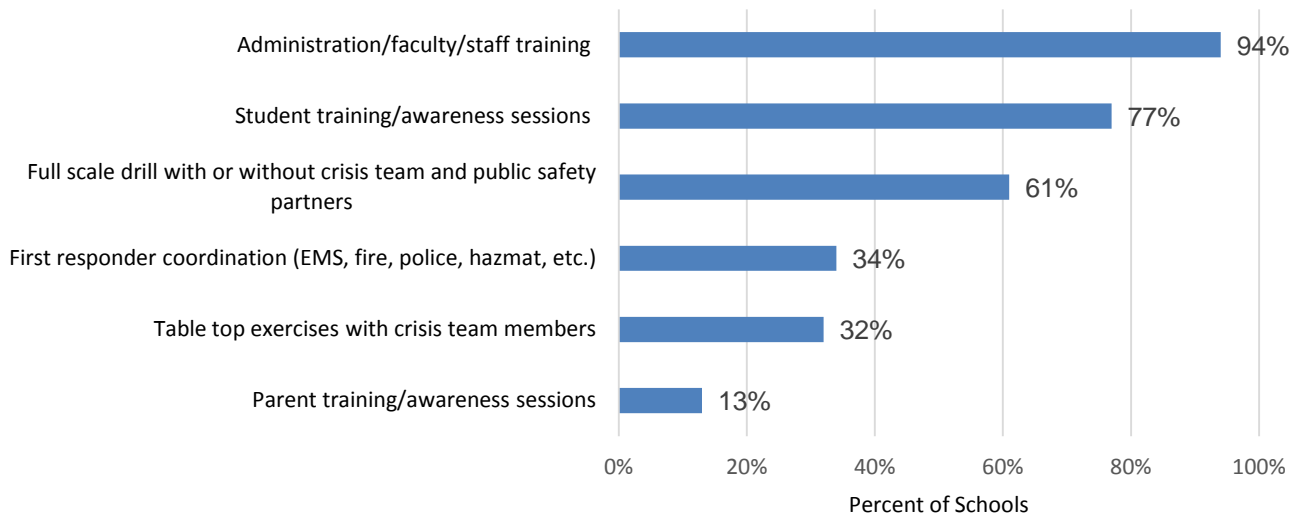
Crisis Management Plan (CMP)²/Emergency Management Plan (EMP)

Virginia Code §22.1 – 279.8 describes school crisis and emergency management plans and states that “each school board shall ensure that every school that it supervises shall develop a written school crisis, emergency management, and medical response plan.”

Q. Did your school practice any portion of its Crisis Management Plan/Emergency Management Plan (CMP/EMP) during the 2013–2014 school year? How was your school’s CMP/EMP practiced during the school year?

Nearly all schools (97%, 1,920) reported that they practiced some portion of their CMP/EMP during the 2013–2014 school year. Figure 5 shows how the schools practiced their CMP/EMP.

Figure 5: How CMP/EMP Was Practiced (N = 1,920)



NOTE: Percentages equal more than 100% because respondents were asked to select all that apply

There was a slight increase in some practice methods when compared with the 2012–2013 survey responses: full scale drills increased to 61% from 55%, first responder coordination increased to 34% from 32%, and table top exercises increased to 32% from 28%.

When these responses were examined by type of school, we found that:

- Fewer high schools (66%) conducted student training/awareness sessions than did elementary, middle and other (78%, 77% and 72%, respectively).
- Fewer elementary schools (28%) conducted first responder coordination than did middle, high, and other (39%, 42%, and 37%, respectively).

² VCSCS publishes numerous resources regarding Crisis Management, to explore these resources please visit www.dcs.virginia.gov/common/links.cfm?code=17&program=VCSS#62.

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Q. Did you have to activate any portion of your school’s crisis management plan during the 2013–2014 school year due to an actual critical event or emergency?

Overall, one-quarter of the schools (496, 25%) said they activated their CMP; the percentage was slightly higher among middle schools (29%) and high schools (30%).

Electronic Notification System (ENS)

Q. Does your school have an electronic notification system (ENS) for notifying parents/guardians of an emergency at your school?

Overall, most schools (1,839, 93%) had an ENS. Of the schools with an ENS, 19% (341) activated the system for an emergency during the 2013–2014 school year.

Reasons for Activation of CMP and ENS

Q. Under what emergency circumstances did you activate your school’s crisis management plan and/or electronic notification system?

There were 496 schools that activated their CMP and 341 schools that activated their ENS in the 2013–2014 school year. These are slightly fewer activations than reported in 2012–2013 when 510 schools activated their CMP and 383 schools activated their ENS.

Figure 6 lists the percentage of schools that activated their CMP and/or ENS for each of the listed types of emergency circumstances.

Figure 6: Types of Emergency Circumstances that Initiated Activation of CMP and/or ENS

Type of Emergency Circumstance(s)	Activated CMP N=496	Activated ENS N=341
Health related incidents and emergency(ies):		
Allergic reaction ON school property	9%	4%
Exposure to hazardous substances ON school property/biohazard	2%	3%
Food poisoning ON school property	<1%	1%
Influenza, pandemic, MRSA ON school property	1%	2%
Other health related incident ON school property	13%	5%
Other health related incident OFF school property	2%	3%
Man-Made incidents and emergency(ies):		
Bomb threat	12%	15%
Gun, knife, or other weapon ON school property	6%	4%
Loss, disappearance, or kidnapping of a student ON school property	1%	2%
Presence of or threat of unauthorized persons or trespassers ON school property	9%	7%
Other man-made incident ON school property	3%	3%
Other man-made incident OFF school property	21%	21%
Building damage or power outage related incident(s) or emergency(ies)		
Earthquake	<1%	1%
Flood	1%	2%
Tornado/hurricane	11%	7%
Other natural disaster or severe weather	6%	13%
Roof or building collapse	<1%	1%
Smoke or fire	11%	13%
Other building-related damage or power outage related emergency(ies)	8%	10%
Other		
Incident at another school that affected your school	6%	9%
Unfounded incident/faulty or false alarm	11%	9%
Other safety-related incident that affected school and is not listed above	10%	13%

NOTE: Percentages equal more than 100% because respondents were asked to select all that apply

Other types of emergency circumstances described included:

CMP: student threat (3), suspected student threat (2), gas leak (10), bus accident (2), threat by non-student (1), other (3) ENS: student threat (1), suspected student threat (2), gas leak (6), bus accident (5), other (6)

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The most frequently cited reasons schools' CMPs were activated:

- Man-made incident off school property (21%)
- Health-related incident on school property (13%)
- Bomb threat (12%)

The most frequently cited reasons schools' ENSs were activated:

- Man-made incident off school property (21%)
- Bomb threat (15%)
- Natural disaster/severe weather (13%)
- Smoke/fire (13%)
- Other safety-related incident that affected school (13%)

Communication with Law Enforcement

Q. Do your school administrators have regular meetings with local law enforcement to discuss problems in and around the school?

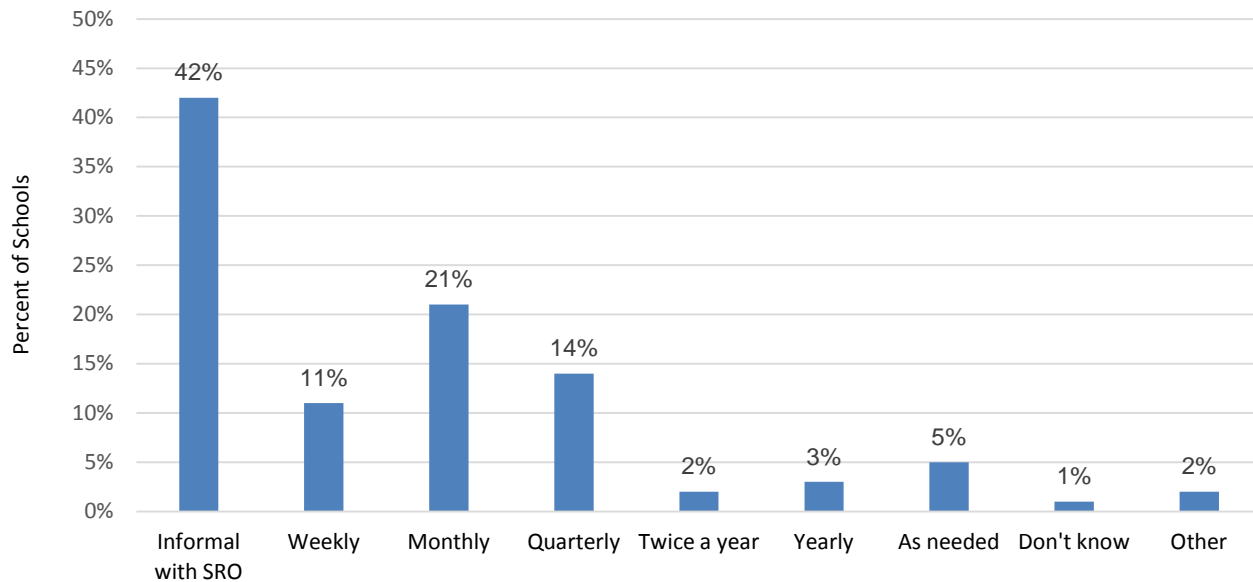
Overall, two-thirds of schools (1,295, 66%) reported their school administrators had regular meetings with local law enforcement to discuss problems in and around the school. This is a 16% increase compared to the 2012-3013 reports.

When examined by type of school, administrators in middle and high schools had regular meetings with local law enforcement more frequently (84% and 89%, respectively) than did those in elementary (53%) and other (68%) schools.

Q. How frequently are these meetings with law enforcement held?

Forty-two percent of schools (547) reported that these meetings are not formally scheduled, but are instead informal discussions with their School Resource Officers (SRO).

Figure 7: Frequency of Meetings with Law Enforcement (N = 1,295)



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Q. Does your school regularly receive crime data reports from local law enforcement regarding crimes occurring in the area near the school?

Just under half of all schools (890, 45%) said they regularly received crime data reports from local law enforcement regarding crimes occurring in the area near the school. This is slightly higher among middle and high schools (49% and 60%, respectively) when compared with elementary (40%) and other schools (42%).

Q. How frequently do you receive crime data reports from local law enforcement?

Over half of the schools regularly receiving crime data reports from local law enforcement (53%) said these reports were made informally in discussions with the SRO.

Figure 8: Frequency Crime Data Reports Received from Law Enforcement (N = 890)

Frequency of Reports	Number of Schools	Percentage of Schools
As needed, in informal discussions with SRO	475	53%
Daily	9	1%
Weekly	125	14%
Monthly	132	15%
Quarterly	25	3%
Yearly	2	<1%
As needed	92	10%
Other	27	3%

Virginia Code [§22.1-279.3:1 \(Paragraph B\)](#) requires local law enforcement to notify schools of certain offenses committed by students under certain circumstances.

Q. Are there formal processes or protocols in place through which your school routinely receives notification on these offenses from local law enforcement?

Overall, 58% (1,135) of schools reported that they had such formal processes or protocols in place. The percentage was higher among high schools (68%).

THREAT ASSESSMENT³

In 2013, the Governor convened the School and Campus Safety Taskforce, which focused on improving safety in public schools and on college and university campuses throughout the Commonwealth. As a result of the work of this taskforce, the 2013 General Assembly passed HB 2344 which added section §22.1-79.4 to the *Code of Virginia*. Effective July 1, 2014, local school boards were required to create policies and procedures to establish threat assessment teams. The legislation also required division superintendents to establish a threat assessment team for each school. This section states,

Each team shall (i) provide guidance to students, faculty, and staff regarding recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior that may represent a threat to the community, school, or self; (ii) identify members of the school community to whom threatening behavior should be reported; and (iii) implement policies adopted by the local school board pursuant to subsection A.

³ For more information about threat assessment teams in Virginia, visit the VCSCS resources page at www.dcis.virginia.gov/common/links.cfm?code=17&program=VCSS#62.

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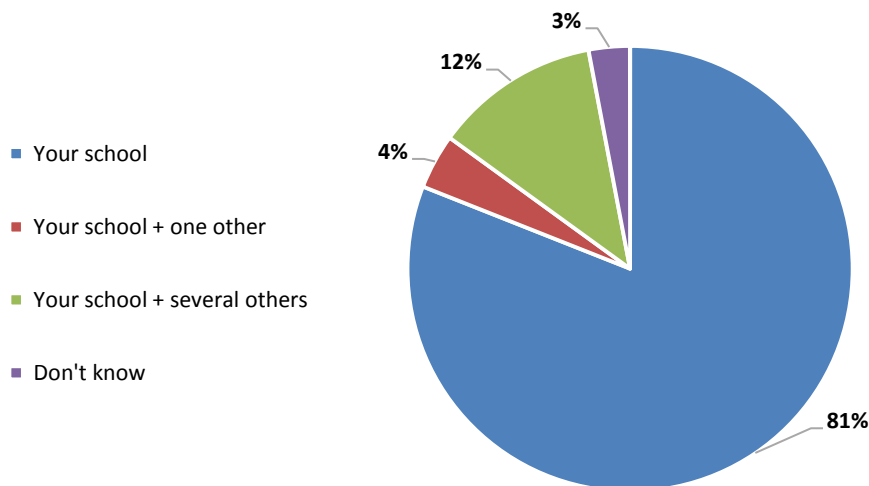
Additionally, the legislation required DCJS to collect quantitative and qualitative data on threat assessment teams and threat assessments conducted in Virginia schools. To facilitate this requirement, questions regarding threat assessment teams and threat assessments were added to the 2014 School Safety Survey. If a school indicated that a threat assessment was conducted during the 2013–2014 school year, the school received a follow-up survey in January 2015 to provide further details. Preliminary findings of the follow-up survey are included in this report; a more detailed report of the findings is forthcoming and will provide comparisons across elementary, middle and high schools.

Threat Assessment Teams

Some schools have their own threat assessment team that serves only their school. Others share a threat assessment team with other schools in their division.

Q. Which of the following does your threat assessment team serve?

Figure 9: Threat Assessment Team Responsibility (N = 1,972)



Most schools (81%) reported that their threat assessment team serves their school only. This was slightly higher among middle and high schools (both 86%) than in elementary and other schools (79% and 78%, respectively).

Figure 10: Threat Assessment Team Responsibility, by Type of School (N = 1,972)

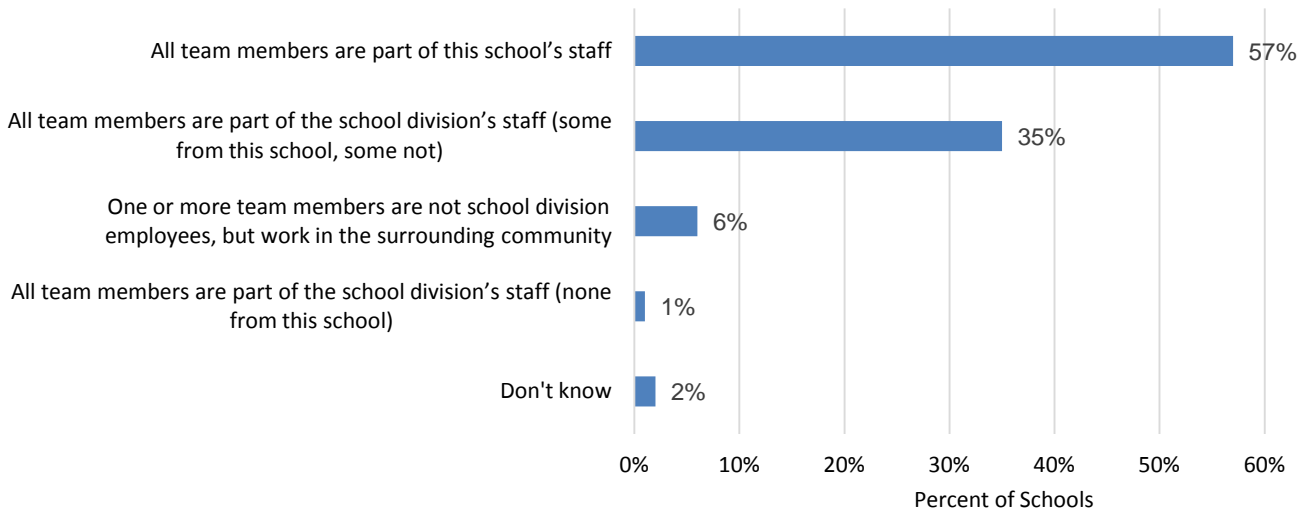
Threat Assessment Team Responsibility	Elem	Middle	High	Other
Your school	79%	86%	86%	78%
Your school + one other	3%	3%	3%	6%
Your school + several others	14%	9%	10%	13%
Don't know	4%	2%	2%	4%

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Q. Are all team members part of this school's staff (including team members such as a SRO or school psychologist who may be assigned to multiple schools)?

Figure 11 shows the composition of threat assessment teams' members among the schools.

Figure 11: Threat Assessment Team Membership (N = 1,972)



NOTE: School Resource Officers are considered as part of school staff.

Most schools (57%) reported that all team members were part of their staff. This percentage was higher among high schools (65%).

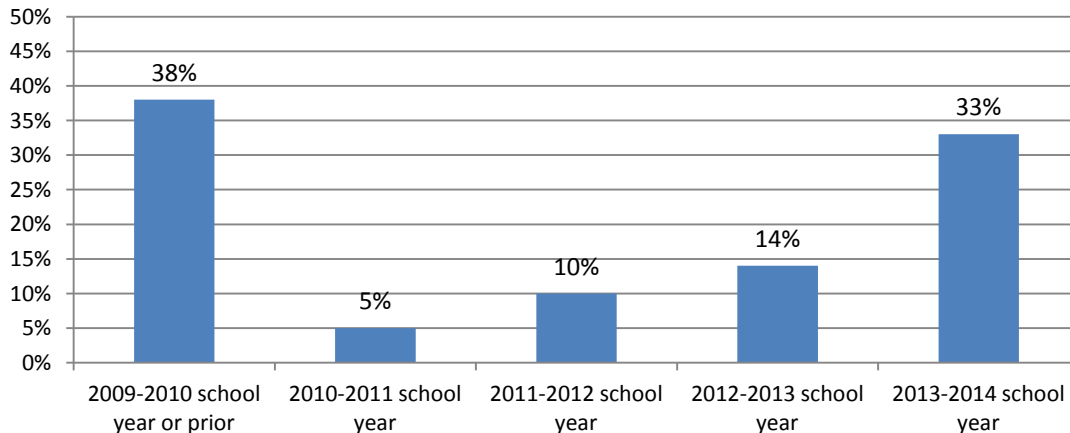
Threat Assessment Model

There are numerous threat assessment models currently used by Virginia public schools. Some are nationally known, some are well-known in Virginia, and some are amalgamations created by the school divisions.

Q. During which school year did your school begin using your current threat assessment model? Have members of your threat assessment team received staff in-service training in using your current threat assessment model?

One-third of schools began using their current threat assessment model very recently, while more than one-third have been using their current model for 5 years or more.

Figure 12: When Schools Began Use of Current Threat Assessment Model (N = 1,972)



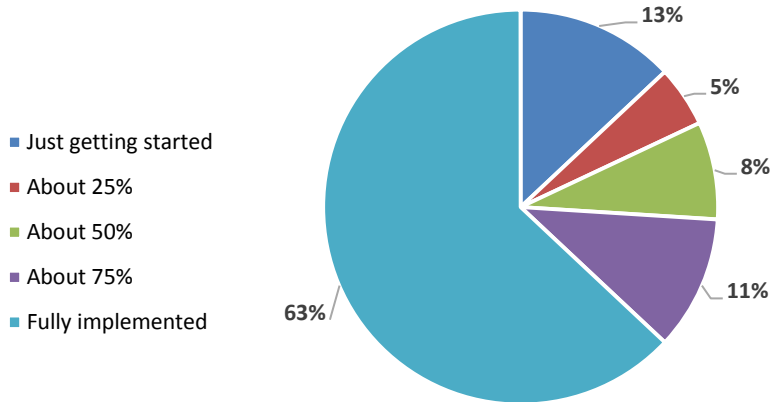
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Most schools (1,677, 85%) reported that members of their threat assessment team received in-service training for their current threat assessment model.

Q. How fully has your school implemented its current threat assessment model?

Nearly two-thirds of schools (1,249, 63%) reported that they had fully implemented their current threat assessment model.

Figure 13: Implementation of Current Threat Assessment Model (N = 1,972)



Recognizing/Reporting Threats

Q. How have students, staff and parents been informed about the school’s threat assessment process during the 2013–2014 school year?

Informing students and school staff about their schools’ threat assessment process was typically done in-person, while parents were informed using all methods somewhat evenly.

Figure 14: Informing School Community of Threat Assessment Process (N = 1,972)

	Brochure/paper document	Website/ email	Oral presentation (classroom, assembly or other group meeting)	Other
Students	23%	20%	59%	19%
School staff	38%	29%	74%	8%
Parents	34%	34%	31%	24%

NOTE: Percentages equal more than 100% because respondents were asked to select all that apply

There were 517 schools that said they used an “other” method of informing their school community about the threat assessment process and provided some explanation about those methods. Of these:

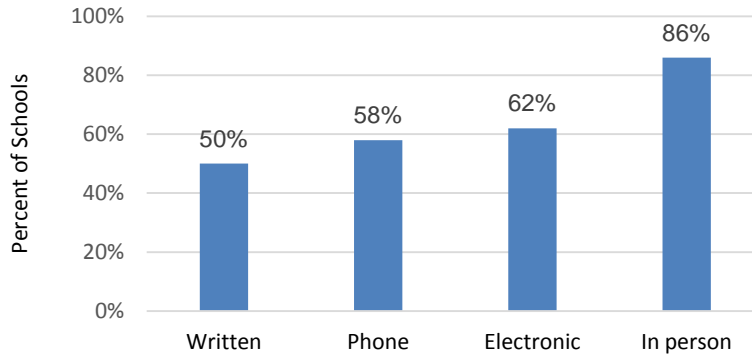
- 36% said that they only informed students/staff/parents if it was necessary (such as when the student had made a threat or had a threat made against them)
- 16% said that no one was informed because their threat assessment team was not yet in place in 2013–2014

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Q. How are reports of “concerning or aberrant behavior” received by your threat assessment team?

Most schools (1,692, 86%) said that their threat assessment team received reports of “concerning or aberrant behavior” in person (face-to-face). Other ways that these reports were received include:

Figure 15: How Threat Assessment Reports Are Received (N = 1,692)



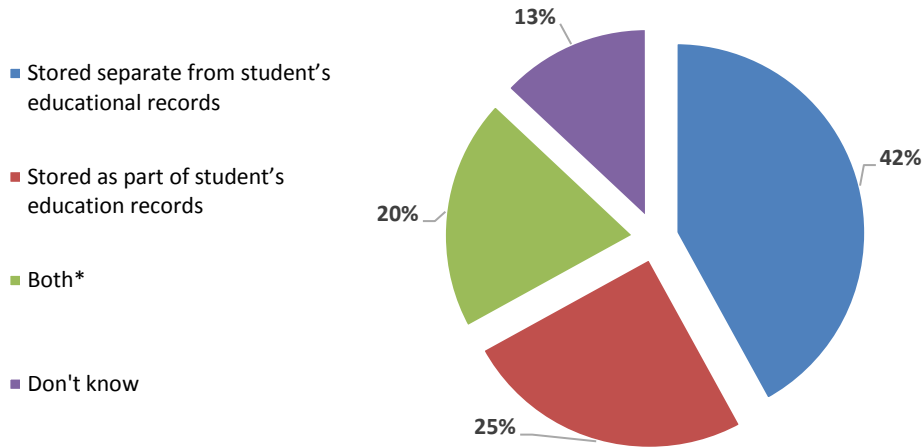
NOTE: Percentages equal more than 100% because respondents were asked to select all that apply

Record Keeping

Q. Are threat assessment case records maintained separately from the student’s educational records or as part of the student’s educational records?

Just under half (42%) of the schools reported that they store threat assessment case records separately from a student’s educational record, while one-quarter (25%) store them as part of the student’s educational records.

Figure 16: How Student Threat Assessment Records Are Stored



(*Case records are stored as part of student’s educational records AND at another location separate from student’s educational records.)

Q. How is threat assessment case information shared with other threat assessment team members?

Most schools (1,854, 94%) reported that threat assessment case information is shared with other threat assessment team members in person. Far fewer reported that case information is shared via phone (28%) or email/fax (19%), and 5% didn’t know how such information is shared.

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Threats Assessed

Q. In cases deemed to be appropriate, what are your school’s procedures for the mental health evaluation of a student identified for a threat assessment?

A majority of schools (1,616, 82%) reported that they use evaluation by a school-based mental health professional in appropriate cases for students identified for a threat assessment.

Figure 17: Procedures for Student Mental Health Evaluation (N = 1,972)

Student Mental Health Evaluation Procedures	Number of Schools	Percent of Schools
Evaluation by a school-based mental health professional (e.g. school psychologist, school counselor, school social worker)	1,616	82%
Evaluation with a community-based mental health professional identified by the parent/guardian	751	38%
Evaluation through the Community Services Board (CSB)	698	35%
Evaluation by a mental health professional employed by the school division	565	29%
Evaluation with a community-based mental health professional identified by the school	552	28%

NOTE: Percentages equal more than 100% because respondents were asked to select all that apply

Q. How many assessments were conducted by the school’s threat assessment team during the 2013–2014 school year? Of these, how many were found to be low risk, moderate risk, high risk, and/or imminent risk?

Schools were asked how many assessments were conducted by their threat assessment team, regardless of outcome.

- 1,157 (59%) schools reported conducting one or more threat assessments during 2013–2014; 41% of schools reported not having conducted any threat assessments.

Of the 1,157 schools that reported conducting threat assessments, the average number of threat assessments conducted was 4.9; the median number conducted was 2.

Figure 18: Number of Threat Assessments Conducted, by School Type

Number of Threat Assessments Conducted	Percent of Schools, by Type				All Schools N = 1,971*
	Elem N = 1119	Middle N = 339	High N = 317	Other N = 196	
0	49%	25%	25%	55%	41%
1–5	44%	49%	54%	36%	45%
6–10	5%	16%	12%	7%	8%
11–20	3%	6%	8%	2%	4%
21–40	<1%	4%	1%	<1%	1%
41 +	0	1%	1%	0	<1%

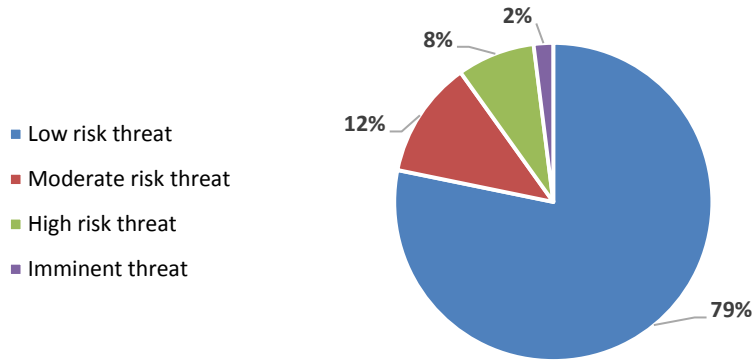
**Correct threat assessment data was not received from one school.*

Half of elementary and other schools reported not having conducted any threat assessments, whereas only 25% of the middle and high schools reported not having conducted any.

It should be noted that since some schools were just getting started with their threat assessment team, figures provided about the number of threat assessments conducted in 2013–2014 may not be representative of how frequently schools will conduct threat assessments statewide once all schools have fully functioning teams.

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The 1,157 schools that conducted one or more threat assessments in 2013–2014 were asked to report the number of cases that were assessed and classified as low risk, moderate risk, high risk, and/or imminent risk.



Nearly four-fifths of the threats assessed were classified as low risk, while one-fifth were classified as moderate or high risk. Fewer than 100 were classified as an imminent threat. Of those classified as imminent threats, 28 were from elementary schools, 30 from middle schools, 23 from high schools and six from other schools.

Figure 20: Threat Assessment Risk Classification by Type of School

Number of Threat Assessments, by Threat Assessment Classification and Type of School					
Classification	Elem	Middle	High	Other	Total
Low	1,833	1,351	1,085	240	4,509
Moderate	193	229	194	50	666
High	113	150	154	34	451
Imminent	28	30	23	6	87
Total	2,167	1,760	1,456	330	5,713

Percent of Type of School, by Threat Assessment Classification Type					
Classification	Elem	Middle	High	Other	Total
Low	41%	30%	24%	5%	100%
Moderate	29%	34%	29%	8%	100%
High	25%	33%	34%	8%	100%
Imminent	32%	34%	26%	7%	99%
Total	38%	31%	25%	6%	100%

Percent of Threat Assessment Classification Type, by Type of School					
Classification	Elem	Middle	High	Other	Total
Low	85%	77%	75%	73%	79%
Moderate	9%	13%	13%	15%	12%
High	5%	9%	11%	10%	8%
Imminent	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Total	100%	101%	101%	100%	101%

Threat Assessment Follow-Up Survey

A follow-up survey was conducted in January 2015 to collect detailed information about incidents for which a threat assessment was conducted during the 2013–2014 school year. The 1,157 schools indicating that they had conducted a threat

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assessment were contacted and asked to provide case information for up to five threat assessments. This section of the report briefly reviews some preliminary findings from the case data collected. A more thorough report on the threat assessment case data will be available as an addendum to this report.

As a check, the 1,157 schools indicating that they had conducted a threat assessment during the school year were again asked in the follow-up survey whether or not they had conducted a threat assessment during the 2013–2014 school year. Nearly one-quarter replied that they had not. This is a significant change in response to a basic but important question. Further study will be needed to determine if the questions about threat assessment were unclear, if there are record keeping issues that need to be improved, or if more training and technical assistance need to be made available to the schools to improve understanding of threat assessment processes. This question will be clarified on future surveys.

- Threat assessment case data were collected for threat assessments conducted during the 2013–2014 school year.
- There were 882 schools that conducted 3,569 threat assessments during 2013–2014 (Mean = 4.0 assessments per school; median = 2.0 assessments per school).
- Schools were asked to provide case information for up to five threat assessment cases (the most and least serious and the three most recent, if they had more than five threat assessment cases; all cases if they had five or less).
- Case-level data were collected on cases that involved students from the reporting school (case-level data did not include non-students/adults or students from other schools).
- This resulted in threat assessment case-level data for 2,042 cases.

Q. Did your school's threat assessment team conduct any threat assessments due to a threat/perceived threat during the 2013–2014 school year? If yes, please provide the total number of threat assessment cases conducted by your threat assessment team during the 2013–2014 school year.

Of the 887 schools that reported conducting a threat assessment, most (80%) conducted between one and five assessments during the 2013–2014 school year. Five schools that said they had conducted a threat assessment then reported conducting “0” threat assessments. This brings the number of schools that conducted at least one threat assessment to 882.

Figure 21: Threat Assessment Follow Up Survey

Number of Threat Assessments Conducted	Number of Schools	Percent of Schools
0	5	<1%
1–5	710	80%
6–10	92	10%
11–20	62	7%
21–40	15	2%
41 +	3	<1%
Total	887	100%

Case-level data were collected for 2,042 threat assessments conducted by the schools.

- In 86% of cases, the threat was reported to the threat assessment team/school authorities by either a student or faculty member.
- Most cases (98%) involved only one student. The other 2% involved multiple students: 25 cases involved two students, nine cases involved three students, and three cases involved four or more students.

A detailed look at the threat assessment case data is available in the report “Threat Assessment in Virginia Schools: Technical Report of the Threat Assessment Survey for 2013–2014,” at

www.dcjs.virginia.gov/vcscs/documents/TechnicalReport2014ThreatAssessmentSurvey5-12-15.pdf

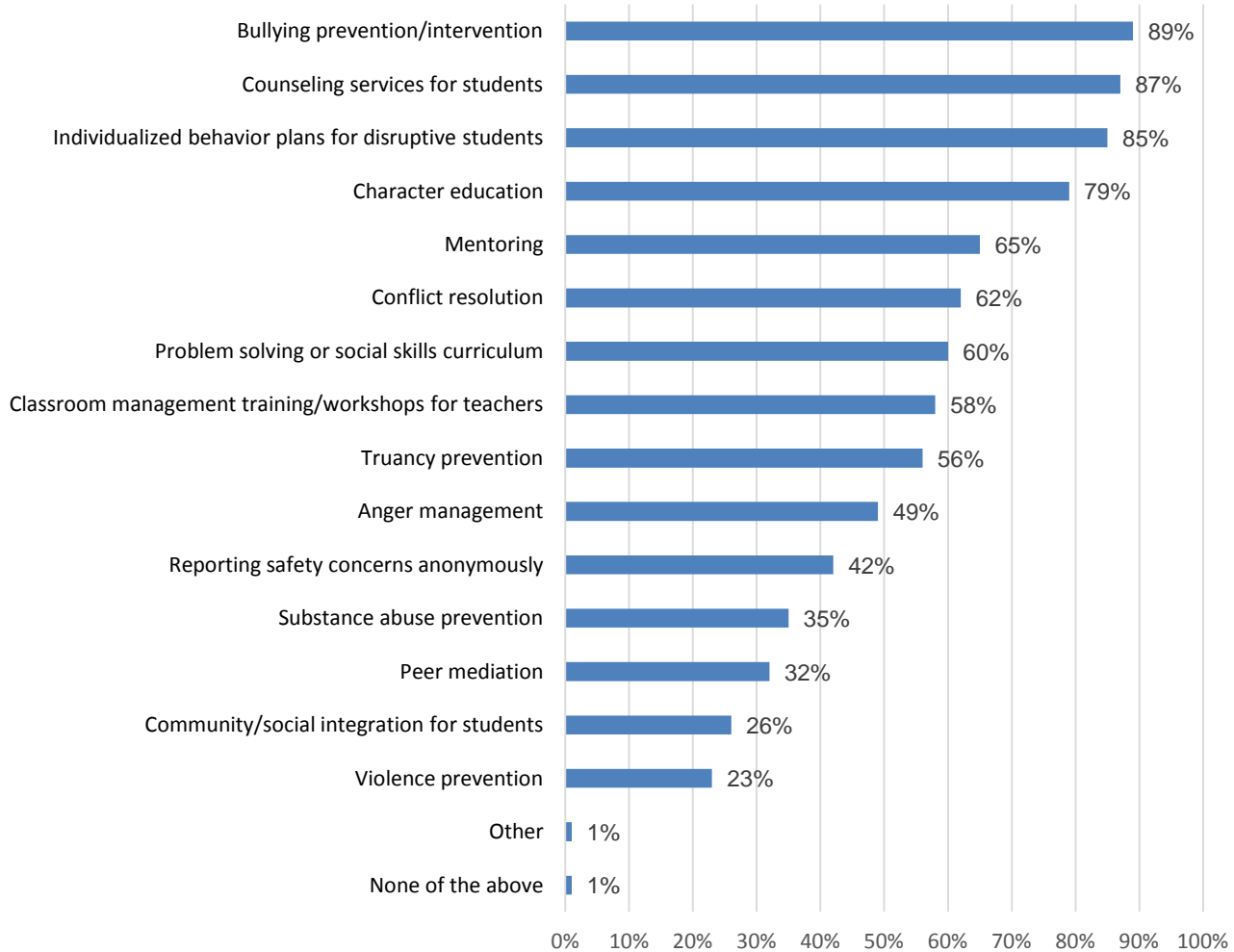
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SCHOOL CLIMATE AND SAFETY-RELATED PROGRAMS

School Safety Programs

Schools were asked to review the following list of program categories and select those for which their school took intentional and sustained action (i.e., occurred more than once) during the 2013–2014 school year.

Figure 22: School Safety Programs in the Schools (N = 1,972)



NOTE: Percentages equal more than 100% because respondents were asked to select all that apply

Bullying prevention/intervention, counseling services for students, and individualized behavior plans for disruptive students were the programs most often cited by the schools.

The 22 schools that reported having none of the listed school safety programs consisted of 5 elementary schools, 3 high schools, 3 Governor’s schools, 2 middle schools, 2 Pre-kindergarten schools, 2 primary schools, 3 vocational/technical schools, 1 special education school, and 1 specialty school.

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Bullying

In Virginia law, “Bullying” means any aggressive and unwanted behavior intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between the aggressor or aggressors and victim; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. “Bullying” includes cyber bullying, but does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict.

Q. Review the following list of anti-bullying/bullying prevention programs and practices and select those that were in place at your school during the 2013–2014 school year.

The bullying prevention unit within Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS), which is also known as Effective School-Wide Discipline (ESD), was in place in nearly three-quarters of the schools, by far the most frequently used bullying prevention program.

Figure 23: Bullying Prevention Programs, by School Type

Bullying Prevention Programs	Type of School				All Schools N = 1,972
	Elem N = 1,119	Middle N = 340	High N = 317	Other N = 196	
Bullying Prevention within PBIS	81%	79%	55%	57%	74%
Olweus Bullying Prevention Program	19%	31%	13%	17%	20%
Al’s Pals	9%	<1%	1%	9%	6%
Second Step curriculum	9%	3%	1%	7%	6%
Bullyproofing Your School	5%	4%	4%	5%	5%
None of the above	15%	14%	34%	32%	19%

NOTE: Percentages equal more than 100% because respondents were asked to select all that apply

When examined by school type, elementary and middle schools generally have bullying prevention programs in place more often than do high or other types of schools.

Bullying prevention practices are more like standard operating procedures than programs. Figure 24 shows the practices that schools use to assist with bullying prevention. Individual counseling with students identified as bullies or victims were frequently cited by the schools.

When examined by school type, overall, middle schools appear to have bullying prevention practices in place more often than do elementary, high or other types of schools.

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Figure 24: Bullying Prevention Practices, by School Type (N = 1,972)

Bullying Prevention Practices	Type of School				All Schools N = 1,972
	Elem N = 1,119	Middle N = 340	High N = 317	Other N = 196	
Individual counseling with student bullies	84%	87%	80%	64%	82%
Individual counseling with student victims of bullying	81%	86%	80%	63%	80%
Rules/policy on bullying communicated to all students	75%	83%	77%	68%	76%
Counselor-facilitated program	86%	71%	50%	55%	74%
Classroom meetings about bullying	79%	73%	50%	57%	71%
Specific disciplinary consequences for bullying	60%	75%	73%	63%	65%
Increased supervision in areas where bullying occurs	55%	77%	70%	54%	61%
Teacher/staff training on bullying	56%	69%	51%	55%	57%
Conference or assembly on bullying (school wide)	52%	67%	51%	43%	54%
Curriculum on bullying taught to all students	48%	50%	19%	24%	42%
Videos for students about bullying	33%	45%	27%	26%	33%
Hotline/complaint box (anonymous report)	29%	45%	36%	18%	32%
Parent education/outreach program on bullying	29%	33%	15%	19%	26%
Restorative discipline practices for bullying	24%	34%	29%	22%	26%
Bus driver training on bullying	26%	24%	27%	25%	25%
None of the above	<1%	0%	1%	5%	1%
Other	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%

NOTE: Percentages equal more than 100% because respondents were asked to select all that apply

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Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to deliberately threaten and/or harass someone with the intent of harming and/or embarrassing them. Text or images used in incidents of cyberbullying may be sent or posted using text messaging, email, instant messaging, social websites, blog posts, chat rooms, etc.

Q. How many known incidents of cyberbullying occurred at your school during 2013–2014? (Include incidents that were sent or received/viewed on school property or at school-related functions. Also include incidents where students passed around printouts of online activity such as chats or photos in school.)

Forty-three percent of the schools reported that one or more incidents of cyberbullying occurred at their school during the 2013–2014 school year. Most reported between one and ten incidents.

Figure 25: Cyberbullying Incidents, by School Type (N = 1,972)

Range of Cyberbullying Incidents	Type of School				All Schools N = 1,972
	Elem N = 1,119	Middle N = 340	High N = 317	Other N = 196	
No known incidents	79%	20%	20%	57%	57%
1 – 2 incidents	17%	22%	22%	25%	19%
3 – 10 incidents	4%	43%	46%	16%	18%
11 – 20 incidents	0	11%	8%	2%	3%
21 – 50 incidents	0	4%	4%	1%	1%
51 – 100 incidents	0	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%

When examined by type of schools, middle and high schools accounted for most of the reported cyberbullying with very few incidents in the elementary schools.

Q. Does your school prohibit use of cell phones and text messaging devices during school hours? Does your school limit access to social networking websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) from school computers?

Most schools (1,577, 80%) prohibit use of cell phones and text messaging devices during school hours. This is a decrease of seven percent from the 2012–2013 survey when 1,690 schools reported a prohibition.

When examined by type of school, a much lower percentage of high schools prohibit cell phone use than elementary, middle or other types of schools.

Percentage of schools that prohibit use of cell phone, by school type (N = 1,972):

Elementary	91%
Middle	82%
High	43%
Other	72%

However, nearly all schools (1,928, 98%) limit access to social networking websites from school computers, and at a similar percentage among school types (high school was the lowest with 96%; middle school was the highest with 99%). This is very similar to what was reported in 2012–2013.

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School Climate

Schools were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements pertaining to the climate at their school during the 2013–2014 school year. The scales are used to measure aspects of school climate that are related to school safety conditions.

Figure 26: School Climate Statements by Percent of Schools Indicating Agreement/Disagreement (N = 1,972)

Statement	Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.			
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Bullying is a problem at this school.	1%	22%	39%	38%
Students know whom to go to for help if they have been treated badly by another student.	90%	9%	<1%	<1%
Students feel free to ask for help from teachers if there is a problem with a student.	73%	25%	2%	<1%
Teachers know when students are being picked on or being bullied.	29%	66%	6%	<1%
Teachers take action to solve the problem when students report bullying.	75%	24%	1%	<1%
Students report it when one student hits another.	59%	37%	4%	<1%
Students are encouraged to report bullying and aggression.	91%	7%	1%	1%
Students here often get teased about their clothing or physical appearance.	1%	16%	46%	37%
Students here often get put down because of their race or ethnicity.	1%	6%	33%	60%
Students here often get put down because of their perceived sexual orientation.	1%	6%	24%	70%
There is a lot of teasing about sexual topics at this school.	1%	9%	26%	64%
Zero tolerance makes a significant contribution to maintaining order at this school.	32%	38%	19%	11%
Zero tolerance sends a clear message to disruptive students about appropriate behaviors in school.	36%	37%	17%	10%
Suspension is a necessary tool for maintaining school order.	21%	42%	25%	12%
Schools cannot afford to tolerate students who disrupt the learning environment.	52%	35%	11%	3%
Suspension makes students less likely to misbehave in the future.	6%	37%	38%	18%
Out-of-school suspension is unnecessary if we provide a positive school climate and challenging instruction.	20%	43%	28%	10%

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There was strong agreement among schools that:

- Students know whom to go to for help if they have been treated badly by another student (90%)
- Teachers take action to solve the problem when students report bullying (75%)
- Students are encouraged to report bullying and aggression (91%)

Starting in 2012–2013, the VCSCS began surveying students and teachers about school climate. The Secondary School Climate Survey for students and teachers is now a component of the annual school safety audit which school divisions are required to submit. The survey measures student and teacher/staff perceptions of school rules and discipline, teacher-student relationships, student engagement in school, and the extent of bullying and teasing at school. This survey is administered in alternating years; grades 7 and 8 were surveyed in spring 2013 and grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 were surveyed in spring 2014. Grades 7 and 8 will be surveyed in spring 2015 and grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 in spring 2016. More information about this year’s findings may be found under **V. Disciplinary Infractions and Responses** in the section titled, “Results from the Virginia Secondary School Climate Survey.”⁴

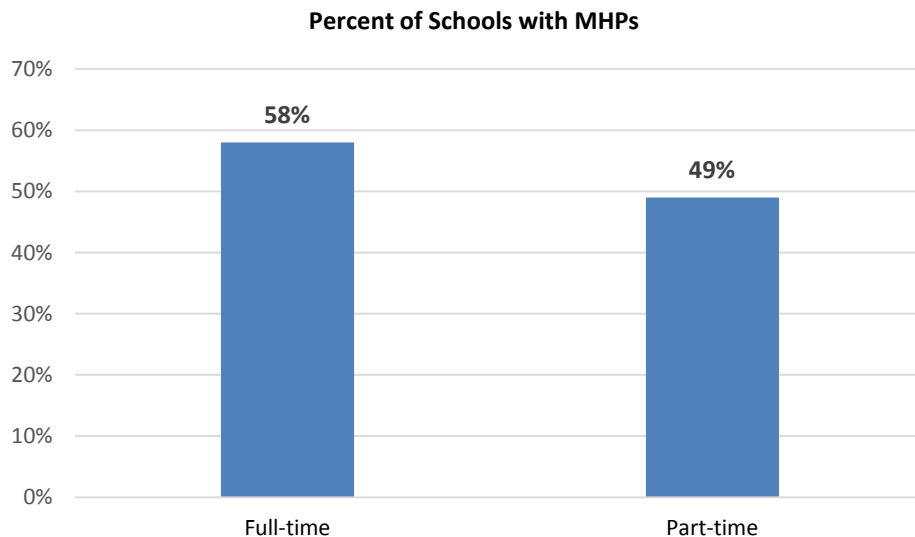
Mental Health

Q. Does your school employ a mental health professional (counselor, psychologist, social worker, substance abuse counselor) whose primary assignment is to provide counseling services to students? How many mental health professionals work at your school full-time/part-time?

Nearly three-quarters of the schools (1,434, 73%) reported that they employed a mental health professional whose primary assignment was to provide counseling services to students. This was slightly higher among middle schools (78%) and lower among other schools (59%).

Schools were also asked how many mental health professionals (MHP) worked at their school full-time (FT) and/or part-time (PT).

Figure 27: Schools with Mental Health Professionals, Part-time and Full-time (N = 1,434)



⁴ For more information about the Secondary School Climate Survey and School Climate, please visit www.dcs.virginia.gov/vcss/audit/student.

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Figure 28: Number of Mental Health Professionals Employed in the Schools, Part-time and Full-time (N = 1,434)

Employment Status	Total Number of MHPs Employed	Average Number of MHPs Employed Per School (N = 1150)
Number of full-time	2,309	2.0
Number of part-time	1,625	1.7

There were a total of 2,309 full-time and 1,625 part-time mental health professionals employed by the schools in the 2013–2014 school year.

Q. Among all mental health professionals working in your school, on average, what percentage of their time is spent providing mental health/counseling services?

Of the 1,434 schools that have a MHP:

- 24% reported their MHP spent a *majority* of their time (70% or more) providing MH services
- 29% reported their MHP spent *about half* their time (between 41% and 70%) providing MH services
- 31% reported their MHP spent *less than half* their time (between 11% and 40%) providing MH services
- 16% reported their MHP spent *very little* time (10% or less) providing MH services

Q. Does your school have mental health professionals from community agencies that provide counseling services in your school to your students? On a weekly basis, what is the average number of hours that a community agency counselor is in your school?

Overall, about half of the schools (1,062, 54%) reported they had mental health professionals from community agencies that provide counseling services to their students. This was lowest among elementary schools.

Percentage of schools that use MHPs from community agencies:

Elementary	49%
Middle	60%
High	60%
Other	60%

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SCHOOL SECURITY AND SURVEILLANCE

NOTE: The questions in this section asked about security practices at the schools. Because the public release of such information might compromise safety and security plans, Virginia Code §2.2-3705.2 and §22.1-279.8 allow such information to be protected from release under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) for individual schools and will only be reported in the aggregate.

Security Strategies

Schools were asked to review the following list of security strategies and indicate which were in place at their school during the 2013–2014 school year.

Figure 29: Security Strategies in Schools, by School Type (N = 1,972)

Security Strategies	Percent of Schools, by Type				All Schools N = 1972
	Elem N = 1,119	Middle N = 340	High N = 317	Other N = 196	
All exterior entrances to the school building/ campus are locked during school hours	89%	82%	80%	82%	86%
Main entrance of the school building/campus is secured by a controlled access system during school hours	80%	74%	69%	74%	77%
Security cameras are used to monitor school property (e.g., parking lots, corridors, playground, entrances)	64%	84%	95%	75%	73%
Safety Patrols are conducted by teachers and/or staff	54%	59%	74%	60%	58%
All classrooms in the school can be locked from both inside and outside	46%	48%	51%	49%	48%
Someone is stationed at the front entrance of the school at all times during school hours (to ensure that visitors report to the main office for visitor check-in)	43%	47%	60%	43%	46%
Safety/security personnel are present at all times during the school day	13%	70%	80%	39%	36%
School grounds are secured by a controlled access system during school hours	29%	29%	33%	27%	29%
None of the above	1%	1%	0	<1%	1%
Other	2%	4%	2%	1%	2%

NOTE: Percentages equal more than 100% because respondents were asked to select all that apply

Most schools (86%) reported that all exterior entrances are kept locked during school hours; this was highest among elementary schools (89%).

More high schools reported using of security cameras (95%) and safety patrols (74%) when compared with other types of schools.

The use of safety/security personnel at all times during the school day was much higher among middle and high schools (70% and 80%, respectively) than in elementary (13%) and other (39%) types of schools.

Safety Personnel

Q. Did you have safety/security personnel such as School Resource Officers (SROs), School Security Officers (SSOs), or other types of security personnel working at your school full time during the 2013–2014 school year?

Overall, 39% (776) of the schools reported that they had safety/security personnel working at their school full-time during the school year. This is a slight increase from 2012–2013 where 36% (697) of schools said they had full-time safety/security personnel.

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However, when examined by school type, the percentage was much higher among middle and high schools (82% and 91%, respectively) than among elementary (11%) and other (42%) types of schools.

The 776 schools with full-time safety/security personnel were asked to specify the type(s) working full-time at their school.

Figure 30: Types of Safety/Security Personnel Working Full Time, By School Type

Type of Safety/Security Personnel	Percent of Schools, by Type				All Schools N = 1,972
	Elem N = 125	Middle N = 280	High N = 288	Other N = 83	
School Resource Officers (SROs)	27%	90%	99%	70%	81%
School Security Officers (SSOs)	53%	31%	45%	45%	41%
Other	20%	4%	5%	6%	7%

Most of the schools (630, 81%) reported School Resource Officers (SROs) worked at their school full-time. This is very similar to what was reported in 2012–2013 (81% SRO, 42% SSO, and 8% Other).

When examined by school type, more high schools used SROs (99%) and more elementary schools use SSOs (53%) for full-time security.

When compared with 2012–2013 data, the use of SROs increased among all school types except high schools (where it was down 1%), and use of SSOs decreased except in high schools (where it was up 3%).

The 630 schools that reported having full-time SROs at their school were asked a series of questions about SRO training, coverage, and funding.

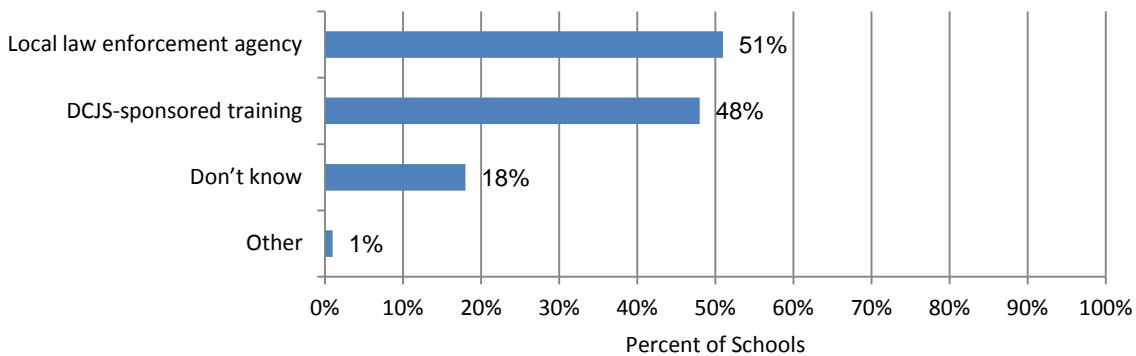
SRO Training

Q. Has the SRO(s) that worked at your school completed a School Resource Officer Basic Training? Who provided the SRO training that your SRO completed?

Most schools (556, 88%) said that their SRO(s) completed School Resource Officer Basic Training, 12 schools (2%) said their SRO had not completed this training, and 63 schools (10%) did not know.

Of the 556 schools whose SRO completed School Resource Officer Basic Training, about half completed training offered by their local law enforcement agency (51%) and just under half completed training sponsored by DCJS (48%). Eighteen percent did not know who trained their school’s SRO.

Figure 31: SRO Training Providers (N = 556)



NOTE: Percentages equal more than 100% because respondents were asked to select all that apply
Other includes: Division/County (2), Attorney General’s Office (1), County Police Academy (1)

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SRO Coverage

Q. Is there a substitute SRO that steps in to work at your school when your regular SRO is out (e.g., in court, sick day, etc.)?

Overall, 61% (385) of the 630 schools with a full-time SRO reported having a substitute who provided coverage while their regular SRO was out. This represents a 26% increase over 2012–2013. This percentage of schools with substitute SROs was highest among the 33 elementary schools with SROs.

Types of schools with SRO coverage:

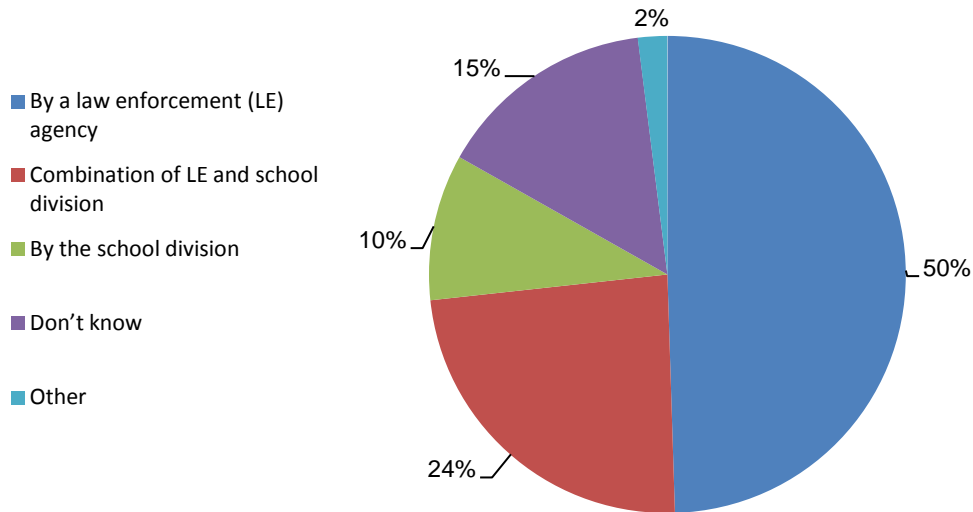
Elementary	70%
Middle	59%
High	63%
Other	60%

SRO Funding

Q. How is the SRO position(s) at your school funded?

Half of the schools with SROs (318) reported that their SRO was funded by the local law enforcement agency.

Figure 32: How SRO Positions Were Funded (N = 630)



NOTE: Percentages equal more than 100% because respondents were asked to select all that apply

Safety-Related Communication

Q. Do you have two-way communication between the school office and all other areas of your school's property (both interior and exterior)?

Most schools (1,803, 91%) reported having two-way communication between the school office and all other areas of their interior and exterior property.

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Q. What is the primary way used to maintain two-way communication between the school office and the classrooms?

Most use either telephone, intercom, or two-way radios. Very few cited using cell phones or panic buttons.

Figure 33: Primary Method of Two-Way Communication between Classrooms/Office (N = 1,972)

Primary Two-Way Communication	Number of Schools	Percent of Schools
Telephone	772	39%
Intercom	749	38%
Two-way radio	402	20%
Cell phone	17	1%
Panic/alarm button	26	1%
Other	6	<1%

Other included: email (3), voice (1), ichat (1), and none (1)

Q. Can school administrators communicate with law enforcement/first responders via radio when they are inside the school building?

In the 2013–2014 school year, 59% of schools said that school administrators can communicate with law enforcement/first responders via radio when they are inside the school building. This represents a 14% increase overall from last year’s survey.

When examined by type of school, more middle and high schools (69% and 77%, respectively) reported radio communication with law enforcement/first responders than did elementary (52%) and other (54%) types of schools.

Q. Do first responders (including police, fire and EMS) have electronic/internet-based access to current floor plans for your school in case they need to respond to a large scale security incident at your facility?

Nearly three-quarters of the schools (1,436, 73%) reported that first responders have electronic/internet-based access to current floor plans for their school. This is an increase of 15% over 2012–2013.

Lockdowns

In 2013, the General Assembly enacted legislation (§ 22.1-137.2) requiring all public schools in Virginia to conduct at least two lockdown drills every school year. One lockdown drill is to be completed in September of each school year and another in January.

Q. Were lockdown drills practiced at your school more than twice during the 2013–2014 school year?

Sixty-two percent (1,212) of schools reported that they practiced lockdown drills more than twice during the 2013–2014 school year. The percentage was slightly higher among middle and high schools (both 66%).

Q. Do first responders have access to the school during a lockdown so they do not have to breach doors or windows to gain access?

More than three-quarters of the schools (1,513, 77%) reported that first responders had access to their school during a lockdown. This was higher among middle and high schools (80% and 84%, respectively).

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Parking lots

Q. Is your school parking lot(s) monitored during school hours? Which of the following monitoring methods are used to monitor your school’s parking lot(s) during school hours?

Over half of the schools (1,209, 61%) reported that their parking lot(s) are monitored during school hours; this was highest among high schools (87%). The following methods were used:

Figure 34: Methods Used by Schools to Monitor Parking Lots (N = 1,209)

Parking Lot Monitoring Methods	Number of Schools	Percent of Schools
Randomly patrolled by school security personnel	702	58%
Security cameras (monitored live in real time)	688	57%
Randomly patrolled by school faculty/staff	576	48%
Randomly patrolled by law enforcement	470	39%
Security cameras (taped, not monitored in real time)	455	38%
No formal surveillance, only informal monitoring	124	10%
Other	7	1%

*NOTE: Percentages equal more than 100% because respondents were asked to select all that apply
Other includes: volunteer/parent monitors (3), random security vehicle patrol (1), formal monitoring only during arrival/dismissal (1), security monitor (1), no student parking (1)*

Background Checks

Q. Does your school conduct background checks on volunteers who work with your students (not including parents/guardians)?

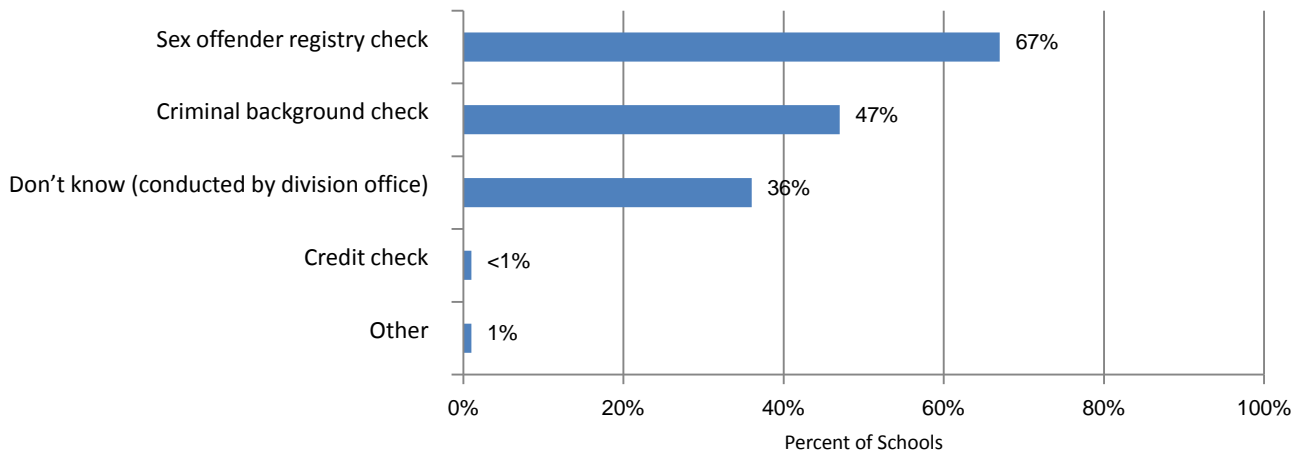
More than three-quarters of the schools (1,552, 79%) conducted background checks on volunteers who work with their students. When examined by type of school, more high schools reported conducting background checks.

Percent of schools that conducted background checks on school volunteers:

Elementary	74%
Middle	82%
High	87%
Other	84%

The following types of checks are conducted on volunteers who work with students.

Figure 35: Types of Background Checks Conducted on Volunteers that Work with Students (N = 1,552)



*NOTE: Percentages equal more than 100% because respondents were asked to select all that apply
Other includes: fingerprint check (4), Social Services/CPS check (3), Scan of driver’s license by guard (2), reference check (2)*

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When examined by school type, more high schools reported using criminal background checks (59%). When compared with 2012–2013 reports, the overall percentage of schools using criminal background checks and sex offender registry checks has increased (42% and 61%, respectively compared to 2012–2013).

Gang-Related Activity

Per § 18.2-46.1. "Criminal street gang" means any ongoing organization, association, or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, (i) which has as one of its primary objectives or activities the commission of one or more criminal activities; (ii) which has an identifiable name or identifying sign or symbol; and (iii) whose members individually or collectively have engaged in the commission of, attempt to commit, conspiracy to commit, or solicitation of two or more predicate criminal acts, at least one of which is an act of violence, provided such acts were not part of a common act or transaction.

Q. Using the definition above, did your school have any gang-related problems or incidents during the 2013–2014 school year? Did the number of gang-related problems or incidents increase, decrease, or stay about the same when compared with the previous school year.

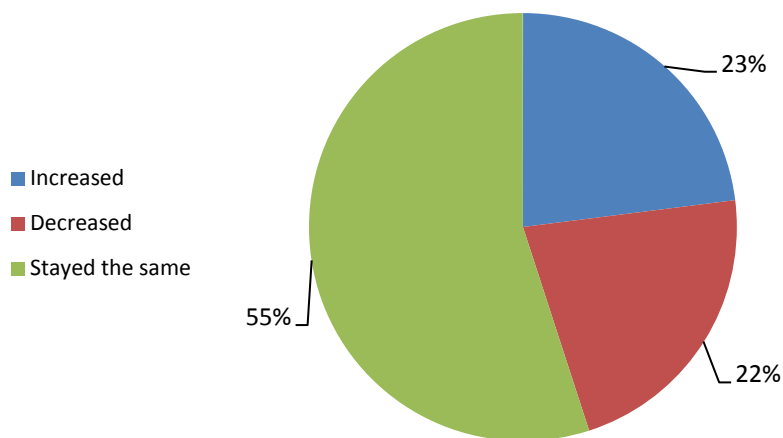
Most schools (1,890, 96%) reported no gang-related problems or incidents during the 2013–2014 school year, while four percent (82 schools) did report problems. This is a slight decrease from 2012–2013 when 92 schools reported having gang-related problems or incidents.

Of the 82 schools that reported gang-related problems:

- 10% were elementary schools
- 23% were middle schools
- 52% were high schools
- 15% were other schools

The 82 schools reporting gang-related problems were asked if the number of gang-related problems or incidents had increased, decreased, or were about the same when compared with the previous school year. Just over half (55%) reported this was about the same as in 2012–2013.

**Figure 36: Change in Gang-Related Incidents from Previous School Year
Schools with Gang-Related Problems in 2013–2014 (N = 82)**



The 1,890 schools that reported no gang-related problems in the 2013–2014 school year were asked a similar question:

Q. Does this reflect a decrease in gang-related problems or incidents from the previous school year or were both school years free of gang-related problems/incidents?

Most of these schools (1,808, 96%) said that both years were free of gang-related problems/incidents, while four percent (81) reported that it was a decrease from the previous school year.

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Q. Did the community surrounding your school have any gang-related problems or incidents during the 2013–2014 school year?

Relatively few schools (299, 15%) said that the community surrounding their school had known gang-related problems or incidents during the 2013–2014 school year. Over two-fifths of the schools (856, 43%) said the surrounding community did not have known gang-related problems/incidents and nearly as many (817, 41%) did not know.

Gang Prevention

Q. Indicate which of the following were part of your school’s routine tasks in regard to gang graffiti and its prevention/eradication in 2013–2014.

Schools were given a list of gang graffiti prevention tasks and were asked to indicate which, if any, were part of their routine tasks.

Three-quarters (1,493, 76%) reported having no gang graffiti on school property during the 2013–2014 school year.

Figure 37: Gang Graffiti Prevention Tasks (N = 1,972)

Gang Graffiti Prevention Tasks	Number of Schools	Percent of Schools
Maintenance and/or janitorial staff routinely looked for gang graffiti in restrooms, locker rooms, trash cans, etc.	713	36%
When/if graffiti was found, it was immediately removed	529	27%
When/if graffiti was found, photo documentation was made and shared with local law enforcement	465	24%
Staff were trained to look for/identify gang-related graffiti.	411	21%
None of the above	99	5%

NOTE: Percentages equal more than 100% because respondents were asked to select all that apply

Schools were asked to select from a list those gang prevention measures that were in place during the 2013–2014 school year. Two-fifths of the schools (802, 41%) reported having no gang prevention measures during the 2013–2014 school year, and most of these (77%) were elementary schools.

Of the 1,170 schools with gang prevention measures:

Figure 38: Gang Prevention Measures Used in Schools (N = 1,170)

Gang Prevention Measures	Number of Schools	Percent of Schools
Formal student policy regarding gang-related behavior	865	74%
Students advised about restrictions on gang-related behavior	559	48%
Cooperative effort with law enforcement to identify gang-related crime	423	36%
Counseling services provided to discourage gang-related behavior	302	26%
Students suspended from school for gang-related behavior	224	19%
Gang awareness in-service training and workshops for teachers/staff	203	17%
Speaker for students on gangs	105	9%
Speaker for parents on gangs	45	4%
Use of G.R.E.A.T. (Gang Resistance Education and Training) program	31	3%
Use of a program other than G.R.E.A.T. to discourage gang involvement	26	2%
Other	25	2%

NOTE: Percentages equal more than 100% because respondents were asked to select all that apply
 Other includes: DARE (8), addressed in Student Code of Conduct (4), administrative training (3), other (10)

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The most often used gang prevention measures reported by the schools focused on advising students about prohibitions on gang-related behaviors:

- Formal student policy regarding gang-related behavior (865, 74%)
- Students advised about restriction on gang-related behavior (559, 48%)

Indicators of Gang Activity

Q. Which of the following indicators of gang activity were observed in your school during the 2013–2014 school year?

Very few schools (37, 2%) reported any incidents of gang-related fights on campus during school hours. Overall, the incidence of these gang activity indicators is very low among schools; only 250 (13%) reported having any of the listed indicators.

Figure 39: Gang Activity Indicators Observed in the Schools, by Percent of Schools (N = 1,972)

Indicator	No Incidents	1 - 2 Incidents	3 or More Incidents
Gang-related fights occurred during school hours on the school campus	98%	1%	1%
School staff reported observing students using gang-related hand signals	95%	4%	1%
Gang signs or symbols were identified on students’ clothing or other belongings	93%	6%	2%
School staff identified gang-related graffiti on school property	92%	6%	2%

Q. Rate the overall threat of gang activity by street gangs in your school during the 2013–2014 school year.

Schools were asked to rate the overall threat of gang activity by street gangs, with five (5) being the highest threat and one (1) being a very low threat. Three-quarters of the schools (1,488, 76%) reported no threat of gangs.

Figure 40: Overall Threat of Gang Activity Rating (N = 1,972)

Rating	Number of Schools	Percent of Schools
5 (high)	2	<1%
4	5	<1%
3	15	1%
2	58	3%
1 (low)	404	21%
None (no threat)	1488	76%

V. DISCIPLINARY INFRACTIONS AND RESPONSES

This section examines links between school safety practices and student disciplinary infractions that resulted in suspension from school. Disciplinary data were obtained from the Virginia Department of Education.

For the purposes of this report, student infractions were limited to three main categories: (1) infractions involving aggressive behavior against others (e.g. fights and assaults); (2) infractions involving alcohol, tobacco, or drug use (ATOD); and (3) infractions involving weapon possession or use (counted separately from the first category).

Figure 41 shows the average rate of unduplicated suspensions (each student was counted only once, even if suspended more than once) by type of infraction for elementary, middle, and high schools. Middle schools had more than twice the rate of suspensions for aggression against others (72 per 1,000 students) compared to elementary (19 per 1,000) and high schools (37 per 1,000).

As might be expected, high schools had a much higher rate of ATOD infractions (17 per 1,000 students) than middle schools (6 per 1,000) or elementary schools (.4 per 1,000). Infractions related to weapons were rare and were slightly higher in middle schools (3 per 1,000) than in high schools (3 per 1,000) and elementary schools (2 per 1,000).

Figure 41: Suspension Rates Per 1,000 Students

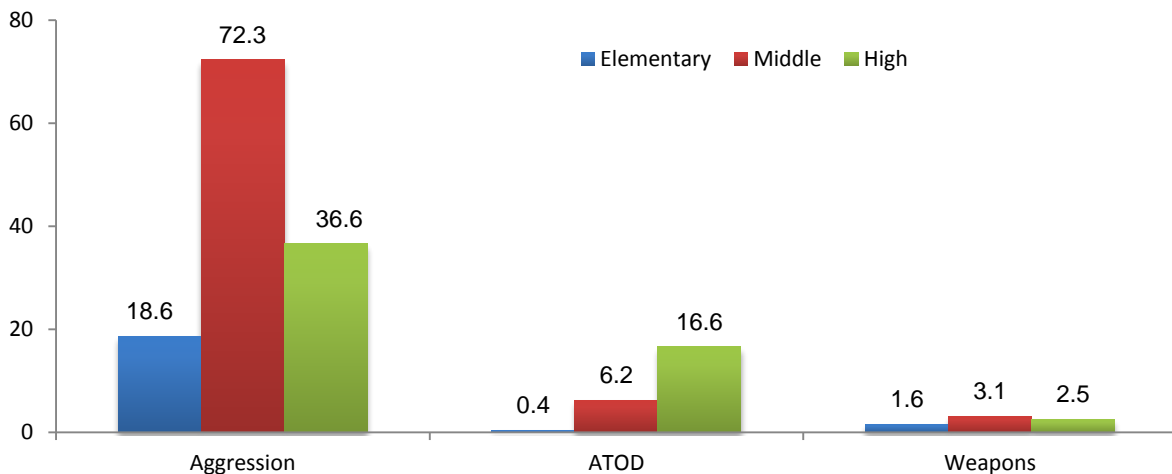
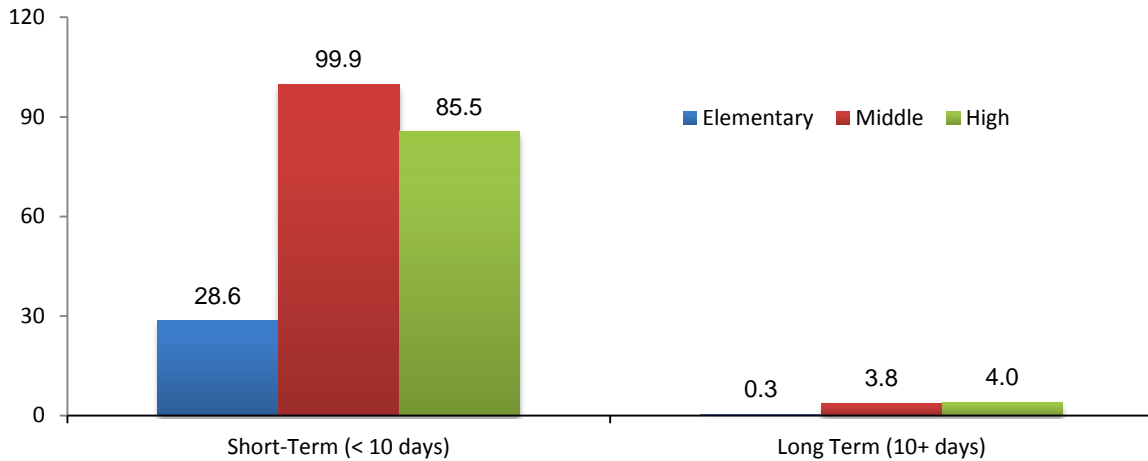


Figure 42 shows short-term suspensions (<10 days) and long-term suspensions (10+ days). High schools and middle schools had many more short-term suspensions (about 100 per 1,000) than elementary schools (29 per 1,000). Long-term suspensions were less common, but again high schools and middle schools had more long-term suspensions (4 per 1,000) than elementary schools (0.3 per 1,000). Infractions related to weapons were rare and were slightly higher in middle schools and high schools than in elementary schools (2 per 1,000).

It should be noted that Figures 41 and 42 present averages across schools, which masks some substantial differences between schools.

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Figure 42: Short-Term and Long-Term Suspension Rates per 1,000 Students



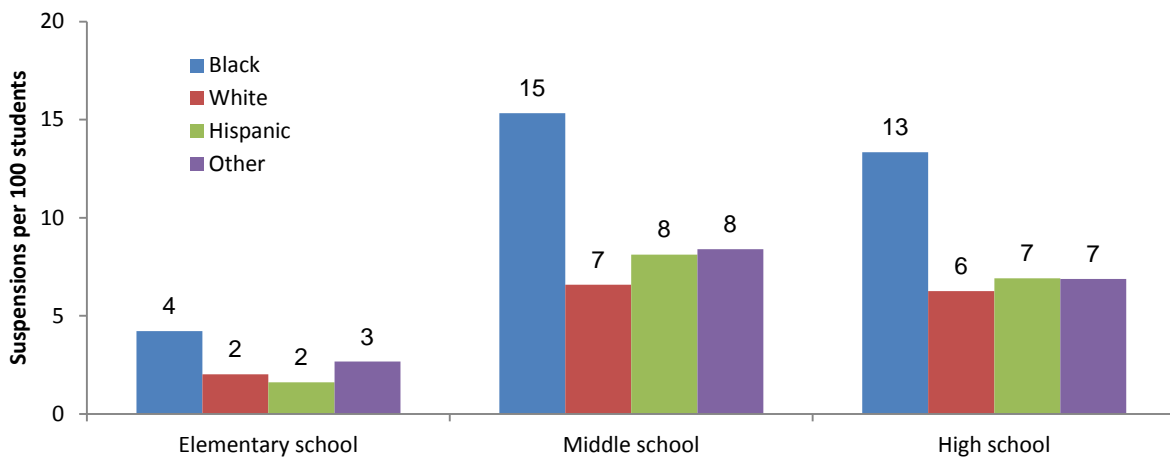
Race/Ethnic Differences in Disciplinary Responses

This section examines suspension rates across race/ethnic groups. These analyses show that there are consistent racial disparities in school suspension rates, but these disparities require further investigation. There may be multiple factors that contribute to a correlation between race and suspension rate. The Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education and Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice issued a Dear Colleague letter to all public schools concerning racial disparities in student discipline. (January 8, 2014, www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201401-title-vi.pdf). This letter asks all school systems to assess and remedy racial disparities in student discipline.

The statewide population of students consisted of 23% Black students, 52% White students, 13% Hispanic/Latino students, and 12% Other students. The Other category was made up of Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and multiracial students. Suspension rates were calculated as the number of students suspended within a particular race/ethnic group divided by the total enrollment of that race/ethnic group.

Figure 43 shows that Black students were suspended at a higher rate than any other group in elementary school (4 per 100 Black students), middle school (15 per 100 Black students), and high school (13 per 100 Black students). Suspension rates were more similar among the other three racial groups, ranging from 2 to 3 per 100 students in elementary schools, 7 to 8 per 100 students in middle schools, and 6 to 7 per 100 students in high schools.

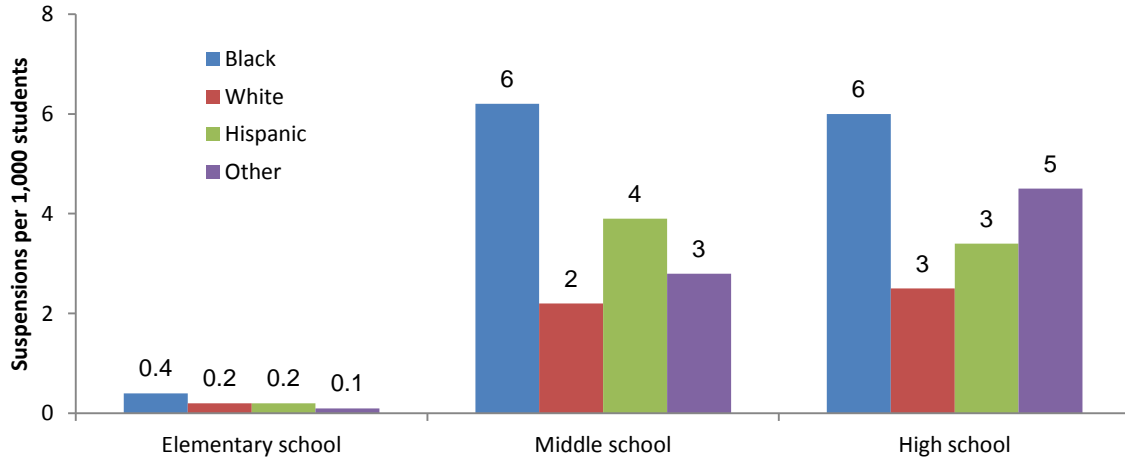
Figure 43: Racial Differences in Short-Term Suspensions



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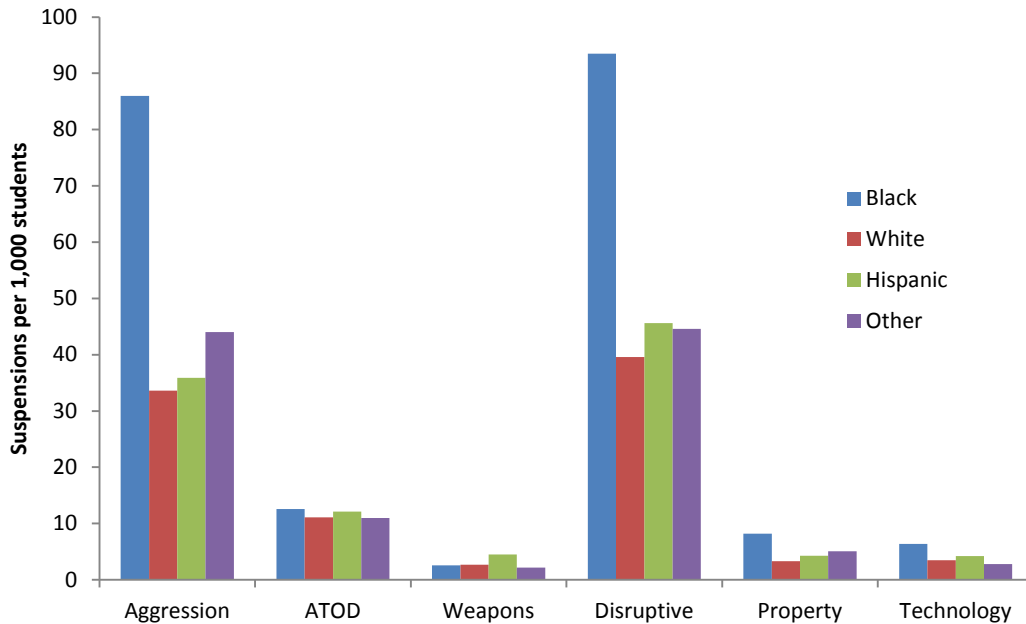
Figure 44 shows the breakdown for long-term suspensions. Consistent with the pattern of short-term suspensions, Black students were suspended at a higher rate than any other group in middle school (6 per 1,000 compared to 2 to 4 per 1,000 in the other groups) and high school (6 per 1,000 compared to 3 to 5 per 1,000 in the other groups). In elementary schools, long-term suspension rates were very low across race/ethnic groups. It is important to note that many different factors can contribute to disparities in disciplinary responses across racial/ethnic groups.

Figure 44: Racial Differences in Long-Term Suspensions



A second set of analyses investigated what types of infractions were driving the disparities in suspension rates between Black and White students. Figure 45 shows the rates of different types of infractions by race/ethnic group for middle and high school students. Black students were suspended for aggression against others and disruptive behaviors at much higher rates than the other groups. Black students were also suspended at higher rates for property and technology infractions, but not for drug or weapons infractions. As shown in Figure 45, the rate of White suspensions for aggression against others was 34 per 1,000 for White students, and the rate of Black suspensions was more than twice as high (86 per 1,000 Black students). The same pattern was found for disruptive behaviors, with 40 White suspensions per 1,000 White students and 94 Black suspensions per 1,000 Black students.

Figure 45: Racial Differences in Suspensions Rates per 1,000 Students in Secondary School



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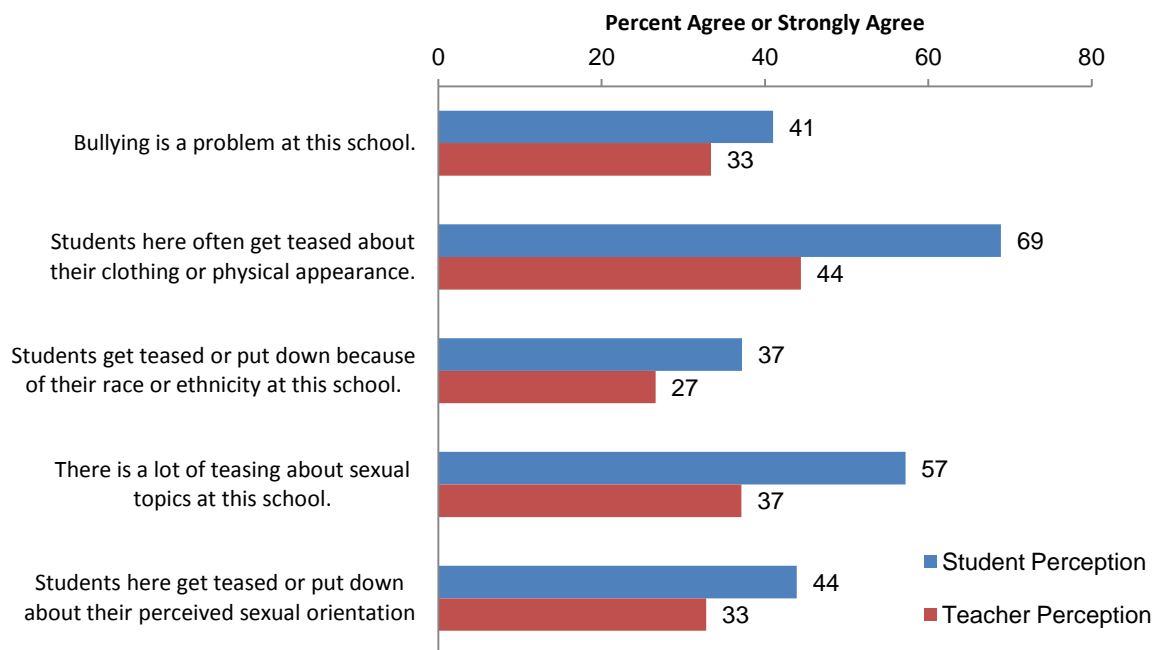
There is unlikely to be a simple explanation for the racial disparities in suspension rates. Black students could be engaging in more aggression against others and more disruptive behaviors than students from other race/ethnic groups in some cases, and in other cases Black students could be treated differently for similar misbehavior. Both possible explanations require further study to understand and remedy.

Results from the Virginia Secondary School Climate Survey

The Virginia Secondary School Climate Survey (VSSCS) is a survey of students and teachers administered as part of the annual School Safety Audit. The survey is designed to give secondary schools important information about the quality of their school climate and safety conditions. In 2014, the survey was completed by 48,027 students and 13,455 teachers in 323 high schools.

Figure 46 shows the percentages of students and teachers who reported each type of teasing and bullying at their school. Students consistently reported more teasing and bullying than teachers. Notably, a large majority of students (69%), but fewer than half of teachers (44%), agreed that students often got teased about their clothing or physical appearance. Similarly, a majority of students (57%), but a minority of teachers (37%), agreed that there was a lot of teasing about sexual topics at their school. The percentages of students and teachers who reported teasing because of race or ethnicity and because of sexual orientation were lower, but the pattern of higher student reports was similar.

Figure 46: Student and Teacher Perceptions of Teasing and Bullying



As the correlations in Figure 47 demonstrate, there is moderate agreement between student and teacher reports about the prevalence of teasing and bullying in their school. However, our research has found that both student and teacher perceptions of the prevalence of teasing and bullying are valuable indicators of school conditions.

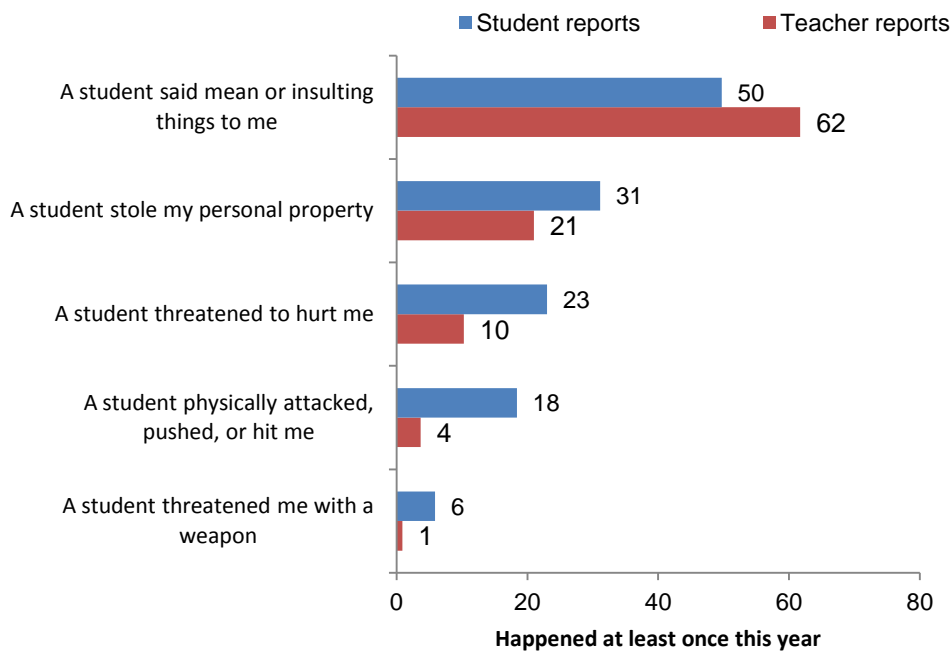
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Figure 47: Correlations between student and teacher perceptions of bullying and teasing

	Correlation
Bullying is a problem at this school.	0.56
Students here often get teased about their clothing or physical appearance.	0.40
Students get teased or put down because of their race or ethnicity at this school.	0.58
There is a lot of teasing about sexual topics at this school.	0.49
Students here get teased or put down about their perceived sexual orientation.	0.65

Students and teachers were also asked about their own experiences as recipients of aggressive behavior from students. Figure 48 shows the percentages of students and teachers who reported experiencing each form of victimization at least once. Half of students (50%) and a majority of teachers (62%) reported being the victim of an insult at least one time in the year. Having personal property stolen was also fairly common among both students (31%) and teachers (21%). About one in five students reported being physically attacked (18%) and being threatened (23%), while a much smaller percentage of teachers reported these forms of victimization (4% and 10%, respectively). Finally, six percent of students and one percent of teachers reported that a student had threatened them with a weapon.

Figure 48: Student and Teacher Reports of Being Victimized in School



Authoritative School Climate

Research in Virginia schools has found that two key domains of school climate are *structure* (students experience strict, but fair, discipline) and *support* (students feel supported and respected by school personnel). According to research on authoritative school discipline, good schools have high levels of both structure and support, analogous to the model of authoritative parents as both demanding and warm in their relationship with their children. Schools which are high on structure but low on support are described as authoritarian, schools that are low on structure but high on support are described as permissive, and schools low on both structure and support are described as disengaged.

Student perceptions of structure and support in their schools were measured with a series of scales and their responses were used to classify schools into four categories: high structure and high support (authoritative), high structure and low support

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(authoritarian), low structure and high support (permissive), and low structure and low support (disengaged). This is a heuristic classification used to facilitate the display of survey results; in practice, schools fall along a continuum of structure and support.

The four structure and support categories were used to predict the prevalence of teasing and bullying in school and students' and teachers' experiences of victimization. As shown in Figure 49, students and teachers in schools with both high structure and high support reported the lowest prevalence of teasing and bullying, while students and teachers in schools with both low structure and low support reported the highest prevalence of teasing and bullying. Figure 50 shows a similar pattern for teacher and student reports of victimization.

Figure 49: Prevalence of Teasing and Bullying by School Structure and Support

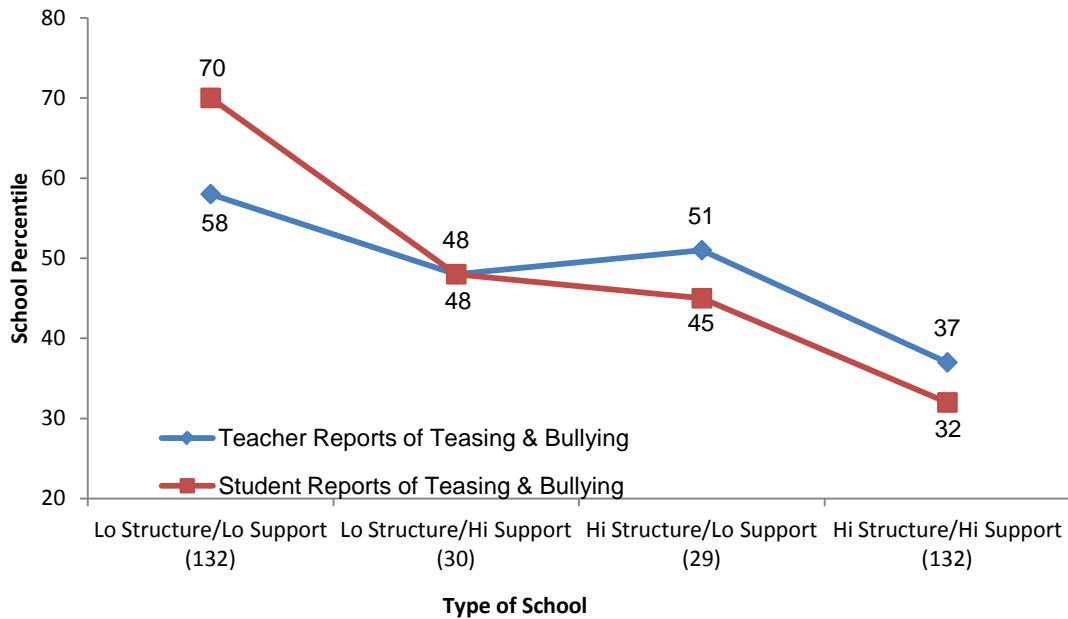
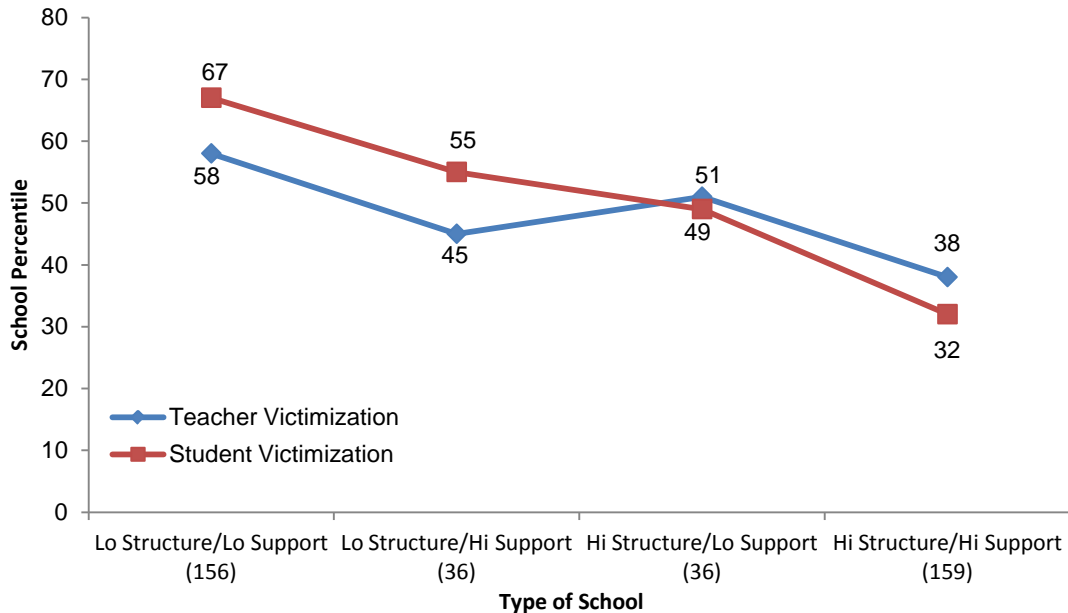


Figure 50: Student and Teacher Victimization by School Structure and Support



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Technical notes

The Virginia Secondary School Climate Survey (VSSCS) was developed by researchers in the Virginia Youth Violence Project in the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia. The VSSCS was administered to students and teachers in grades 9 through 12 in 2014 and will be administered again to those grades in 2016. Surveys of students and teachers in grades 7 and 8 are scheduled for 2015 and 2017.

Each school was provided with detailed reports of survey results for students and teachers. These reports compare student and teacher perceptions of the school with state and regional norms. Reports can be found at www.dcjs.virginia.gov/vcss/audit/student/reports. A technical report that includes more information about the survey can be found here: www.dcjs.virginia.gov/vcss/audit/student. The measures of structure and support used two student-reported scales containing a total of 15 items. Representative items to measure structure include, “The school rules are fair,” and “The punishment for breaking school rules is the same for all students.” Representative items to measure support included, “Most teachers and other adults at this school care about all students” and “There are adults at this school I could talk with if I had a personal problem.” All items were answered on a four-point Likert scale (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree).

All analyses using structure and support to compare the four groups of schools (Figures 49 and 50) controlled for the size of the school enrollment, the percentage of students receiving free or reduced price meals, and the percentage of minority students in the school. Students’ and teachers’ experiences of victimization in Figure 50 were calculated as sum scores of the five victimization questions shown in Figure 47.

The table below describes the specific types of infractions grouped into the categories shown in Figures 41 and 42.

Infraction Category	Types of Infractions
Aggression against others	Altercation, Battery against staff with/without weapon, Battery against student with/without weapon, Bullying or cyber bullying, Extortion, Fighting w/o injury, Gambling, Harassment, Hazing, Malicious Wounding, Offensive sexual touching staff or student, Robbery using force, Sexual assault student, Sexual battery staff or student, Sexual harassment, Sexual offense without force, Threat of student
Disruptive behavior	Attempting to incite a riot, Inciting a riot, Classroom disruption, Defiance, Disrespect, Disruptive demonstration, Gang activity, Minor insubordination, Obscene/disruptive literature, Obscene language/gestures, Trespassing
ATOD	Alcohol, Bringing tobacco paraphernalia to school, Over the counter med/use, Possession, use, sale or distribution of schedule I & II drugs, look-alike drugs, over the counter medicine, inhalants, Use, possession, and distribution of drug paraphernalia, Use of inhalants, Schedule I & II drugs, steroid, and marijuana, Synthetic marijuana use/possession/sale/distribution, Theft and attempted theft of prescription drugs, Tobacco products/use/possession/sales/distribution
Weapons	Bomb threat, Possession of a handgun/shotgun or rifle/toy or look-alike gun/BB gun/handgun/weapon that expels projectiles/knife more than three inches/explosive device/stun gun/taser/other weapon/other firearm, School threat
Property	Arson, Burglary, Breaking and entering, Lighted firecrackers, cherry bombs, or stink-bombs, Theft, Theft of motor vehicle, Vandalism
Technology	Causing damage to computer, Cellular phones, Electronic devices, Unauthorized use of technology, Violation of acceptable use/internet policy

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APPENDIX A: 2013–2014 VIRGINIA SCHOOL SAFETY SURVEY

Welcome to the 2014 Virginia School Safety Survey

This is a secure, web-based survey conducted by the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (VCSCS). Submission of this survey partially fulfills the Virginia School Safety Audit requirement. (Virginia Code §22.1-279.8).

While answering the following survey questions, please base your responses on the conditions in your school during the 2013–2014 school year. You are required to provide a response to each survey question in order to complete the survey.

Should you have any questions or experience technical problems with the survey, contact Jessica Smith at the VCSCS, 804-786-5367 or jessica.smith@dcjs.virginia.gov or Donna Michaelis at 804-371-6506 or donna.michaelis@dcjs.virginia.gov.

Please answer the following questions about your school as accurately as possible.

I. SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. What is the name of your school division? (select from drop-down list)

2. What is your school’s name? (select from drop-down list)

If we have any questions about your survey responses, we would like to be able to contact you. Please provide us with your contact information:

4. What is your name?

5. What is your title?

6. What is your phone number?

7. What is your email address?

8. Which of the following best describes your school? (select one)

- Elementary Charter
Middle Magnet
High Governor’s
Combined Grades Special Education
Primary Correctional Education
Pre-Kindergarten Adult Education
Alternative School for the Deaf and Blind
Career/Technical/Vocational Other (describe):

9. What grades were taught at your school during 2013–2014? (select all that apply)

- Pre-Kindergarten
Kindergarten 5th grade 10th grade
1st grade 6th grade 11th grade
2nd grade 7th grade 12th grade
3rd grade 8th grade Not applicable
4th grade 9th grade

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10. What was your [fall membership enrollment number](#) on September 30, 2013? (enter numeric response)

(For definitions of urban, suburban, town and rural, click [here](#).)

11. Which of the following best describes the region where *most* of your students live? (*select one*)

Rural Suburban Town Urban

II. ASSESSMENT, PLANNING, AND COMMUNICATION

Crisis Management Plan/Emergency Management Plan

Virginia Code § 22.1-279.8 describes school crisis and emergency management plans. It also states that “each school board shall ensure that every school that it supervises shall develop a written school crisis, emergency management, and medical response plan.”

12. Did your school practice any portion of its Crisis Management Plan/Emergency Management Plan (CMP/EMP) during the 2013–2014 school year? (*Practice does not include an actual emergency. You will be asked about those events in an upcoming question.*)

Yes No

(If 12 = yes)

12a. How was your school’s CMP/EMP *practiced* during the school year? (*select all that apply*)

Administration/faculty/staff training

Student training/awareness sessions

Parent training/awareness sessions

First responder coordination (EMS, fire, police, hazmat, etc.)

Table top exercises with crisis team members

Full scale drill with or without crisis team and public safety partners

Other (describe):

13. Did you have to activate any portion of your school’s crisis management plan during the 2013–2014 school year due to an *actual* critical event or emergency?

Yes No

14. Does your school have an [electronic notification system \(ENS\)](#) for notifying parents/guardians of an emergency at your school?

Yes No

(If 14 = yes)

14a. Did your school activate its electronic notification system (ENS) this year for an actual emergency?

Yes No

(If 13 = yes)

13a. Under what emergency circumstances did you activate your school’s crisis management plan (CMP)?

(If 14a = yes)

14a-1. Under what emergency circumstances did you activate your school’s electronic notification system (ENS)?

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(select each circumstance for which you activated your CMP/EMP)

Type of Emergency Circumstance(s)	Activated CMP	Activated ENS
Health related incidents and emergency(ies):		
allergic reaction ON school property	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
exposure to hazardous substances ON school property	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
food poisoning ON school property	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
influenza, pandemic, MRSA ON school property	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
other health related incident ON school property	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
other health related incident OFF school property	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Man-Made incidents and emergency(ies):		
bomb threat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
gun, knife, or other weapon, ON school property	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
loss, disappearance, or kidnapping of a student ON school property	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
presence of or threat of unauthorized persons or trespassers ON school property	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
other man made incident ON school property	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
other man made incident OFF school property	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Building damage or power outage related incident(s) or emergency(ies)		
earthquake	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
flood	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
tornado/hurricane	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
other natural disaster or severe weather	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
smoke or fire	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
roof or building collapse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
other building related damage or power outage related emergency(ies)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other		
incident at another school that affected your school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
unfounded incident/faulty or false alarm	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
other safety-related incident that affected school and is not listed above	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(if 13a = Other)

13a-1. You indicated that your school had a safety-related incident that was not on the previous list for which you activated your CMP. Please briefly explain the nature of the incident.

(if 14a-1 = Other)

14a-1.1. You indicated that your school had a safety-related incident that was not on the previous list for which you activated your ENS. Please briefly explain the nature of the incident.

Communication with Law Enforcement

15. Do your school administrators have regular meetings with local law enforcement to discuss problems in and around the school?

Yes No

(if 15 = yes)

15a. How frequently are these meetings with law enforcement held? (*select one*)

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Nothing scheduled, just informal discussions with [school resource officer \(SRO\)](#)

Weekly

Monthly

Quarterly

Other (describe):

16. Does your school regularly receive crime data reports from local law enforcement regarding crimes occurring in the area near the school?

Yes No

(if 16 = yes)

16a. How frequently do you receive crime data reports from local law enforcement? *(select one)*

As needed, in informal discussions with SRO

Weekly

Monthly

Quarterly

Other (describe):

Question 17 refers to Virginia Code [§22.1-279.3:1 \(Paragraph B\)](#) which requires local law enforcement to notify schools of certain offenses committed by students under certain circumstances. Please click on the Code cite and review the Code section before answering this question.

17. Are there formal processes or protocols in place through which your school routinely receives notification on these offenses from local law enforcement?

Yes No

III. THREAT ASSESSMENT

Threat Assessment Teams

18. Which of the following does your threat assessment team serve? *(select one)*

Your school only

Your school plus one more

Your school plus several others

Don't know

19. Are all team members part of this school's staff (including team members such as a SRO or school psychologist who may be assigned to multiple schools)? *(select one)*

All team members are part of this school's staff

All team members are part of the school division's staff (some from this school, some not)

All team members are part of the school division's staff (none from this school)

One or more team members are not school division employees, but work in the surrounding community

Don't know

Threat Assessment Model

20. During which school year did your school begin using your current threat assessment model? *(select one)*

2013 - 2014

2012 - 2013

2011 - 2012

2010 - 2011

2009 - 2010 or prior

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21. Have members of your threat assessment team received staff in-service training in using your current threat assessment model?

Yes No

22. How fully has your school implemented its current threat assessment model? *(select one)*

Just getting started About 25% About 50% About 75% Fully implemented

Recognizing/Reporting Threats

23. How have students, staff and parents been informed about the school’s threat assessment process during the 2013–2014 school year? *(select all that apply for each: student, staff, parents)*

	Brochure or other paper document	Website/emai	Oral presentation (classroom, assembly or other group meeting)	Other
Students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(if “other” is selected)

23a. Please briefly describe the other method by which students, staff and/or parents are informed about the school’s threat assessment process.

24. How are reports of “concerning or aberrant behavior” received by your threat assessment team? *(select all that apply)*

Phone (e.g., hotline) Written (e.g., drop box) Don’t know
 Electronic (e.g., email, text, website) In person (face-to-face) Other (describe)
(if 24 = phone, electronic, written)

24a. Are the reports received anonymously? Are the reports received by the school or the division (or both)?
(only the items selected in Q 24 will appear in matrix for Q 24a.)

	Are the reports received anonymously?		Who receives the reports? (select all that apply)	
	Yes	No	Received by School	Received by Division
Phone (e.g., hotline)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electronic (e.g., email, text, website)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written (e.g., drop box)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Record keeping

25. Are threat assessment case records maintained separately from the student’s educational records or as part of the student’s educational records?

Separate from student’s educational records
 Part of student’s education records
 Both—case records are stored as part of student’s educational records AND at another location separate from student’s educational records
 Don’t know

26. How is threat assessment case information shared with other threat assessment team members? *(select all that apply)*

Email In person Phone Don’t know Other (describe)

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Threats Assessed

27. In cases deemed to be appropriate, what are your school’s procedures for the mental health evaluation of a student identified for a threat assessment? *(select all that apply)*

- Evaluation by a school-based mental health professional (e.g. school psychologist, school counselor, school social worker)
- Evaluation by a mental health professional employed by the school division
- Evaluation through the Community Services Board (CSB)
- Evaluation with a community-based mental health professional identified by the school
- Evaluation with a community-based mental health professional identified by the parent/guardian
- Other (describe):

28. How many assessments were conducted by the school’s threat assessment team during the 2013–2014 school year? (provide total number of assessments conducted, regardless of outcome)

If you follow the UVA model, use these equivalents for responding to Q. 28a:

Transient risk - use Low risk

Substantive risk - use High risk

(if 28 ≠ 0)

28a. How many of the threats assessed were found to be low risk, moderate risk, high risk, and/or imminent risk? (provide the number of cases assessed and determined to be at each threat level)

Threat Level	Number of Cases
Low risk threat	
Moderate risk threat	
High risk threat	
Imminent threat	

If respondent says there were NO threats assessed or if the only threats assessed were found to be low risk, they will skip to question 29.

If respondent says there were one or more threats assessed and found to be moderate or high risk, or imminent threat, they will receive the following message before continuing with the survey:

DCJS is collecting specific information about each case where a threat assessment was conducted and the threat was found to be of moderate risk, high risk, or imminent threat.

You will be asked to provide case-specific information to us later this fall. You will be contacted by DCJS and provided with further information.

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IV. STUDENT SAFETY CONCERNS

School Safety Programs

29. Review the following list of program categories and select those for which your school took intentional and sustained action (i.e., occurred more than once) during the 2013–2014 school year. *(select all that apply)*

Anger management	Mentoring
Bullying prevention/intervention	Method to report a safety concern
Character education	anonymously
Classroom management in-service training and workshops for teachers	Peer mediation
Community/social integration for students	Problem solving or social skills curriculum
Conflict resolution	Substance abuse prevention
Counseling services for students	Truancy prevention
Individualized behavior plans for disruptive students	Violence prevention
	None of the above
	Other

Bullying

Note the updated definition of bullying in *Virginia Code § 22.1-276.01*: “Bullying” means any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between the aggressor or aggressors and victim; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. “Bullying” includes cyber bullying. “Bullying” does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict.

30. Review the following list of anti-bullying/bullying prevention programs and practices and select those that were in place at your school during the 2013–2014 school year. *(select all that apply)*

Programs

Al’s Pals	Olweus Bullying Prevention Program
Bullying Prevention within Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS)	Second Step curriculum
Bullyproofing Your School	None of the above
Effective School-wide Discipline (now called PBIS)	Other

Practices

Bus driver training on bullying	Parent education or outreach program regarding bullying
Classroom meetings about bullying	Restorative discipline practices for bullying
Conference or assembly on bullying (schoolwide)	Rules or policy on bullying communicated to all students schoolwide
Counselor-facilitated program	Specific disciplinary consequences for bullying
Curriculum on bullying taught to all students	Teacher/staff training on bullying
Hotline/complaint box (anonymous report)	Videos for students about bullying
Increased supervision in areas where bullying occurs	None of the above
Individual counseling with students identified as bullying others	Other
Individual counseling with students identified as victims of bullying	

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Cyberbullying

(For working definition of [cyberbullying](#), [click here](#))

31. How many known incidents of cyberbullying occurred at your school during 2013–2014? Include incidents that were sent or received/viewed on school property or at school-related functions. Also include incidents where students passed around printouts of online activity such as chats or photos in school. (select one)

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| No known incidents | 11 – 20 incidents | Over 100 incidents |
| 1 – 2 incidents | 21 – 50 incidents | |
| 3 – 10 incidents | 51 – 100 incidents | |

32. Does your school prohibit use of cell phones and text messaging devices during school hours?

- Yes No

33. Does your school limit access to social networking websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) from school computers?

- Yes No

School environment

34. The following scales are used to measure aspects of school climate that are related to school safety conditions. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements pertaining to the climate at your school during the 2013–2014 school year. (select one for each statement)

Statement	Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.			
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Bullying is a problem at this school.	0	0	0	0
Students know whom to go to for help if they have been treated badly by another student.	0	0	0	0
Students feel free to ask for help from teachers if there is a problem with a student.	0	0	0	0
Teachers know when students are being picked on or being bullied.	0	0	0	0
Teachers take action to solve the problem when students report bullying.	0	0	0	0
Students report it when one student hits another.	0	0	0	0
Students are encouraged to report bullying and aggression.	0	0	0	0
Students here often get teased about their clothing or physical appearance.	0	0	0	0
Students here often get put down because of their race or ethnicity.	0	0	0	0
Students here often get put down because of their perceived sexual orientation.	0	0	0	0
There is a lot of teasing about sexual topics at this school.	0	0	0	0
Zero tolerance makes a significant contribution to maintaining order at this school.	0	0	0	0
Zero tolerance sends a clear message to disruptive students about appropriate behaviors in school.	0	0	0	0
Suspension is a necessary tool for maintaining school order.	0	0	0	0
Schools cannot afford to tolerate students who disrupt the learning environment.	0	0	0	0
Suspension makes students less likely to misbehave in the future.	0	0	0	0
Out-of-school suspension is unnecessary if we provide a positive school climate and challenging instruction.	0	0	0	0

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Mental Health

35. Does your school employ a mental health professional (counselor, psychologist, social worker, substance abuse counselor) whose primary assignment is to provide counseling services to students?

Yes No

(If 35= yes)

35a. How many mental health professionals work at your school full-time/part-time?

(enter number of full-time and number of part-time)

Number of full-time	
Number of part-time	

35b. Among all mental health professionals working in your school, on average, what percentage of their time is spent providing mental health/counseling services? *(select one)*

- | | | | |
|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| 0 | 21-30 | 51-60 | 81-90 |
| 1 - 10 | 31-40 | 61-70 | 91-100 |
| 11-20 | 41-50 | 71-80 | |

36. Does your school have mental health professionals from community agencies that provide counseling services in your school to your students?

Yes No

(if 36 = yes)

36a. On a weekly basis, what is the average number of hours that a community agency counselor is in your school? *(enter numerical response)*

V. SCHOOL SECURITY/SURVEILLANCE

The questions in this section of the survey ask about security practices at your school. Because the public release of such information might compromise safety and security plans, *Virginia Code §2.2-3705.2 and §22.1-279.8* allow such information to be protected from release under the *Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)*. *This protection will automatically be given for answers to questions in this section.*

Please note, the DCJS Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety will report the information in this section in an aggregated format for all schools, but it will not release specific information from identified schools.

Security Strategies

37. Review the following list of security strategies and select those that were in place at your school during the 2013–2014 school year. *(select all that apply)*

- Someone is stationed at the front entrance of the school at all times during school hours to ensure that visitors report to the main office for visitor check in
- Main entrance of the school building or campus* is secured by a controlled access system during school hours
- School grounds* are secured by a controlled access system during school hours
- All exterior entrances to the school building or campus are locked during school hours
- All classrooms in the school can be locked from both the inside and the outside of the classroom
- Safety/security personnel are present at all times during the regular school day

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Security cameras are used to monitor school property (e.g., parking lots, corridors, playground, entrances)

Safety Patrols are conducted by teachers and/or staff

None of the above

Other

Safety Personnel

38. Did you have safety/security personnel such as School Resource Officers (SROs), School Security Officers (SSOs), or other types of security personnel working at your school FULL TIME during the 2013–2014 school year?

Yes No

(If 38 = yes)

38a. What type/s of safety/security personnel were working full time at your school? *(select all that apply)*

School Resource Officers (SROs)

School Security Officers (SSOs)

Other (describe) _____

(if 38a = SSO)

38a-1. Please provide the name and email address for each SSO currently working full time at your school.

(if 38a = SRO)

38a-2. Please provide the name and email address for each SRO currently working full time at your school.

*38a-3. Has the SRO/s that works at your school completed a School Resource Officer Basic Training?

Yes No Don't know

(if 38a-3 = yes)

*38a-3.1. Who provided the SRO training that your SRO completed? *(select all that apply)*

DCJS-sponsored training

Local law enforcement agency

Don't know

Other (describe):

*38a-4. Is there a substitute SRO that steps in to work at your school when your regular SRO is out (e.g., in court, sick day, etc.)?

Yes No

38a-5. How is the SRO position/s at your school funded? *(select all that apply)*

By the school division

By a law enforcement agency

Combination of the above

Don't know

Other

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Safety-Related Communication

39. Do you have two-way communication between the school office and all other areas of your school's property (both interior and exterior)?

Yes No

40. What is the primary way used to maintain two-way communication between the school office and the classrooms?
(select one)

Cell phone	Panic/alarm button
Intercom	Telephone
2 way radio	Other (describe)

41. Can school administrators communicate with law enforcement/first responders via radio when they are inside the school building?

Yes No Don't know

42. Do first responders (including police, fire and EMS) have electronic/internet-based access to current floor plans for your school in case they need to respond to a large scale security incident at your facility?

Yes No Don't Know

Lockdowns

43. Do first responders have access to the school during a lockdown so they do not have to breach doors or windows to gain access?

Yes No Don't know

To review *Virginia Code* [§22.1-137.2](#) which designates the frequency and scheduling for lockdown drills, click the code cite.

44. Were lockdown drills practiced at your school more than twice during the 2013–2014 school year?

Yes No

Parking lots

45. Is your school parking lot/s monitored during school hours?

Yes No

(if 45 = yes)

45a. Which of the following monitoring methods are used to monitor your school's parking lot/s during school hours? (select all that apply)

Randomly patrolled by school security personnel (SRO, SSO, private security)

Randomly patrolled by school faculty/staff

Randomly patrolled by law enforcement

Security cameras (monitored live in real time)

Security cameras (taped, not monitored in real time)

No formal surveillance, only informal monitoring

Other (describe):

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Background Checks

46. Does your school conduct background checks on volunteers who work with your students (NOT including parents/guardians)?

Yes No

(if 46 = yes)

46a. What type/s of background check is conducted? *(select all that apply)*

Criminal background check

Sex offender registry check

Credit check

Don't know (all background checks are conducted by the division office)

Other (describe):

Gang-Related Activity

(For Virginia Code [§18.2-46.1](#) definition of "Criminal street gang" click on the Code cite.)

47. Using the definition above, did your school have any gang-related problems or incidents during the 2013–2014 school year?

Yes No

(If 47 = yes)

47a. Did the number of gang-related problems or incidents (such as graffiti, beat-ins, rival gang fights, etc.) increase, decrease, or stay about the same when compared with the previous school year? *(select one)*

Increased

Decreased

Stayed about the same

(if 47 = no)

47b. You reported that your school did not have any gang-related problems or incidents during the 2013–2014 school year. Does this reflect a decrease in gang-related problems or incidents from the previous school year or were both school years free of gang-related problems/incidents? *(select one)*

Reflects a decrease

Same as in 2012–2013 (no gang-related problems or incidents either year)

48. Did the community surrounding your school have any gang-related problems or incidents during the 2013–2014 school year?

Yes No Don't know

49. Indicate which of the following were part of your school's routine tasks in regard to gang graffiti and its prevention/eradication in 2013–2014. *(select all that apply)*

Staff were trained to look for/identify gang-related graffiti.

Maintenance and/or janitorial staff routinely looked for gang graffiti in restrooms, locker rooms, trash cans, etc.

When/if graffiti was found, photo documentation was made and shared with local law enforcement

When/if graffiti was found, it was immediately removed

None of the above

We had no gang graffiti on school property during the 2013–2014 school year

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50. Which of the following gang prevention measures were in place at your school during the 2013–2014 school year?

(select all that apply)

Formal student policy regarding gang-related behavior

Students advised about restrictions on gang-related behavior

Students suspended from school for gang-related behavior

Counseling services provided to discourage gang-related behavior

Speaker for students on gangs

Speaker for parents on gangs

Gang awareness in-service training and workshops for teachers/staff

Use of G.R.E.A.T. (Gang Resistance Education and Training) program

Use of a program other than G.R.E.A.T. to discourage gang involvement

Cooperative effort with law enforcement to identify gang-related crime

None of the above

Other (describe):

51. Which of the following indicators of gang activity were observed in your school during the 2013–2014 school year?

(For each of the listed indicators, please select either “no incidents, 1 or 2 incidents, or 3 or more incidents”)

	No incidents	1 or 2 incidents	3 or more incidents
School staff identified gang-related graffiti on school property	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gang signs or symbols were identified on students’ clothing or other belongings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School staff reported observing students using gang-related hand signals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gang-related fights occurred during school hours on the school campus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

52. Rate the overall threat of gang activity by street gangs in your school during the 2013–2014 school year.

(select one)

5 (high)

4

3 (medium)

2

1 (low)

None

*This concludes the survey questions. You may use the **Back** button to review and/or change your answers. When you are satisfied that your responses are accurate, please click **Submit Survey**. (You will have the opportunity to print your answers after you submit the survey.)*

Thank you for completing the 2014 Virginia School Safety Survey. Your survey responses were successfully submitted to the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety at the Department of Criminal Justice Services.

A copy of your survey responses will be made available to your division superintendent through our secure website. If you are unable to print a copy of your survey responses using the instructions below, please contact your superintendent to request a copy of your survey results. To make a copy of your survey responses for your records, please click on the “view response” button below. A printable version of your survey responses will appear titled, “Response Details.” Print this page using whatever method you typically use to print a webpage, such as: **select file/print from your browser tool bar, or right click your mouse, then select “print” or select “save page as,” and then print after saving the page.**

If you have other questions about the Virginia School Safety Survey, please contact Jessica Smith at the VCSCS: 804-786-5367 or jessica.smith@dcjs.virginia.gov or Donna Michaelis at 804-371-6506 or donna.michaelis@dcjs.virginia.gov.

Please be sure to close this browser window when you are finished.

APPENDIX B: DEFINITIONS

Administration/Faculty/Staff

Some questions on the survey refer to school administration, school faculty and/or school staff. When responding to these questions, respondents were asked to use the following definitions for each group.

Administration: superintendent, principal, assistant principal, office staff/administrative assistant, disciplinary staff

Faculty: teachers, counselor/guidance counselor, substitute teachers, teacher assistants

Staff: bus drivers, food service, janitorial, maintenance, nurse/student health, student activities / athletic, school resource officer (SRO), school security officer (SSO), paid officer from outside private security agency

Bullying

Repeated negative behaviors intended to frighten or cause harm. This may include, but is not limited to, verbal or written threats or physical harm. Another form is cyber bullying, which is using information and communication technologies such as e-mail, cell phone and pager text messages, instant messaging, defamatory personal websites, and defamatory online personal polling websites, to support deliberate, hostile behavior intended to harm others.

Controlled Access System

Controlled access entry systems provide a barrier between potential visitors and building interiors that must be actively removed by school personnel, such as one that requires a staff member to “buzz” visitors through a locked door.

Criminal Street Gang

(*Virginia Code* §18.2-46.1) Any ongoing organization, association, or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, (i) which has as one of its primary objectives or activities the commission of one or more criminal activities, (ii) which has an identifiable name or identifying sign or symbol, and (iii) whose members individually or collectively have engaged in the commission of, attempt to commit, conspiracy to commit, or solicitation of two or more predicate criminal acts, at least one of which is an act of violence, provided such acts were not part of a common act or transaction.

Crisis Management

Crisis Management is that part of a school division’s approach to school safety which focuses more narrowly on a time-limited, problem-focused intervention to identify, confront and resolve the crisis, restore equilibrium, and support appropriate adaptive responses.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to deliberately threaten and/or harass someone with the intent of harming and/or embarrassing them. Text or images used in incidents of cyberbullying may be sent or posted using text messaging, email, instant messaging, social websites, blog posts, chat rooms, etc.

Electronic Notification System

A telephone notification system that is tied to a school’s student database and automatically calls every contact number listed for every student within a specific number of minutes. It is typically activated by a telephone call from a designated school employee or by an e-mail sent from a computer using a secure passcode.

Emergency

An emergency is any event or situation that forces school closure or schedule changes, or that directly threatens the safety or wellbeing of any students, faculty, staff or members of the community and requires immediate action for

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resolution. Examples include severe weather, loss of utilities, bomb threats or terrorist acts, violent crime, release of hazardous materials, and others and need not occur on school property.

Fall Enrollment (Fall Membership Enrollment Number)

As defined by the Virginia Department of Education (DOE), this is the number of students enrolled in public school on September 30th of a given year. Each school in Virginia that officially enrolls students (i.e. student records are maintained on a Virginia Teacher's Register or automated system) submits their fall membership enrollment number to DOE on an annual basis. Excluded from the September 30th count are: special education preschool pupils, pupils in hospitals, clinics or detention homes and local programs such as vocational and alternative education centers (i.e., centers or schools which receive, but do not officially enroll students). More information about the fall membership enrollment number is available on the Virginia Department of Education's website at www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/dbpubs/all_Membership/2008/readme.htm.

Family Assistance Center (FAC)

A Family Assistance Center is a secure facility established to serve as a centralized location to provide information and assistance about missing, unaccounted for, injured or deceased persons, and support the reunification of individuals with their loved ones during and in the aftermath of an emergency.

The Family Assistance Center is a facility that is established as the result of a mass casualty/fatality incident, wherein a significant number of victims and/or family members are expected to request information and assistance. A FAC is an organized, calm, professional, and coordinated method of assistance delivery in a safe and secure environment following an incident or accident. A FAC is staffed by trained personnel.

Formal Threat Assessment Process

In a school setting, a threat assessment is conducted when a person (or persons) threatens to commit a violent act, or engages in behavior that suggests that they might act violently. This systematic assessment examines the nature of the threat and the circumstances surrounding the threat, in order to evaluate the seriousness of the threat and probability that the threat will be carried out. More information about threat assessments is available from the Virginia Youth Violence Project's website, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia at <http://youthviolence.edschool.virginia.edu/threatassessment/student-threat-assessment.html>

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is the statute that provides access to government records (or portions thereof) except to the extent that such records are protected from disclosure by any of the exemptions included in the act. Security plans and specific assessment components of school safety audits may be excluded from FOIA as referenced in § 2.2-3705.2 and as provided in §22.1-279.8.

Virginia Code § 2.2-3700.

- A. This chapter may be cited as "The Virginia Freedom of Information Act."
- B. By enacting this chapter, the General Assembly ensures the people of the Commonwealth ready access to public records in the custody of a public body or its officers and employees, and free entry to meetings of public bodies wherein the business of the people is being conducted. The affairs of government are not intended to be conducted in an atmosphere of secrecy since at all times the public is to be the beneficiary of any action taken at any level of government. Unless a public body or its officers or employees specifically elect to exercise an exemption provided by this chapter or any other statute, every meeting shall be open to the public and all public records shall be available for inspection and copying upon request. All public records and meetings shall be presumed open, unless an exemption is properly invoked. The provisions of this chapter shall be liberally construed to promote an increased

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awareness by all persons of governmental activities and afford every opportunity to citizens to witness the operations of government. Any exemption from public access to records or meetings shall be narrowly construed and no record shall be withheld or meeting closed to the public unless specifically made exempt pursuant to this chapter or other specific provision of law. This chapter shall not be construed to discourage the free discussion by government officials or employees of public matters with the citizens of the Commonwealth.

All public bodies and their officers and employees shall make reasonable efforts to reach an agreement with a requester concerning the production of the records requested. Any ordinance adopted by a local governing body that conflicts with the provisions of this chapter shall be void.

Regions

Office of Management and Budget's Standards for Defining Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas (2000):

- Urban:** According to Census criteria, urban refers to a principal city in an area. (In Virginia this includes: Alexandria, Arlington, Blacksburg, Bristol, Charlottesville, Christiansburg, Danville, Hampton, Harrisonburg, Lynchburg, Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Reston, Richmond, Roanoke, Virginia Beach, Waynesboro, and Winchester.)
- Suburban:** Territory outside a principal city (see list of principal cities above) but inside a settled area that contains at least 50,000 people and has an overall population density of 1,000 people per square mile or higher.
- Town:** Territory outside a principal city or suburb, but within a settled area containing at least 2,500 people and with an overall population density of 1,000 people per square mile or higher.
- Rural:** Territory outside of principal cities, suburbs, and towns. (Some examples of rural areas in Virginia are Monterey and Middleburg.)

Reunification Plan

When students and staff have been evacuated to an alternate site, school administrators or the crisis response team should implement a school's student-parent reunification plan for releasing students to their parents and guardians. A strong reunification plan will:

- Designate reunification sites and outline the procedures for releasing students
- Maintain updated student emergency information that details students' special needs and any medical or custody issues, and incorporate guidelines for storing the information in a secure location accessible to authorized personnel
- Outline parental notification methods such as the use of calling trees, local media channels or an electronic notification system

School

The Virginia Center for School Safety uses a different definition for a "school" than the Virginia Department of Education due to the nature of the school safety audit requirement. For the purposes of a "school safety audit" the VCSS uses the following definition: "A school is any separate physical structure that houses and instructs public school students on a daily basis." Therefore, regional, alternative, governor's schools, head start, preschool facilities, and others that are not physically part of another public school building, are required to complete a school safety survey, regardless of where the enrollment of its students is housed.

School Resource Officer (SRO)

A certified law-enforcement officer employed by the local law enforcement agency that provides law-enforcement and security services to a Virginia public school

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School Security Officer (SSO)

An individual who is employed by the local school board for the singular purpose of maintaining order and discipline, preventing crime, investigating violations of school board policies, and detaining students violating the law or school board policies on school property or at school-sponsored events and who is responsible solely for ensuring the safety, security, and welfare of all students, faculty, staff and visitors in the assigned school.

Student Assistance Programming (SAP)

Broadly stated, Student Assistance Programming goals are to prevent problems through education and address existing problems by directing students to school-based or community services providers as may be appropriate.

Furthermore, SAP:

- provides a framework and process for managing the continuum of social, emotional, and mental health supports for all students and intervention for those in need.
- engages students and parents at each level of prevention, intervention and support services.
- offers a systematic and flexible approach for integrating and sustaining evidence-based practices, programs and strategies to enhance a positive school climate and safe school environment.
- builds and maintains collaborative partnerships with multiple community stakeholders – e.g., law enforcement agencies, community service boards, other behavioral health service providers, social services, the faith community, youth and family service organizations, prevention councils.
- uses a data-driven decision making process conducted by a planning team in each school to assess needs and monitor interventions.
- changes priorities as determined by relevant data and review of existing plans, curriculum, practices, programs and strategies.

Threat Assessment Team

School threat assessment teams shall be headed by the principal or administrative designee and include at least one guidance counselor, a school psychologist and/or school social worker, a law enforcement representative who is typically a school resource officer, and a member with expertise in instruction. Other school staff may serve on the team and/or be consulted during the threat assessment process, as appropriate, or as determined by the principal. [Note: § 22.1-79.4.D., *Code of Virginia*, requires school threat assessment teams to include persons with expertise in counseling, instruction, school administration, and law enforcement]

In fulfilling statutory responsibilities, school threat assessment teams shall:

- Conduct the assessment of and intervention with students whose behavior may pose a threat to the safety of the school staff or students
- Provide guidance to students, faculty, and staff regarding recognition of threatening behavior that may represent a threat by conducting presentations, broadly disseminating relevant information, and ensuring access to consultation from teams
- Clearly identify the person(s) to whom members of the school community are to report threatening behavior
- Implement school board policies in an effective manner for the assessment of and intervention with students whose behavior poses a threat, including, in appropriate cases, referrals to community services boards or health care providers for evaluation or treatment. (§ 22.1-79.4.C., *Code of Virginia*)

Zero Tolerance

Zero tolerance refers to the practice of automatic expulsion of students for violations of certain school safety rules.



1100 Bank Street
Richmond, VA 23219
www.dcjs.virginia.gov

