Agenda

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Overview of School Safety Data and Policy Change

III. School Responder Model (SRM)

IV. Behavioral Health and Justice Strategies: Cross-Systems Collaboration for Reducing School Violence

V. Questions and Answers
Speakers

• David Adams, *Senior Policy Advisor, Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice*

• Dr. Crystal Brandow, *Senior Project Associate, National Center for Youth Opportunity and Justice*

• Tim Ferrara, *Deputy Director, Schenectady County Center for Juvenile Justice*

• Avery Irons, *Senior Project Associate, National Center for Youth Opportunity and Justice*
Speakers

- Felicia Lopez Wright, Policy Analyst, Behavioral Health, *The Council of State Governments Justice Center*
- Andrea Tote-Freeman, *District Director of Pupil Personnel Services, Schenectady City School District*
- Dr. Allison Upton, *Project Manager, Behavioral Health, The Council of State Governments Justice Center*
The U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance

Mission: BJA provides leadership and services in grant administration and criminal justice policy development to support local, state, and tribal law enforcement in achieving safer communities.

www.bja.gov
Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program

JMHCP supports innovative cross-system collaboration for individuals with mental illnesses or co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders who come into contact with the justice system.
The Council of State Governments Justice Center

We are a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that combines the power of a membership association, representing state officials in all three branches of government, with policy and research expertise to develop strategies that increase public safety and strengthen communities.
How We Work

- We bring people together
- We drive the criminal justice field forward with original research
- We build momentum for policy change
- We provide expert assistance
Our Goals

Break the cycle of incarceration
We assist those working inside and outside of government to reduce both crime and incarceration among youth and adults in contact with the justice system.

Improve health, opportunity, and equity
We work across systems to develop collaborative approaches to improve behavioral health, expand economic mobility, and advance racial equity for people and communities affected by the justice system.

Expand what works to improve safety
We help leaders understand what works to improve public safety and what does not, and assist them to develop strategies, adopt new approaches and align resources accordingly.
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National Center for Youth Opportunity and Justice

Dr. Crystal L. Brandow
Senior Project Associate

Avery Irons, JD
Senior Project Associate
Our Work

I. Collaborate with communities to build capacity across service delivery systems

II. Conduct applied research and evaluation

III. Communicate emergent and best practices to policymakers and practitioners

IV. Guide and inform policy at the national, state, and local levels

V. Elevate the voices and perspectives of youth and families
Let's Chat!

In 2020, what does “school safety” mean to you?
Why School Safety?

School Safety

- Applies to schools and school-related activities where students are safe from violence, bullying, harassment, and substance use.
- Linked to improved outcomes for both students and schools.
- Associated with school climate.
  - School climate is “the quality and character of school life.”

School Safety

In the 2017–2018 school year:

• 71% of schools reported at least one violent incident
• 65% reported at least one nonviolent incident

School Safety

In the 2017–2018 school year:

• 46% of traditional public schools had at least one school resource officer (SRO) on campus at least once a week

• School-written crisis plans are largely for natural disasters (94%), active shooters (92%), and bomb threats/incidents 91%

Source: Diliberti et al., School Survey on Crime and Safety.
Alternative Strategies: 2017–2018

• Among schools with at least 50% enrollment of students of color, 50% reported engaging students in restorative circles

• An estimated 51% of schools administered mental health assessments
  ▪ With another 38% providing mental health treatment to students

Source: Diliberti et al., School Survey on Crime and Safety.
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL SAFETY INITIATIVE
1. Identify and understand the potential root causes and consequences of school violence and its impact on school safety.

2. Increase the safety of schools nationwide by developing a solid foundation of knowledge and best practices that can be sustainably implemented through individualized school safety programs, policies, and activities.

3. Help identify matters internal and external to the school that may result in harm to students, teachers, staff, and schools.
4. Implement programs, policies, and practices that improve school safety and climate, focus on the school environment, or enhance educational and other outcomes for students and schools.

5. Identify effective strategies to respond to and resolve safety issues faced by schools and students.

6. In collaboration with key partners from education, law enforcement, behavioral/mental health, and social work, develop and test a comprehensive framework for school safety.
### Types of School Violence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Non-physical</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Fighting</td>
<td>• Threats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assaults (w/ or w/o weapon)</td>
<td>• Verbal bullying</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Gang violence</td>
<td>• Cyberbullying</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Intimidation</td>
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<td>• Isolation</td>
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2017 School Violence Incidents

Students Grades 9–12

Percentage of Bullying Among Vulnerable Populations

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Questioning vs. Heterosexual Students

<table>
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<th>Group</th>
<th>Bullying Prevalence</th>
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<tr>
<td>LGB Students</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questioning Students</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heterosexual Students</td>
<td>13%</td>
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</table>

Students with Disabilities vs. Students without Disabilities

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<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Bullying Prevalence</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students with disabilities</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students without disabilities</td>
<td>24%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Prevalence rates vary:
- 35.3% of students with emotional and behavioral disorders,
- 33.9% of students with autism, and
- 24.3% of students with intellectual disabilities face high levels of bullying victimization.

Violent Victimizations

Students ages 12–18 (2017)

School Shooting Incidents

• 42 Active Shooting Incidents between 2001 and 2018
• In 2018 . . .
  ▪ 24 shootings with injuries or deaths
  ▪ 35 people killed (28 students, 7 adults)
  ▪ 79 people injured

Transforming Policies

By year and topic, states implementing safety laws after high-profile shootings

## Transforming Policies

### School focused
- Zero tolerance policies
- Student support innovations
  - Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
  - Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)
  - Trauma-Sensitive Schools (TSS)
  - Social Emotional Learning (SEL)
  - Restorative Practices (RP)
- Building community partnerships

### Community focused
- Crisis intervention responses
- Systems of care
- Wraparound services
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School Responder Models (SRMs): Origins and Present Research

- Mental Health/Juvenile Justice Action Network
  - Started with: CT, CO, IL, LA, OH, PA, TX, WA

- National Institute of Justice’s Comprehensive School Safety Initiative (NIJ CSSI)
  - 2017–2020: 4 schools in Michigan, 4 schools in Louisiana
Traditional School-Justice Pathway

School infraction → Out of school suspension → Arrest → Entry into the juvenile system

Arrest → Out of school suspension
An Alternative to the School-Justice Pathway

- School infraction
- Responder completes behavioral health screening
- Clinical assessment for youth who are flagged via screening
- Treatment plan and connection to behavioral health services

School discipline based graduated response/restorative justice model
Prevalence of Behavioral Health Conditions Among Justice-Involved Youth

- 65–70% of justice-involved youth have a mental health condition
- 46% of justice-involved youth have a substance use disorder
- 90% of justice-involved youth have had exposure to a traumatic event(s)

Disproportionality

- Black students account for 15.5% of public school students, but 39% of student suspensions.
- LGBTQ youth experience greater school discipline and have greater involvement in the juvenile justice system than their peers/youth who do not identify as LGBTQ.

*Students suspended or expelled are nearly three times as likely as their peers to be in contact with the juvenile justice system.*

School Responder Model: Four Core Components

- Form a cross-systems collaborative team
- Engage families and youth
- Implement a behavioral health response
- Create formal structures
School Responder Model: Four Guiding Principles

- Trauma-informed practices
- Restorative practices
- Wellness and self-care
- Shifting cultures
School-Based Behavioral Health

Youth who are in need of school-based behavioral health diversion have two key characteristics:

▪ They are at risk of referral to the juvenile justice system for school behaviors
▪ They have indicators of potential need for behavioral health supports
SRM Outcomes

Connecticut
• 34% reduction in court referrals
• Connected 47% more students to behavioral health services than would have been connected without the SRM framework in place
• 4,300+ teachers and staff have been trained to recognize trauma and mental health concerns

Nevada
• 15% reduction in referrals to probation

Schenectady High School, New York
• 70% reduction in superintendent hearings in 2017–2018 when compared to the previous year
SRM Implementation

Louisiana

• Three out of four schools in the NIJ CSSI are utilizing “implementing circles” as part of their regular practice for addressing student misbehavior.

Beloit, Wisconsin

• A Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant, PBIS, restorative practices, and community partnerships (police, crisis, juvenile justice) are all previously existing resources that align with the objectives of their SRM and assist them with effortlessly implementing and integrating the SRM framework

Michigan

• Participation in parent orientation increased from 10% to 20% at one school from the 2018–2019 orientation to the 2019–2020 orientation
School Responder Models and School Safety
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Cross-Systems Team Building

Initiative Coordinator

TEAM WITH A SHARED VISION

Decision-Makers

Doers
Cross-Systems Team Building

Schools (Leadership, Implementers)

Juvenile Justice System Partners

Law Enforcement

Families and Youth

Community Behavioral Health

Community-Based Organizations

Substance Use Services

Mental Health Services

Trauma Support Services
Collaboration Includes Students and Their Families

- An SRM’s likelihood of success increases when:
  - Caregivers participate throughout the model
  - Parents/guardians consent to the model
  - Lived experience informs program design
  - Youth buy into the model
Effective Family Engagement Strategies

- Incorporate family voice in all school safety planning and quality improvement efforts
- Train staff in family engagement
- Invest in supports to address language and culture barriers
- Shift to family partnership
- Offer whole family supports
- Use parent peers to bridge the gap
Family Engagement as Part of Cross-Collaboration

- Family engagement is essential in supporting students who have experienced trauma
- Restorative practices create opportunities for bringing families into the school
- Higher rates of family engagement are associated with decreased likelihood of suspension and fewer instances of violent behavior
Schenectady, NY: School-Based Diversion Initiative

Andrea Tote-Freeman
District Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Schenectady City School District

Timothy P. Ferrara
Deputy Director
Schenectady County Center for Juvenile Justice
Schenectady City School District

Creating a “Culture of Care”

School Responder Model: Diversion Pathway

Trauma Sensitive Schools

Restorative Practices
Schenectady City School District

- School-based diversion
- Pathway for at-risk youth with behavioral health needs
Data: Schenectady School District

Diversion vs. Superintendent’s Hearing
Year-End Totals 2016–2019

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<tr>
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Superintendent Hearings

- 2016–2017 to 2018–2019: 44.8% reduction
THE MINNESOTA MODEL OF SCHOOL-BASED DIVERSION FOR STUDENTS WITH CO-OCCURRING DISORDERS

IMPLEMENTATION MANUAL

Minnesota Department of Human Services
School Responder Model Flow Chart: Example

- Preventive Efforts (pre-infraction)
  - Universal screening (behavioral health and basic needs)
  - Restorative practices implementation
- Responsive Efforts (post-infraction)
  - Infraction-based screening
  - Behavior intervention tracking
- Results
  - Decreased: suspensions, suspension days, and high-level intervention referrals
Integrating a Behavioral Health/Justice Strategy

- Youth-support focus
  - Addressing needs and risk factors

- Multi-stakeholder, cross-system collaboration
  - Including family and youth engagement

- Track and assess the outcome data
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Questions & Answers
School Safety Resources

- National Center for Youth Opportunity and Justice
- Youth Violence Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Supporting Safe Schools, Community-Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office, U.S. Department of Justice
- CrimeSolutions.gov, National Institute of Justice
- International Association of Chiefs of Police
- National Sheriffs’ Association
- CASEL
- National Center for Safe Supportive Learning Environments
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