



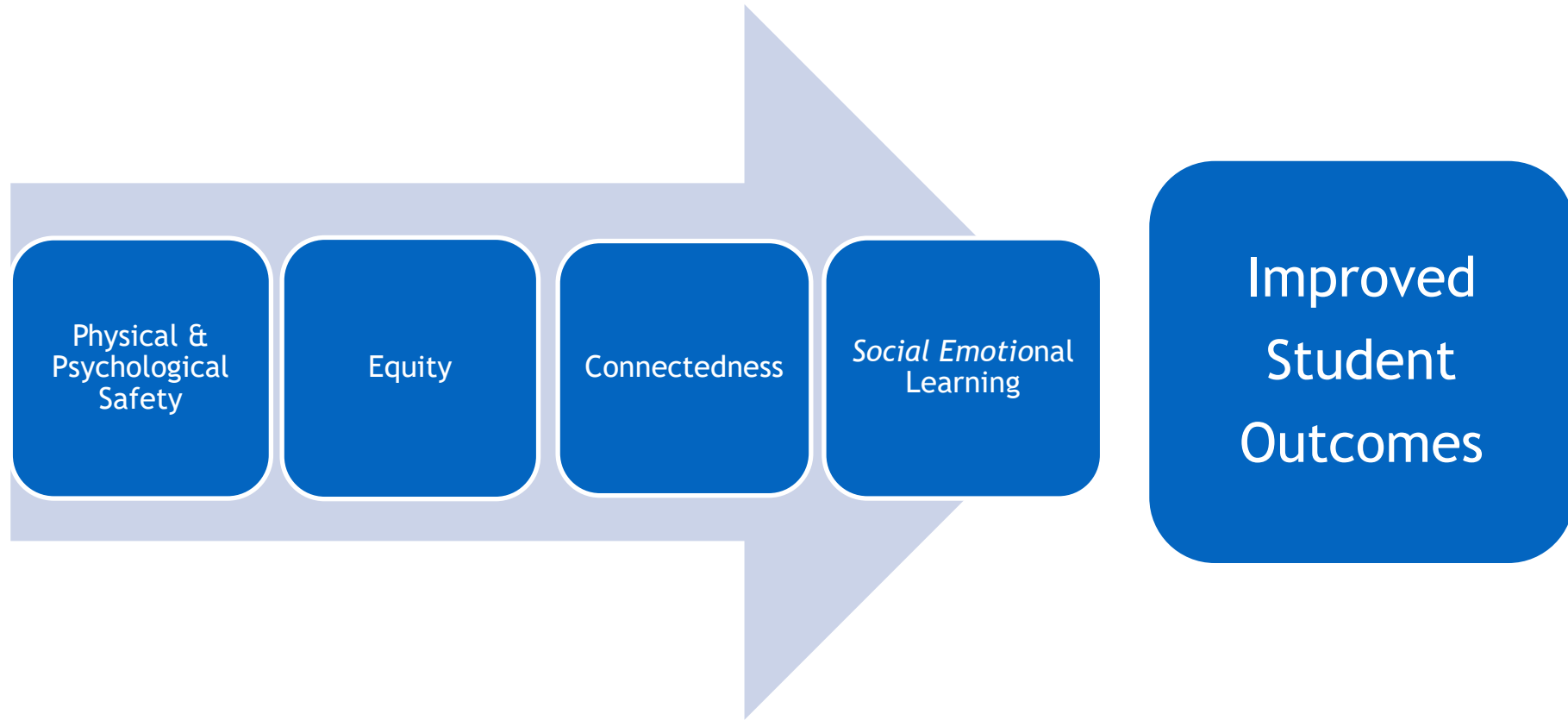
COLORADO
Office of School Safety
Department of Public Safety

RESOURCES FROM THE COLORADO OFFICE OF SCHOOL SAFETY

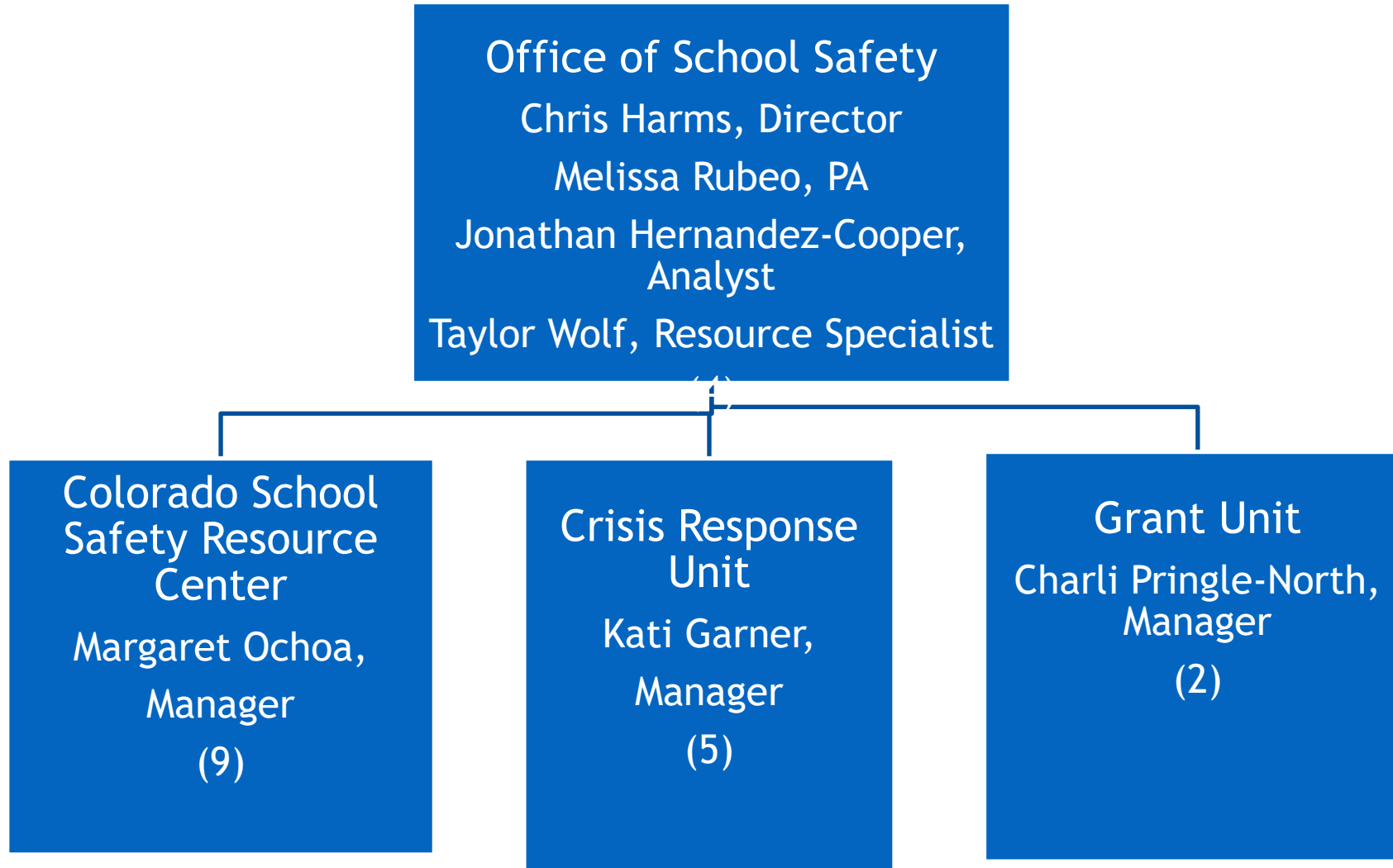
CASB Conference
December 11, 2025
Christine R. Harms MS, Director
Colorado Office of School Safety
Colorado Department of Public Safety



School Climate and Achievement



Office of School Safety - SB23-241



Office of School Safety

- Colorado School Safety Resource Center (CSSRC) - 9 FTEs
 - Margaret Ochoa - Manager
 - Brad Stiles - Emergency Response Outreach Consultant
 - Cary Lynch - School Outreach Consultant
 - Jae Dee Wood - Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Specialist
 - Vacant - South Central Training Consultant
 - Mike Vagher - Eastern Regional Training Consultant
 - Chelsey Lehmkuhl- NE Regional Training Consultant
 - Kelly Donnelly - NW Regional Training Consultant
 - Amy Miglinas - SW Regional Training Consultant

Office of School Safety

- **Crisis Unit - 5 FTEs**
 - Manager: Kati Garner
 - Crisis Response Specialists: Jenny Mills, Leah Lefever, Kristin Kushmider and Ali Harris
 - NASP trained in PREPaRE and other crisis response topics
 - Able to train other MH providers in PREPaRE
 - Able to respond to a school crisis
- **Grants Unit - 2 FTEs**
 - Manager: Charli Pringle-North
 - Grant Specialist - Chamone Patrick-Jones
 - Managing 90+ grants currently
 - Able to research school safety grants

Colorado Safe Schools Act (CRS 22.32.109.1)

SB08-181: NIMS for Colorado Schools

Requires all school districts and the Charter School Institute (CSI) to adopt the tenets of the National Response Framework (NRF), including the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command Structure (ICS).



In the definitions a school includes:

(g.3) “School” means a public school of a school district, a charter school, or an institute charter school.



Components of the Colorado Safe Schools

Act C.R.S. 22-32-109.1

- Makes safety a priority in mission
- Development of a safe school plan
- Requires written policies for conduct and discipline codes
- Bullying prevention & education
- Safe schools reporting requirements for conduct & discipline code violations
- Internet safety plan (recommended)
- Agreements with state agencies
- School response framework-school safety, readiness & incident management plan
- Safety & security policy
- Employee screenings
- Immunity for school personnel-safe school plan
- Compliance with reporting
- Sharing information
- CSA prevention (encouraged)

Ongoing Initiative

- **School Safety Working Group (SSWG)** established December 2022
 - Created in legislation - SB20-023 and HB22-1274
 - Mission: Reviewed the work of the state agencies involved in school safety efforts
 - Looked for duplication
 - Considered evaluation
 - Identified gaps
 - Made recommendations to the legislature
- Work was conducted by committees
 - Behavioral and Mental Health Committee
 - Access to Services Committee
 - Gap Analysis
 - Sustainability
 - Metrics & Data
 - Physical Safety
- Report went to the Colorado General Assembly in January 2024

Basic Physical Safety Recommendations

School Safety Team to consider:

- External Safety measures
 - Perimeter delineation
 - Well-lit parking
 - Safe playgrounds
 - Secure entryways
 - Exterior doors that lock
- Internal Safety Measures
 - Secure vestibules or secure entry process
 - Working PA system that can be heard EVERYWHERE
 - Classroom doors that easily lock
 - Training for staff, students and information to parents/guardians on safety procedures

Information to Parents/Guardians

- Student handbooks that require a sign-off
- Opportunities at parent/guardian gatherings for quick safety reminders
- Information on conducting trauma-sensitive drills. Solicit their input to school staff if their student has significant trauma.
- Letters after drills to alert parents/guardians and request their assistance with reassuring students.

Table Discussion - 15 minutes

Please discuss the physical safety resources and challenges you have at your schools.

Perhaps some of your colleagues can suggest how they have addressed similar challenges?



Best Practices in School Safety

1. School Safety Planning Team & Crisis Response Team w/initial training	IS 100SCa Incident Command IS 362A Multi-Hazard IS 700 Incident Command for Schools All free online from FEMA
2. Assess community & building safety concerns	Templates/First responders will help/community emergency managers may help/free
3. Write/update existing school safety plans	Templates available/CSSRC can assist/free
4. Incident Command Structure in place (NIMS compliant)	Templates available/CSSRC/free

Best Practices in School Safety

5. Develop emergency actions & conduct drills including communication checks (Evacuation, Shelter-in-Place, Lockdown & Lockout)	Templates from CSSRC & others/free CSSRC can assist with tabletop drills/free
6. Threat Assessment - policy & procedures in place for a process	Training available/CSSRC/free
7. Threat Assessment Team trained	CSSRC/free
8. Psychological Recovery Team trained	CSSRC/free PREPaRE/NASP
9. Continue to complete and update plan and train according to best practices	Templates available from CSSRC/U.S. Dept. of Ed/U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security

Basic Psychological Safety Recommendations

- Efforts to create a positive climate in the building
- Consistent discipline interventions and consequences
- Social emotional lessons including bullying prevention
- Suicide prevention workshops (at least 3 times in each student's career)
- Trauma-informed drills
- Trained threat assessment teams
- Mental health staff trained to do suicide assessments
- Mental health providers trained in PREPaRE

Psychological Safety Workshops Available

Adult Sexual Misconduct Training	CSSRC CSDSIP
Brain Development	CSSRC
Bullying Prevention	CDE Recommended Policy for Districts & Resources CSSRC/Resource Guide
Child Abuse Prevention Trainings	CSSRC/Resource Guide
Psychological Issues of Youth	CSSRC
Restorative Practices	CSSRC/Resource Guide
Secondary Traumatic Stress	CSSRC & Crisis Response Unit
Sexting & Cyberbullying Prevention	CSSRC Local law enforcement agencies
Suicide Best Practices	CSSRC/Resource Guide CDPHE/Office of Suicide Prevention
Trauma Sensitive Classrooms	CDHS/Trauma Office

Colorado General Assembly 2025

[SB25-027\(opens in new window\)](#) Trauma-Informed School Safety Practices

[SB25-143\(opens in new window\)](#) Extend Prohibition on School Facial Recognition

[SB25-178\(opens in new window\)](#) Colorado K-5 Social & Emotional Health Pilot Program

Colorado General Assembly 2025

Reminder: HB23-1003 School Mental Health Assessments

[HB25-1135\(opens in new window\)](#) Communication Devices in Schools

[HB25-1167\(opens in new window\)](#) Alternative Education Campuses

[HB25-1173\(opens in new window\)](#) Advisory Board Serving Office of School Safety

[HB25-1188\(opens in new window\)](#) Mandatory Reporter Task Force Recommendations

[HB25-1248\(opens in new window\)](#) Protect Students from Restraint & Seclusion Act

[HB25-1250\(opens in new window\)](#) Gun Violence Prevention & Parents of Students

[HB25-1274\(opens in new window\)](#) Healthy School Meals for All Program

[HB25-1312\(opens in new window\)](#) Legal Protection for Transgender Individuals

Educators' School Safety Task Force

- HB24-1320 with members specified in the legislation
- 15 voting members and three non-voting members
- Convened on August 29, 2024
- Studied:
 - Laws and regulations for school staff safety
 - Caseload effects on disruptive learning environments
 - Incidents of aggressive student behavior and consequences
 - Solutions to the challenges
 - The work of the School Finance Task Force, SSWG, Disproportionate Discipline Task Force and Facility Schools Working Group.
 - Impact of insufficient funding and lack of resources
 - Recommendations for administrative and statutory changes
- Final report was completed by June 30, 2025
- Video, summary of the Survey and Road Maps are on the OSS website

Challenging Issues in School Safety

- Swatting
- Threat Assessment
- SROs in schools
- Others?

Swatting

- “Swatting is when someone calls in a bogus threat in an attempt to direct law enforcement resources to a particular home, school, or other location.”
- AI generated, in some cases: 4/13/2023
<https://www.vice.com/en/article/k7z8be/torswats-computer-generated-ai-voice-swatting>
- NASRO guidelines: 9/26/2022
- <https://www.nasro.org/news/2022/09/26/news-releases/surge-in-school-swatting-calls-considerations-for-school-resource-officers/>

CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

- SROs are encouraged to initiate a discussion within their agencies regarding response protocols for 'swatting' calls at schools.
- SROs are encouraged to facilitate a discussion with their school administrators, staff, and faculty about what protocols will be followed in the event of a 'swatting' call.
- Together, school administrators and SROs are encouraged to initiate a discussion with students and parents about law enforcement protocols that will be followed in the event of a 'swatting' call.
- If your school is the target of a 'swatting' call, debrief with all school community members afterward to identify what went well and what needs improvement, as well as lingering adverse consequences.

FBI Indicators of Potential Swatting Calls

Caution: Continue to use your agreed upon protocols.

- Callers stating a specific number of deceased or injured victims. During an ongoing incident, this information may not be known.
- Receiving one call regarding an ongoing attack. Call centers typically receive multiple calls from more than one person.
- Callers referencing non-existent classroom numbers, floors, or buildings. Someone on the scene would be familiar with the actual location.
- Caller ID showing a different number than the alleged source.

FBI Indicators of Potential Swatting Calls

- Calling the non-emergency line to a local police department. Calls to report incidents of this nature are typically made to 9-1-1 centers. Calling a non-emergency line may indicate the call was made using VoIP.
- Caller hangs up when asked for additional information about discrepancies in information provided or lack of background noise or when asked for someone else to be put on the phone.

¹ (U//FOUO); Notification; *Federal Bureau of Investigation Intelligence Branch Office of Partner Engagement*; “Subject Making Hoax Active Shooter Calls to Schools”; 26 September 2022.

² (U//FOUO); Intelligence Bulletin; *San Diego Law Enforcement Coordination Center*; “Swatting Incidents Likely Continue to Divert Responding Law Enforcement from Legitimate Emergencies and Have the Potential to Create Dangerous Situations”; 23 September 2022.

Threat Assessment

*Despite its good intentions,
threat assessment has been criticized as an unfair and
discriminatory process*

**Protocols to stop mass school shootings are
spreading. Are students' right being violated?**

Dewey Cornell, Ph.D., Presentation March 9, 2023 in Colorado

Agreement

- Threat assessment must be fair and equitable to all students.
- Student rights must be protected.
- Student misbehavior should not be inappropriately criminalized or subject to zero tolerance discipline.
- Schools must monitor and address any evidence of unfairness or bias.

Studies on Threat Assessment

2012, School Psychology Review. Random controlled trial 40 schools, 20 did threat assessments and 20 did not.

Students in threat assessment schools...

- 4x more likely to receive counseling
- 2.5x more parent involvement
- 3x more likely not to get long-term suspension
- 8x more likely not to be placed elsewhere

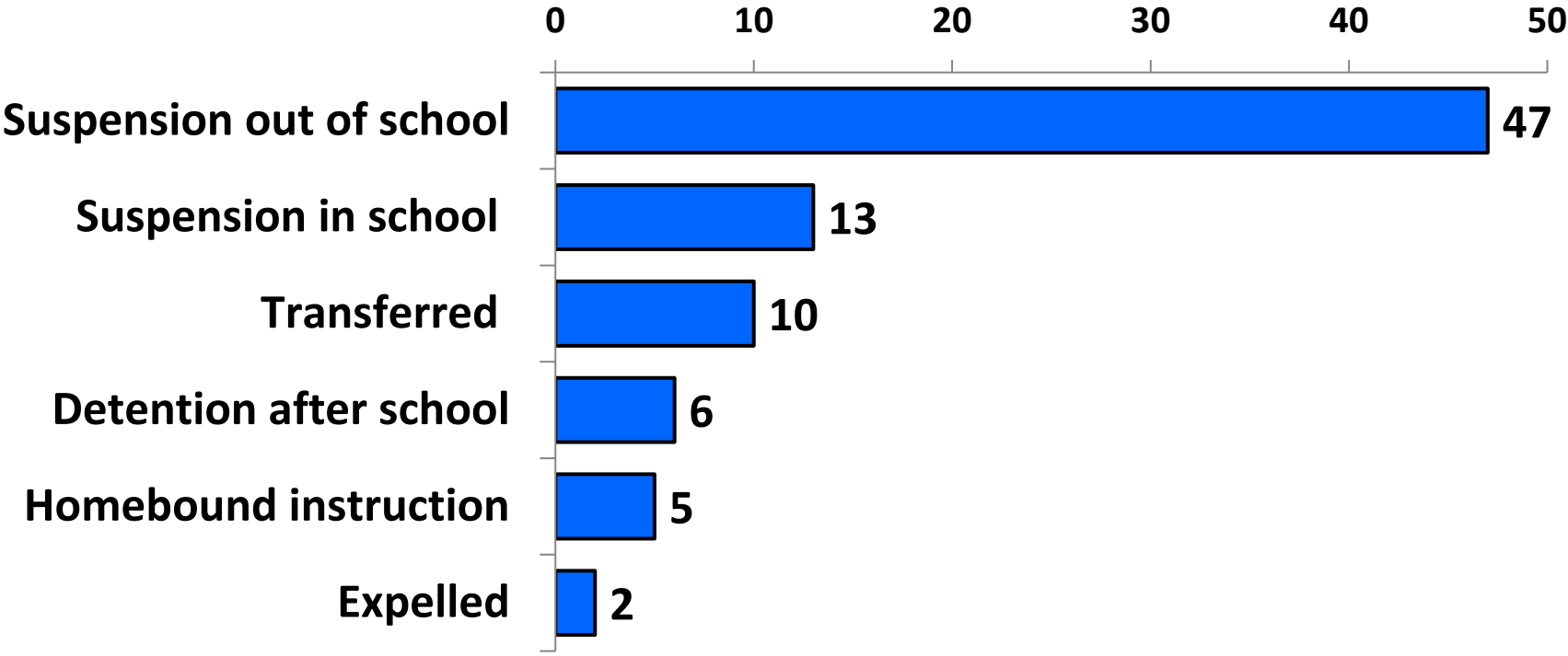
Dewey Cornell, Ph.D., Presentation March 9, 2023 in Colorado



Studies on Threat Assessment

Disciplinary Outcome (%)

N = 1,470 Virginia cases

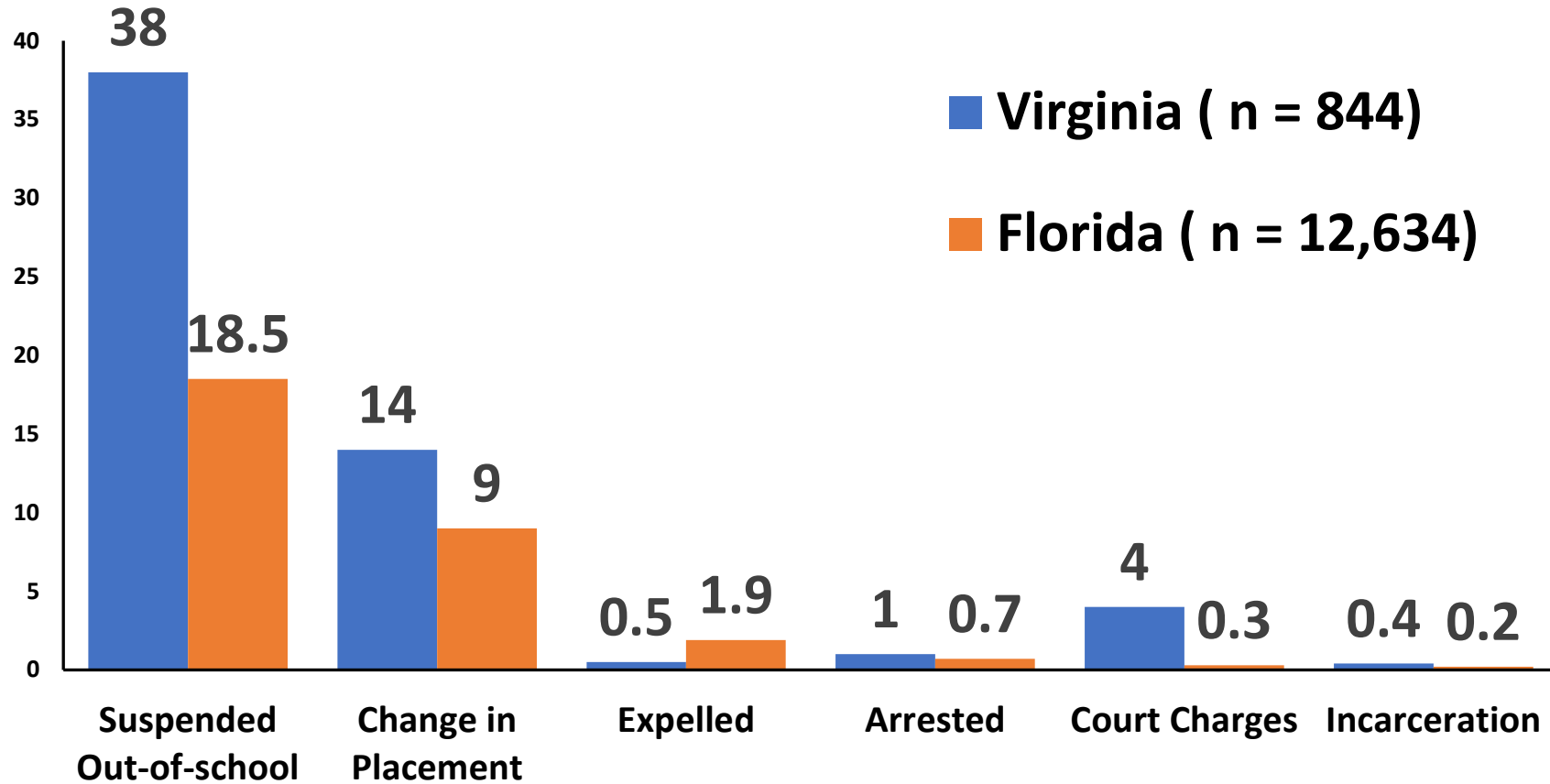


Dewey Cornell, Ph.D., Presentation March 9, 2023 in Colorado

Following the 2018 Parkland shooting, Florida mandated threat assessment in its 4,000 public schools

Dewey Cornell, Ph.D., Presentation March 9, 2023 in Colorado

Disciplinary and Legal Outcomes For Virginia and Florida



Dewey Cornell, Ph.D., Presentation March 9, 2023 in Colorado

*We don't know if these numbers
would be similar in Colorado.*

Threat Assessment Data Collection

School TA **Without** Data Can Lead to...

- Uneven practice
- Reactionary planning
- Unclear patterns
- Uneven resources
- Disproportionality
- Inadequate staffing
- Unpredictability

TA **With** Data Enables Schools to...

- Standard practice
- Proactive planning
- Identify patterns
- Proportioned resources
- Monitor/address disproportionality
- Assess staffing needs

NASP Recommended Minimum Data

- Numbers of threat assessments screens and full assessments conducted, disaggregated by identified disability, race and ethnicity.
- Outcomes of each threat assessment case and disaggregate by identified disability, race and ethnicity
- Referral, removal, involuntary commitment, and arrest rates for students who have had a threat assessment conducted and disaggregated by identified disability, race, and ethnicity

If disproportionality is identified for any group or subgroup of students, it is imperative that schools immediately seek to examine factors that contributed to identified disparities and take corrective action to promote equitable practices and outcomes. - NASP 2021



SROs in Schools - Research is mixed

- Increase in arrests is directly correlated to the presence of SROs
- School-to-prison pipeline
- Certain groups are policed disproportionately
- Students of color are arrested or referred to law enforcement at significantly higher rates
- Students with disabilities are arrested or referred to law enforcement nearly three times the rate as their non-disabled peers.

ACLU in Washington, May 24, 2021 School Resource Officers: When the Cure is Worse than the Disease, Kendrick Washington, ACLU- WA Youth Policy Counsel and Tori Hazelton, ACLU-WA Advocacy Intern



SROs in Schools

- Promote school safety
- Address the root causes of student misbehavior
- Decrease juvenile delinquency petitions
- Improve relationships between students and law enforcement
- Serve as protectors for victimized students
- Reduce the burden on local law enforcement
- Contribute to a positive school climate
- Mentor students

Children's Legal Rights Journal, Volume 41, Issue 2, Article 10, 2021. School Resource Officers: Do the Benefits of Student Safety Outweigh their Negative Impacts? Madeleine Morris

SROs in Schools - What's Needed

- SROs
 - Right people for the job
 - Clearly defined roles and responsibilities in the school
 - Education on adolescent development
 - Education on handling students with disabilities & trauma
 - Education on implicit bias
- Administrators
 - Understanding the role of the SRO
 - Understanding the roles and responsibilities of the administration especially in regard to discipline
- Policies and MOUs should support these roles

Other Concerns?

Upcoming OSS Training

- January 20th and 21st - Mini-Summit at Aims Community College
- February 10th - Student/Staff Summit at Colorado Mesa University
- February 24th - Student/Staff Summit at Pueblo Community College
- March 3rd - Mini-Summit at Durango Public Library
- May 28th - IHE Summer Safety Summit at Colorado Mtn. College
- June 2nd, 3rd & 4th - School Safety Specialist Academy, OSS Offices

Site-based Training

- ❖ ASIST, QPR, PREPaRE, TA, CSSRC Suicide Assessment & Intervention Toolkit, Cybersafety, MH for Educators, Bullying Prevention, and more
- ❖ 12 online courses which can earn CEUs
- ❖ Virtual workshops - these vary so check Training Calendar
- ❖ Email or call us for any other school safety needs. Template is on the homepage of our website: www.Colorado.gov/CSSRC



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- About Us
- Communications
- Grants
- Crisis Response
- Resource Center
- Trainings
- 5-Preparedness Missions



Youth Suicide Prevention Symposium

Hosted by the Colorado Office of School Safety and the Office of Suicide Prevention at CDPHE. This is a critical opportunity for professionals to gain insights from leading experts in the field.

[Read more about Youth Suicide Prevention Symposium](#)

Thank You!



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