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**Author(s):                 Lawrence F. Travis III, Julie Kiernan Coon**

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THE ROLE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT IN PUBLIC SCHOOL SAFETY:  
A NATIONAL SURVEY

Lawrence F. Travis III

Julie K. Coon

Center for Criminal Justice Research  
University of Cincinnati

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to develop an accurate description of the current involvement of law enforcement in schools. Based on results from a national survey of schools and law enforcement agencies, this report identifies the range of roles played by law enforcement and factors related to these roles. This study also describes the level and frequency of police involvement in schools. Additionally, in-depth case studies of fourteen schools and the law enforcement agencies that serve those schools are presented. The findings from these visits include more detailed information about school problems, school/law enforcement relations, security measures, and the role of law enforcement in public schools.

Concern about school safety has led to new strategies aimed at reducing crime and violence in schools. High-profile shootings and other events have captured the attention of the public and have resulted in various reactions from government agencies and schools. One way that many schools have chosen to address safety concerns is by having greater law enforcement involvement in their schools. This report will describe the role of police in schools at the national level.

Using the U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data, we selected a sample of schools (n=3,156) proportionate to the population of schools (N=88,511) based on factors such as type of school, grade span of school, state, and urbanism. Surveys were mailed to school principals and we had a response rate of 44.7%. Using information from the school surveys, we also sent surveys to the law enforcement agencies serving those schools, and received a 75.6% response rate from those agencies. We ultimately selected site visits in an attempt to have a representative sample of schools based on region, urbanism, and school level. Further, only schools for which there was a police response were eligible for selection.

There are several noteworthy findings from the school surveys. First, the vast majority of school principals (96.8%) reported that they relied predominantly on public law enforcement rather than private security (3.2%). Further, almost half of respondents also reported that they had school resource officers (47.8%). There were many reasons given for getting a school resource officer including national media attention about school violence, crime prevention, federal grants, drug awareness education, mentoring, and as part of community policing efforts.

The results from the school surveys also indicated that the majority of police were involved in traditional law enforcement functions such as patrolling school grounds, school facilities, student travel routes, drug-free zones beyond school boundaries, traffic patrol on or around campus, and responding to calls for service. While less common than patrol, law enforcement officers participated in a variety of other activities in some schools including mentoring individual students, working with parents to help their children, and referring students and parents to other sources of help. Many respondents also reported that police were present at school functions such as athletic and social events. Additionally, police were largely not involved in teaching activities at schools with the exception of D.A.R.E., but were typically involved in safety plans and meetings with schools.

In addition to exploring findings from school surveys, we examined law enforcement survey results. Law enforcement-related activities such as patrol and responding to calls for service were the most frequently cited types of involvement. Primary law enforcement officers were most likely to teach anti-drug classes, safety education classes, and alcohol awareness/DUI prevention. A variety of safety plans and meetings with schools were common, especially working with schools to create written plans to deal with bomb scares or other school-wide

threats. Not surprisingly, police departments that were identified as secondarily relied upon agencies tended to report less involvement in schools than primary law enforcement agencies.

This study also compares school principal and police responses about law enforcement involvement in schools. In general, principals and police officials had significantly different perceptions of the types of activities in which law enforcement is involved. For most activities, a higher percentage of police respondents than school principals perceived that police were more involved in law enforcement, advising/mentoring with staff, advising/mentoring with groups, advising/mentoring with students or families, and presence at school events. Police also reported significantly more teaching activity in schools than did school principals. In terms of police involvement in school safety plans and meetings, the police did not report higher levels of involvement than reported by principals. It may be that school officials were simply not aware of all the activities of the police, which may be particularly likely for activities such as patrolling the school boundaries or grounds when school is not in session.

Multivariate models predicting level and frequency of law enforcement involvement in schools are also included in this report. For most of the activities, level (amount of activities participated in) and frequency (how often police participate in activities) of police involvement in schools were most consistently related to school level, amount of school crime, and presence of a school resource officer. Further, police involvement was significantly and positively related to these variables, suggesting that secondary schools, schools with higher levels of crime and disorder, and schools with dedicated school resource officers were more likely to have police involvement and this involvement was more frequent than in other types of schools. Additionally, percentage of students eligible for free lunch was a significant and positive



correlate for level of law enforcement-related activities, frequency of law enforcement-related activities, frequency of police advising staff, and frequency of police presence at school events.

The site visits to fourteen schools and their corresponding law enforcement agencies provided an opportunity to better understand school problems, school/law enforcement relations, security measures, and the role of law enforcement involvement in schools. Teams of two researchers interviewed school administrators, teachers, staff, and police officials, and conducted focus groups with parents and students. These visits allowed research teams to ask open-ended questions and therefore obtain more complete information about school safety and the extent of law enforcement involvement from a wide range of perspectives.

While the schools differed in many ways including school level, region, and urbanism, a number of trends were found among these sites. The three problems mentioned at every school were lack of parental involvement, inadequate funding, and disciplinary issues. Although the majority of staff at all schools said they felt safe on their campus or in their buildings, there were safety concerns at all of the schools including: unauthorized access to campus, buildings, or students; the presence and use of weapons and drugs; and general physical safety. Many respondents described some sort of “critical incident” (e.g. death threats, weapons on campus) which affected attitudes or policies toward safety. Further, changing demographics were cited as a trend that often contributed to a lack of social unity in the community, which sometimes was associated with loss of security or a rise in conflict.

Opinions regarding the ideal role of police in schools varied widely among school staff, parents, and students. The general trend was that respondents thought that police should be able to assist in addressing problems, but differed in terms of to what extent and with what level of authority. Respondents stated they would like to have, in varying combinations, police as

educators, legal resources, security, law enforcers, disciplinarians, counselors, role models, and mentors. The greatest consistency among respondents concerned the feedback from school resource officers. These officers tended to see their roles as diverse, with involvement in education, discipline, counseling, and serving as a role model. Further, sometimes having an officer in the school seemed to be limited to having police participate in traditional law enforcement-related activities, teaching D.A.R.E., and as security for social events. Other schools, however, seemed to view officers as a valuable resource as part of a more comprehensive school plan.

There were several advantages to law enforcement involvement in schools. Parents and staff believed that officers served several functions including: acting as a deterrent for student misbehavior and delinquent activity; availability for responding to emergencies; acting as role models; and their presence makes students, staff, and parents feel safer. Those participants that believed there were disadvantages to police involvement in schools mentioned the following: constant presence of an officer gives the impression that something is wrong at the school or might generate fear among staff, parents, and students; an officer on campus means a gun on campus which may be undesirable; and if students become too familiar with officers, they may lose respect for them and their authority if they become “buddies.” Overall, students, parents, and staff were supportive of having police in their school. Similarly, law enforcement officials were eager to help schools if funds were available and if police presence was deemed necessary or beneficial for the school. Principals reporting a substantial increase in the presence or involvement of law enforcement indicated that it was primarily a response to increases in violence, or a tragic event.

This research also suggests that it is common for police roles to differ by school characteristics, such as school level. The survey results indicate that the type and frequency of police involvement in schools differs by school level and results from the site visits indicate that police, school administrators, staff, parents and students want this role to vary by school level. Generally, elementary schools have more limited roles for police. Elementary school respondents did not want police in their schools on a daily basis, but value police in a mentoring role and to be available if needed. Respondents at secondary schools generally expressed greater support for a broader and more frequent police role in their schools.

The site visits also indicated that sometimes there is conflict between schools and police. One source of conflict between police and school administrators is different expectations about the role of police in schools. We frequently heard from police that they did not want to enforce school rules. Written agreements outlining school and police expectations may help to clarify the role of police in schools and reduce conflicts and misunderstandings. Additionally, support for police in schools was higher when the administration and staff believed that their school resource officer did not overstep certain boundaries. It also became clear that officers were really supervised by their police departments rather than schools. Further, there were a variety of ways officers may be selected or volunteer to become a SRO. Efforts to match school needs with officers who are sensitive to school concerns may result in a more appreciated and effective role for police in schools.

The site visits allowed us to better understand the role of law enforcement in schools, the relationship between schools and police, and how police became involved with the school. Additionally, we learned what type of law enforcement involvement administrators, teachers, parents, students, and police preferred. There was often disagreement and in part, this leads to

the conclusion that there is no single ideal role for police in schools. The police role should vary by the needs of the school and often this was associated with school level, environmental factors, and school climate. Further, the policy of having officers assigned to several schools should be carefully examined. Officers working at more than one school often may be limited to dealing solely with security issues.

The site visits also provided an opportunity to more thoroughly explore school safety concerns in general. While some of these concerns were not crime related (e.g. playground equipment was old and not considered safe), many people were concerned about the lack of security in the school. It also became clear from these visits that the design of some school buildings contributes to security problems. While some schools attempted to reduce potential threats through the use of security technologies, the best solution was not always employed or used correctly. For example, we noticed at one site that the school had cameras, but had no one watching the monitors. School personnel admitted that no one watched the monitors largely due to staffing shortages. Many schools simply lacked personnel and funds necessary for increased security. Further, many of the safety programs (e.g., a program aimed at eliminating drunk driving among students) implemented by schools have never been evaluated for their effectiveness. While many people expressed that they liked these programs, it is unknown whether these programs had the desired, undesired, or any effect at all. Clearly, evaluating safety programs and security plans should be pursued in the interest of improving safety in our schools.

It is also clear that adequate funding is critical for maintaining police involvement in schools. Grants were most frequently given credit for the presence of dedicated resource officers at the junior and senior high school levels. Some schools acknowledged that they sought the

federal funding because of escalating behavior problems at the school, but most described it as a proactive measure to maintain a positive learning environment.

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## **CHAPTER 1: PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Concern about school safety has led to seeking new strategies aimed at reducing crime and violence in schools. Recent events, including high-profile school shootings, such as those that occurred in Pearl, MS; West Paducah, KY; Jonesboro, AR; Springfield, OR; and Littleton, CO captured the attention of the public and have resulted in numerous reactions from government agencies and schools. One way that schools may be safer is by increasing law enforcement involvement in schools. The current level and types of law enforcement participation in schools has not yet been adequately described at the national level.

The purpose of this research was to develop an accurate description of the current involvement of law enforcement in schools. This report identifies the range of roles played by law enforcement, and explores factors associated with different levels and types of law enforcement involvement in schools. It provides a foundation for understanding what might be the optimal role(s) for law enforcement in schools.

Using results from a national survey of public school principals and the law enforcement agencies serving their schools, we describe the range of roles currently played by law enforcement and identify school-based correlates of those roles. In-depth case studies from visits to fourteen schools and their law enforcement agencies are also presented. These site visits allowed us to investigate what events led to law enforcement involvement in specific school safety strategies, the role of law enforcement in those strategies, and the degree to which law enforcement was integrated into general school safety approaches and the school community overall. Further, these case studies provide a richer context in which differences among schools can be understood.

This report contains nine chapters. Chapter 2 is a literature review describing the rise of school safety concerns and the role of police in schools. Chapter 3 describes the methodology of each stage of the project. Chapter 4 presents findings from the school principal survey, such as the type of law enforcement (public law enforcement, private security, school resource officer) on which schools rely. This chapter also includes reasons schools may choose to have a school resource officer, and whether the school would benefit from having a school resource officer (if it does not currently have one). In addition, the type and frequency of police activities (law enforcement-related, mentoring/advising, and presence at school events) are identified. Further, teaching activities of police and participation in safety plans and meetings are discussed in this chapter. Chapter 5 reports responses of law enforcement agencies to similar questions. In addition to examining principal and police responses separately, Chapter 6 includes analyses comparing principal and police responses in several different areas. Further, responses are compared in two distinct ways. First, we compare all school responses to all police responses. Second, we compare responses of matched schools and police agencies (both school and corresponding police agency must have a valid question response in order to be included in this analysis). In Chapter 7 we explore possible correlates of police activities in schools for both school and police responses. Chapter 8 summarizes findings from the fourteen site visits to school and law enforcement agencies, followed by in-depth case studies from each of these visits. Chapter 9 is a discussion of the findings and includes suggestions for future research efforts.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

School crime and safety in schools has been a growing concern for at least the past thirty years. During the 1970s and 1980s research began to reflect this growing interest. In 1978 the National Institute of Education produced a congressional report entitled, *Violent schools-safe schools: The safe school study report to Congress* and a special issue of the journal, *Crime and Delinquency* (1978) was dedicated to the topic of school crime. About ten years later, the U.S. Department of Justice published *Reducing school crime and student misbehavior: A problem solving strategy* (Rubel and Ames, 1986), which included the results from a national study of school crime. School crime became known as a special type of criminality (Gottfredson and Gottfredson, 1985), and schools and government agencies sought effective responses to school crime.

Media coverage of school shootings during the 1990s further sparked interest in the topic of school crime and school safety. Early in this period the problem became widely redefined as school violence rather than the broader issue of safety in schools (Zins, Travis, Brown, and Knighton, 1994). A number of federal initiatives and scholarly efforts aimed to control what was perceived to be a crisis in school safety. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention published several reports geared toward helping schools and youth serving organizations to reduce crime (Catalano, Loeber, and McKinney, 1999; Arnette and Walseben, 1998). Further, projects such as *School and Staffing Survey 2003-04* (National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education), *Indicators of School Crime and Safety* (National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education and Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2003) *Safe School Initiative* (U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education, 2002), *Annual Report on School Safety 2000* (U.S. Department of Education and U.S.

Department of Justice), and *Principal/School Disciplinarian Survey on School Violence 1996-97* (National Center for Education Statistics) examined school problems in an attempt to prevent school violence. Schools were encouraged to adopt “zero tolerance” policies for dealing with students possessing drugs or weapons at school, and preventive programs and increased security at schools became widespread.

While concern about school crime and violence was increasing, evidence suggests that school safety had not changed significantly over this time period (Hanke, 1996; Annual Report on School Safety, 2000). The introduction to the 2000 Annual Report on School Safety (APSS) states, “The vast majority of America’s schools continue to be safe places.” Overall, school crime has decreased since 1992, and violent crime rates have not risen during this time period (APSS, 2000: 4). Despite these trends, awareness and fear of school crime and violence may have increased.

School crime, its correlates, and responses to problems in school have been addressed by a growing body of literature. Beginning with the *Safe School Study* (National Institute of Education, 1978), studies of school crime tend to indicate that crime is most common in “poor” schools. Schools that lack resources, have students from disadvantaged backgrounds, are located in poor and crime-prone neighborhoods, and where academic achievement is low are at most risk for experiencing crime and violence. Gottfredson and Gottfredson (1985) state that there are many factors related to disorder in schools including: location and community characteristics, school population makeup, school size, school resources, school rules, and practices and perceptions of the school environment. Cantor and Wright (2001) found that high schools with the greatest violence problems tended to be urban, large (average of 1060 students), had a high percentage of minority students, and were located in disadvantaged areas with high residential

mobility. The researchers also note that it is not solely urban schools that were violent, indicating that violence can occur across a variety of settings (Cantor and Wright, 2001).

In addition to exploring relationships between demographic characteristics of schools and school problems, researchers have identified other possible correlates of school safety. Lab and Clark (1996) reported that school safety levels are affected by styles of discipline in school, and the *Safe Schools Study* (1978) found that perceptions of safety were related to management styles. Despite its relative rareness, the threat of violence in schools affects students and teachers alike (Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 1993). Schools can help reduce levels of crime and fear through enhanced security (Green, 1999; Johnson, 1995), improvements in policies and training (Ohio Crime Prevention Association, 2000), and social skills development (Lieber and Mawhorr, 1995).

There is an increased call for preventive measures to address the problems of school safety. Among other things, there is a growing consensus that school safety is a community concern, which can be best addressed through collaborative efforts involving the entire school community. The *Safe Schools/Healthy Students* initiative of the U.S. Departments of Justice, Education, and Health and Human Services encourages widespread community involvement in promoting school safety (APSS, 2000). Law enforcement, juvenile justice, social service, and mental health organizations may work with schools to form partnerships (APSS, 2000). As of the year 2003, close to one hundred educational agencies across the country and their partners have received funds from this program.

There are a number of roles that law enforcement agencies can play in school safety efforts. Reporting on police partnerships with youth serving agencies, Chaiken (1998:xv) found that, "...partnerships between police and youth-serving organizations take many forms." As with

many types of agencies, law enforcement can be involved in school safety in a number of ways. School resource officers are sworn officers assigned to schools, work under the supervision of school administrators, and represent a merging of law enforcement with schools. Law enforcement officers can also serve on school safety committees, advisory boards, and planning bodies. Further, some schools can rely on law enforcement agency expertise for safety surveys, D.A.R.E. programs, staff training, and other special projects. In other cases, law enforcement can be involved in less formal ways, such as guest speaking to classes or school assemblies, and assistance with school events. Like other clients of the police, schools can call on law enforcement in crisis situations when crimes or violence occur, or are suspected. Many schools “contract” with law enforcement for special services, such as security at sporting and social events. Some schools choose to avoid contact with law enforcement.

Law enforcement has been acknowledged as a potentially important partner for schools in planning and implementing school safety efforts (Early Warning, Timely Response, 1998). For example, in reaction to school shootings during the 1990’s, some police departments dramatically changed officer training for dealing with potential shooters, in the hope that these changes would reduce the number of victims during such an event (Harper, 2000). Still, little is known about how and how frequently law enforcement and schools work together in school safety efforts. Despite the appeal of public safety experts and educational experts co-producing school safety, the relations between the two are not always smooth. Richard Lawrence (1995) examined the links between the juvenile justice system and schools. He found there were a number of obstacles to cooperation including distrust. Lawrence characterized the conflict as “fear of crime” by the justice officials and “fear of labeling” by school personnel. Similar conflicts may exist between school personnel and law enforcement officials.

Schools face a variety of obstacles when addressing safety concerns. As noted by Green (1999:5) regarding security technology, school officials often resist security efforts (presumably applies to law enforcement involvement) because of the fear such efforts will have a negative impact on the social and educational climate of the school. If school personnel perceive that law enforcement is only focused on crime control, it is unlikely that school personnel will fully include law enforcement in the operations of the school. As comments during the Strategic Planning Meeting on School Safety (1999) suggested, school personnel often view police officers as “muscle” to be employed in disciplinary matters, but may not view law enforcement as a preventive or general resource.

The goal of the current research is to present results from a national survey of public schools and their affiliated law enforcement agencies. We describe principal responses regarding how law enforcement works with schools to address school problems. We also discuss law enforcement officials’ responses to similar questions regarding the nature and extent of their involvement with these schools.

There are several sections of this report. First, we identify the type of law enforcement (public law enforcement, private security, school resource officer) schools relied on. Second, we explore the reasons for having or not having a school resource officer and perceptions of whether the school would benefit from having a school resource officer (if it does not currently have one) are described. Third, the type and frequency of police activities (law enforcement-related, mentoring/advising, and presence at school events) are identified. Fourth, teaching activities of police and participation in safety plans and meetings are discussed. Further, we explore possible correlates of police activities in schools for both school and police responses. Principal and police responses are examined separately and then responses are compared in several different



areas. Finally, we include results from fourteen site visits to schools and law enforcement agencies. These case studies include findings from interviews with school personnel and law enforcement officials, and results from focus groups we conducted with parents and students.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODS

### Sample Selection

The U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data contains information on nearly 90,000 public schools in the United States. We used these data to select our sample of schools (n=3,156). A sample proportionate to the population of schools (N=88,511) was selected based on the following variables: state (all 50 states and Washington, DC), type of school (regular, special education, vocational, other/alternative), location (large city, mid-size city, urban fringe large city, urban fringe mid-size city, large town, small town, rural-outside MSA, rural-inside MSA), Title- I eligible, school wide Title-I programs<sup>1</sup>, whether the school was a magnet or charter school, grade span of the school, and number of grades in the school.

### School Survey

The school survey (see Appendix) was designed specifically for this research, but did incorporate items from previous surveys, particularly the *School Survey on Crime and Safety* (National Center for Education Statistics, 2000) and the *National Assessment of School Resource Officer Programs Survey of School Principals* (Abt Associates, Inc., 2000). We pre-tested our instrument with a sample of school principals from the greater Cincinnati area. This was done in an attempt to discover potential problems with the instrument, and to solicit suggestions from principals. The school surveys were then sent out between January 2002 and May 2002, following Dillman's mail survey design (a pre-survey notification letter informing the recipient that a questionnaire would be arriving, followed by the questionnaire mailing, reminder postcard, and two subsequent mailings). The pre-survey notification letters were sent from Dr. Lawrence Johnson, the Dean of the College of Education at the University of Cincinnati. The reasoning

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<sup>1</sup> Title I is a federal program that provides school districts with additional funds to help students meet expected standards. Funds are allocated based on the percentage of students living in poverty.

behind having this letter from the Dean was the belief that a letter from a fellow educator might help encourage principals to complete the survey. All subsequent letters were sent from the principal investigator.

The common core of data did not contain principal names, so we searched for principal names in “Patterson’s Elementary Education” guidebook to schools and whenever possible, included principal names on correspondence. Since we had not achieved the expected response rate, we chose to do a fourth survey mailing. In addition, we randomly selected 100 non-responding schools and called the principals. The phone calls served several purposes: 1) to find out if the principals had received the questionnaire; 2) to ask if they had any questions or concerns about the survey; and 3) to stress the importance of the study. We were rarely able to speak with the principals directly, so the vast majority of calls required leaving messages for principals. While only two principals returned our calls, we ultimately received 19 completed surveys from the 100 schools we contacted. It cannot be determined if these calls caused these principals to complete the questionnaire, but it seems likely that our calls served as a reminder for those principals who were considering completing the survey.

We originally sent out 3,156 surveys to schools. We removed 50 schools from our sample for several reasons, including school closings and surveys that were returned by the post office as undeliverable. For surveys that were returned to us, we attempted to find the correct address and resend these surveys. Many of these questionnaires continued to be returned to us as undeliverable. Since these surveys never reached the schools, these cases were removed from the sample. We received 1,387 completed surveys from 3,106 principals, a response rate of 44.7%.

## Law Enforcement Survey

The law enforcement surveys were first sent in August 2002. The surveys had to be sent in several batches because some schools had not identified the law enforcement agency on which they relied. To deal with this situation, we made phone calls to the schools, and when schools could not be reached, we researched what law enforcement agencies were likely to serve those schools. In the principal survey respondents were asked to identify the law enforcement agencies on which they relied. “Primary” law enforcement agencies were those identified as the agency that would respond to an emergency call from the school. “Secondary” agencies were those with whom the schools had contact but which would not receive the emergency call.

We received a better response from law enforcement agencies. A total of 1,508 law enforcement surveys were sent (this number is greater than the number of completed school surveys because 119 schools listed both primary and secondary law enforcement agencies on which they can rely, and law enforcement surveys were sent for two schools that ultimately counted as non-responders). One law enforcement agency was removed from our sample since the agency no longer exists. We received 1,140 public law enforcement surveys, a 75.6% response rate. We also received 4 private security surveys, but did not include these in our analyses. The findings from the private security surveys are briefly discussed in Chapter 5.

## Site Visit Selection

In order to select schools to visit, we generated a list of schools that were grouped into 16 clusters. These 16 cluster groupings were based on several factors, depending on how the schools rated on four factors: 1) levels of response by public law enforcement (e.g. responding to crime); 2) aid from public law enforcement (e.g. mentoring); 3) response from private security; and 4) written plans of action (e.g. plans for bomb threats). Each cluster indicated whether the school

was high, medium, or low on these factors. For example, Cluster 9, which had the largest number of schools, included schools that were medium on levels of response by public law enforcement, high on aid from public law enforcement, low on response by private security, and high on written plans of action. The analysis included only the cases with non-missing information on the survey question items considered (N=1,008).

We initially attempted to select a school from each cluster to contact for potential site visits. We started the selection process with the clusters that had the fewest number of cases. For example, if a cluster had only one school in it, we selected that school (so essentially there was not a choice within those clusters). This method was problematic for two major reasons. First, there were no cases in one of the clusters, so we selected two schools from the largest cluster. Second, all of the schools within several of the smaller clusters refused to participate. Since we were unable to visit a sample of schools by cluster, we looked at the list of schools that were already selected and attempted to select a representative sample of schools. We selected schools based on region, urbanism, school level, and state. For example, if we already had four schools in the Midwest, we would no longer consider schools in the Midwest. If we already had several elementary schools, we would choose only non-elementary schools. We also tried not to select two schools from the same state, but ultimately did have two schools from one state, since the school selected was the best remaining option on all of the other variables. We knew in which states the schools were located (and therefore region) but did not know the exact location when the selections were made (see Chapter 7 for a discussion of findings from the site visits).

## CHAPTER 4: SCHOOL SURVEY FINDINGS

This chapter describes results from the school surveys. The first part of this chapter describes how our respondents compare with the population of schools. The second section includes descriptions of the type of law enforcement schools rely on and how these agencies are involved with the schools. Also included is information about the type of crime and disorder issues that schools face

### Characteristics of Respondents

We compared the schools of our responding principals (N=1,387) with the population of schools from the U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data (N=85,908) to assess possible differences. We found that our respondent's schools are representative of the population of U.S. public schools in many ways (see Tables 4.1 and 4.2). For example, respondent's schools did not differ significantly from the population of schools in terms of number of students, number of full-time classroom teachers, or pupil to teacher ratio. However, our responding schools do differ from the population of schools in terms of proportion white students, proportion of students eligible for free lunch, school level, region, and location. On average, our responding schools had slightly fewer grades in the school, a higher than expected proportion of white students, and a lower than expected proportion of students eligible for free lunch. Additionally, we had a lower than expected response from elementary schools, and a greater than expected response from high schools. We also had fewer than the expected number of schools located in the North respond to our survey, while we had an overrepresentation of schools located in the Midwest. Urbanism (measured in terms of urban, suburban, and rural) also showed significant differences in comparing respondents to the population. We received less than the

expected response from urban schools, more than the expected response from rural schools, and about the expected response from suburban schools.

It is important to examine the characteristics of our responding schools versus the population of schools because it may affect the interpretation of the results. As discussed in Chapter 2, certain types of schools are more likely to have crime/disorder problems. In general, schools that are urban, large, with a high percentage of minority students, located in disadvantaged areas with high residential mobility (Cantor and Wright, 2001), lack resources, have students from disadvantaged backgrounds, are located in poor and crime-prone neighborhoods, and have low academic achievement (Gottfredson and Gottfredson, 1985) appear to be at highest risk for experiencing crime and violence (Cantor and Wright, 2001; Gottfredson and Gottfredson, 1985). In several instances, we had less than the expected response from schools that appear most likely to have problems (e.g. urban, high percentage of minority students, high percentage of students eligible for free lunch). Assuming school problems are related to greater use of police in schools, we may be underestimating the frequency of law enforcement presence in schools. So too, we may underestimate the frequency with which some activities are performed by police in schools. Nonetheless, our data represent an initial assessment of the role of law enforcement in public schools.

TABLE 4.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDING SCHOOLS VS. POPULATION OF SCHOOLS  
(INTERVAL AND RATIO LEVEL VARIABLES)

<b>School Characteristics</b>	<b>Responders (mean)</b>	<b>Population (mean)</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Number of students	528.11	542.73	.196
Number of full-time classroom teachers	32.23	32.507	.704
Proportion white students**	.7260	.6563	.000
Proportion of students eligible for free lunch**	.2926	.3287	.000
Pupil:teacher ratio	14.833	15.175	.062
Number of grades in school*	5.4189	5.56	.020

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01

TABLE 4.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDING SCHOOLS VS. POPULATION OF SCHOOLS  
(NOMINAL AND ORDINAL LEVEL VARIABLES)

<b>School Characteristics</b>	<b>Responders (%)</b>	<b>Population (%)</b>	<b>Chi-Square</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
School Level**			34.231	.000
Elementary	56.5	63.0		
Middle	15.4	15.2		
Junior High	1.5	1.2		
Jr/Sr High	4.5	3.7		
High	19.0	14.3		
Other	3.1	2.7		
Region**			15.541	.001
North	13.6	16.6		
South	33.3	33.2		
Midwest	33.0	29.0		
West	20.0	21.3		
Location**			34.085	.000
Urban	18.5	24.0		
Suburban	30.4	32.0		
Rural	51.1	44.0		

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01



### Type of Law Enforcement Relied On

The vast majority of respondents indicated that they relied on public law enforcement, and almost half reported that they used school resource officers (Tables 4.3 and 4.4). While 13% of principals agreed that they relied on private security, only 3% stated that they predominantly relied on private security (Tables 4.3 and 4.4). Of these, only 10 identified their private security agency. We sent out 10 private security surveys which resulted in 4 responses from private security (see Chapter 5 for a summary of private security responses). Principals were provided with information to help them determine the status (public law enforcement, private security, and school resource officers) in the directions to the survey (See Appendix). It is likely that at least some of the schools reporting private security use relied on personnel contracted directly with the school. For example, in some of the schools we visited parents or other personnel were directly employed by the school to provide security. In such cases there would be no security “agency” to identify or survey.

TABLE 4.3 TYPE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT RELIED ON BY SCHOOLS

	<b>Schools</b>		<b>N</b>
	<b>Yes (%)</b>	<b>No (%)</b>	
<b>Type of Law Enforcement</b>			
School Resource Officers	47.8	52.2	1320
Public Law Enforcement	76.3	23.7	1320
Private Security	13.0	87.0	1319

TABLE 4.4 PREDOMINANT TYPE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT RELIED ON BY SCHOOLS

	<b>Yes (%)</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Type of Law Enforcement</b>		
School Resource Officers	39.8	518
Public Law Enforcement	57.0	741
Private Security	3.2	41
<b>Total</b>	100.0	1300

### School Resource Officers

The school survey included several questions about school resource officers. Some of the questions applied to schools that had an SRO and other questions applied to schools that did not have an SRO. For example, we asked principals what was the primary reason for getting a school resource officer. The most common reason (of the stated choices) was national media attention about school violence (see Table 4.5). Close to half of the respondents listed a reason next to “other” (open-ended choice). Many of these other reasons were combinations of the stated choices or all of the above. Some stated reasons such as: prevention, grants, school policy, to build relationships with students, part of community policing and D.A.R.E. efforts, and for safety and security.

We also asked why they did not have a school resource officer (see Table 4.6). The majority stated that there was no need for an SRO. The second most common reason was that the school had inadequate funds. Only four principals stated that the reason was that parents did not want an officer in the school. In addition, slightly more than half (54.9%) that did not have an SRO did not think their school would benefit from having one.

TABLE 4.5. PRIMARY REASON FOR GETTING A SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER ACCORDING TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

	<b>School (%)</b>	<b>School N</b>
<b>Reason</b>		
Level of violence in the school	3.7	21
Disorder problems (e.g. rowdiness, vandalism)	17.5	100
Parents wanted an officer in the school	6.1	35
National media attention about school violence	24.5	140
Other	48.2	275

N=571

TABLE 4.6. PRIMARY REASON SCHOOL DID NOT HAVE A SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER ACCORDING TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

	<b>School (%)</b>	<b>School N</b>
<b>Reason</b>		
There was no need for a school resource officer	66.2	504
School had adequate technology (e.g. cameras, alarm system, metal detectors) to handle problems	2.4	18
Inadequate funds	22.2	169
Parents did not want an officer in the school	0.5	4
Other	8.7	66

N=761

### Frequency of Public Law Enforcement Activities

The school survey included a broad range of possible activities in which law enforcement officers may be involved at schools. In addition to questions that had yes/no responses, we asked principals to report how frequently police were involved in various activities. Since this question was stated as “how often did public law enforcement do the following at your school” and school resource officers are public law enforcement, it cannot be determined whether the answers specifically refer to a school resource officer or other public law enforcement officer. As can be seen in Table 4.5, patrol activities were the most common of the daily activities. Principals reported that public law enforcement patrolled school facilities (29.9%), patrolled school grounds (29.9%), patrolled drug-free zones beyond school boundaries (23.0%), patrolled student travel routes (23.0%), and performed traffic patrol on or around campus (17.5%) on a daily basis. Overall, advising/mentoring activities with staff and with groups were not common, with the majority of schools reporting that police never participated in such activities. Activities of advising and mentoring students and families were generally more common, and within this category, mentoring individual students was the most likely to occur regularly. In the category of presence at school events, presence at school athletic or social events were the most common.

TABLE 4.7. PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS REPORTING THE FREQUENCY OF PUBLIC LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS' ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS

	Daily	1-4 times per week	1-3 times per month	1-3 times per semester	Once per year	Never	N
<b>Type of Activity</b>							
<b>Law Enforcement Activities</b>							
Patrol school facilities	26.2	14.0	11.3	13.4	4.8	30.3	1262
Patrol school grounds	29.9	17.2	11.0	12.8	5.5	23.5	1263
Patrol drug-free zones beyond school boundaries	23.0	18.7	12.2	9.9	3.0	33.2	1193
Patrol student travel routes	23.3	19.7	13.7	11.6	4.2	27.5	1217
Operate metal detectors	.9	.4	1.3	2.9	1.5	92.9	1271
Conduct safety and security inspections	4.8	4.0	6.9	13.3	19.9	51.1	1266
Respond to crime/disorder reports from school staff	7.0	9.0	12.3	34.4	17.4	19.9	1289
Respond to crime/disorder reports from students	6.6	7.4	7.2	17.5	12.2	49.2	1275
Investigate staff leads about crime/disorder	5.0	6.4	9.2	19.1	20.3	40.0	1259
Investigate student leads about crime/disorder	5.8	6.7	8.6	15.6	16.2	47.2	1249
Make arrests	1.6	2.8	6.2	15.6	16.2	57.6	1266
Issue citations	1.7	5.0	8.7	16.6	13.1	55.0	1267
Write disciplinary reports	2.0	4.1	5.8	12.9	9.6	65.7	1267
Write police reports	4.3	6.6	10.6	26.1	20.3	32.2	1265
Enforce truancy laws or policies	3.3	3.5	8.6	14.9	14.1	55.6	1274
Solve crime-related Problems	4.0	5.1	8.4	16.5	21.7	44.3	1257
Perform traffic patrol on or around campus	17.5	13.5	10.6	14.6	8.5	35.2	1277
Perform sweeps for drugs	1.6	1.6	4.7	12.5	12.8	66.8	1269

TABLE 4.7. PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS REPORTING THE FREQUENCY OF PUBLIC LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS' ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS (continued)

	Daily	1-4 times per week	1-3 times per month	1-3 times per semester	Once per year	Never	N
<b>Law Enforcement Activities</b>							
Perform sweeps for Weapons	1.7	1.4	2.8	7.7	7.8	78.5	1263
<b>Advise/Mentoring Activities with Staff</b>							
Advise staff on school Policy changes	1.7	1.4	4.3	9.4	17.1	66.1	1266
Advise staff on school procedure changes	1.2	1.3	4.4	9.5	16.2	67.5	1261
Advise staff on physical environment changes	1.0	1.7	4.2	8.7	14.9	69.6	1259
Advise staff on Problem solving	1.9	2.4	5.3	11.1	14.3	64.9	1258
Mediate disputes among staff	.7	.2	1.2	2.5	4.3	91.2	1260
Advise staff on avoiding violence/victimization	1.1	1.5	3.0	8.7	18.2	67.4	1259
Advise staff on student Behavior modification	1.2	2.1	3.1	9.1	13.2	71.3	1260
Advise staff on student rule/sanction enforcement	1.4	2.0	4.2	8.8	11.9	71.8	1257
Advise staff on law-related issues	2.1	2.1	6.2	13.3	20.2	56.0	1262
<b>Advise/Mentoring with Groups</b>							
Advise parent-teacher organizations (e.g. PTOs, PTAs)	.2	.3	2.1	7.1	27.1	63.2	1263
Advise police athletic/activities league (PALs)	.7	1.3	3.0	4.3	8.3	82.3	1220
Advise school athletic Teams	.7	1.5	2.9	5.1	8.6	81.3	1226
Advise community outreach programs	.4	1.1	4.8	9.8	15.9	68.0	1219

TABLE 4.7. PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS REPORTING THE FREQUENCY OF PUBLIC LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS' ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS (continued)

	Daily	1-4 times per week	1-3 times per month	1-3 times per semester	Once per year	Never	N
<b>Advise/Mentoring with Students or Families</b>							
Mentor/provide guidance to individual students	7.4	8.3	12.0	20.9	13.2	38.3	1246
Help students with court involvement or intervention	2.5	4.7	10.2	15.2	13.6	53.8	1224
Work with parents to help their children	4.3	7.9	11.2	21.4	14.8	40.5	1222
Refer students to other sources of help	3.7	7.3	9.5	19.6	11.9	48.0	1220
Refer parents to other sources of help	3.3	6.1	9.9	21.3	14.1	45.3	1218
<b>Presence at School Events</b>							
Present at athletic Events	7.2	18.2	14.6	9.7	4.8	45.6	1227
Present for school social events (e.g. dances, open houses)	5.2	9.5	12.8	20.1	12.5	39.8	1258
Present for school performances (e.g. school plays, concerts)	4.0	6.9	9.3	16.7	12.0	51.1	1252
Chaperone school field Trips	1.1	1.5	3.0	5.5	9.1	79.7	1246
Present at award Ceremonies	2.8	2.5	4.1	11.4	22.9	56.3	1252



### Teaching Activities of Law Enforcement Officers

In addition to law enforcement related activities, advising/mentoring, and presence at school events, we asked a series of other questions about law enforcement involvement. One of these other areas covered teaching activities of police. Table 4.8 describes the teaching activities of police as reported by principals. Slightly more than half of the principals reported that police taught D.A.R.E. at their schools. About one third reported that police taught some other anti-drug class. Alcohol awareness or DUI prevention class was fairly common, followed by crime awareness or prevention, and safety education classes. Firearm safety courses were the least likely to be taught by the police.

TABLE 4.8 PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS REPORTING LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS' TEACHING ACTIVITIES

	<b>Yes (%)</b>	<b>No (%)</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Teaching Activity</b>			
D.A.R.E.	51.6	48.4	1326
Other anti-drug classes	33.9	66.1	1304
Alcohol awareness or DUI prevention	30.4	69.6	1295
Anti-gang classes	20.9	79.1	1282
Anti-bullying classes	21.0	79.0	1293
Anti-hate classes	12.7	87.3	1280
Law-related classes	20.3	79.7	1286
Firearm safety classes	11.1	88.9	1284
Other safety education classes	24.2	75.8	1283
Crime awareness or prevention	24.3	75.7	1286
Career training	19.8	80.2	1285
Conflict resolution	23.6	76.4	1290
Problem solving	21.7	78.3	1177

### Frequency of Private Security Activities

In addition to the frequency of activities of public law enforcement officers in schools, we also asked if they relied on private security. While the majority did not rely on private security, 13% of respondents reported that they did rely on some form of private security, with only 1.3% (n=41) stating they predominantly relied on private security rather than public law enforcement. Of these, most did not identify the private security agency on which they relied. Several respondents identified agencies that only provide alarm services. Ultimately, only ten principals identified agencies that provided a range of services, with only four private security agencies responding to our survey (see Chapter 5 for a brief summary of these findings).

The activities of private security officers in schools are described below in Table 4.9. The most commonly reported activities were patrolling school facilities and patrolling school grounds. More than half of those responding stated that private security officers conducted these activities on a daily basis. The third most common activity was traffic patrol on or around campus (21.6% on a daily basis). Similar to public law enforcement involvement, the overwhelming majority of schools reported that private security officers do not operate metal detectors, mediate disputes among staff, advise police athletic leagues or school athletic teams, or chaperone school field trips. With some exceptions (e.g. patrolling school facilities and grounds), principal reports of private security activity at their schools indicated that private security is largely not involved in most of the activities listed in the survey, and is involved in fewer activities than public law enforcement. There appears to be a tendency for private security activities to occur on a daily basis or not at all.

TABLE 4.9. PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS REPORTING THE FREQUENCY OF PRIVATE SECURITY OFFICERS' ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS

Type of Activity	Daily	1-4 times per week	1-3 times per month	1-3 times per semester	Once per year	Never	N
<b>Law Enforcement Activities</b>							
Patrol school facilities	54.1	6.8	6.1	9.5	2.0	21.6	148
Patrol school grounds	51.0	9.5	6.1	8.8	2.0	22.4	147
Patrol drug-free zones beyond school boundaries	17.6	6.6	7.4	7.4	2.9	58.1	136
Patrol student travel routes	16.2	6.6	7.4	10.3	3.7	55.9	136
Operate metal detectors	2.8	1.4	2.1	2.8	1.4	89.7	130
Conduct safety and security inspections	10.4	7.6	11.8	10.4	8.3	51.4	144
Respond to crime/disorder reports from school staff	15.1	6.5	12.2	15.1	5.0	46.0	139
Respond to crime/disorder reports from students	12.0	8.5	10.6	5.6	3.5	59.9	142
Investigate staff leads about crime/disorder	10.0	7.9	5.7	9.3	10.7	56.4	140
Investigate student leads about crime/disorder	8.6	7.9	8.6	9.3	6.4	59.3	140
Make arrests	0	1.5	0	3.0	1.5	94.1	135
Issue citations	3.7	1.5	0	4.4	2.2	88.1	135
Write disciplinary reports	5.6	10.5	9.1	7.0	2.8	65.0	143
Write police reports	.7	1.5	2.2	5.9	7.4	82.4	136
Enforce truancy laws or policies	10.1	6.5	4.3	7.2	5.8	66.2	139
Solve crime-related Problems	3.7	5.1	5.1	8.1	14.0	64.0	136
Perform traffic patrol on or around campus	21.6	7.2	5.8	6.5	2.9	56.1	139
Perform sweeps for drugs	1.5	.7	4.4	5.9	4.4	83.0	135

TABLE 4.9. PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS REPORTING THE FREQUENCY OF PRIVATE SECURITY OFFICERS' ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS (continued)

	Daily	1-4 times per week	1-3 times per month	1-3 times per semester	Once per year	Never	N
<b>Law Enforcement Activities</b>							
Perform sweeps for Weapons	2.9	.7	1.4	2.2	6.5	86.2	138
<b>Advise/Mentoring Activities with Staff</b>							
Advise staff on school policy changes	2.9	1.4	5.0	9.3	9.3	72.1	140
Advise staff on school procedure changes	2.8	2.1	5.7	7.1	9.9	72.3	141
Advise staff on physical environment changes	3.6	1.4	3.6	6.5	7.9	77.0	139
Advise staff on problem solving	4.3	2.2	2.9	5.8	10.1	74.8	139
Mediate disputes among staff	1.5	0	0.7	0.7	2.2	94.9	137
Advise staff on avoiding violence/victimization	1.4	.7	3.6	5.8	11.6	76.8	138
Advise staff on student behavior modification	2.2	2.2	2.2	5.8	5.8	81.8	137
Advise staff on student rule/sanction enforcement	2.9	1.4	4.3	5.1	8.7	77.5	138
Advise staff on law-related issues	1.4	.7	3.6	8.6	7.9	77.7	139
<b>Advise/Mentoring with Groups</b>							
Advise parent-teacher organizations (e.g. PTOs, PTAs)	.7	.7	1.5	3.7	11.0	82.4	136
Advise police athletic/activities league (PALs)	.8	0	0	2.3	.8	96.2	130
Advise school athletic Teams	.8	.8	.8	3.8	3.0	91.0	133
Advise community outreach programs	0	0	1.5	3.7	5.2	89.6	134

TABLE 4.9. PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS REPORTING THE FREQUENCY OF PRIVATE SECURITY OFFICERS' ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS (continued)

	Daily	1-4 times per week	1-3 times per month	1-3 times per semester	Once per year	Never	N
<b>Advise/Mentoring with Students or Families</b>							
Mentor/provide guidance to individual students	12.6	1.5	5.9	8.9	5.9	65.2	135
Help students with court involvement or intervention	2.3	2.3	3.8	4.6	5.3	81.7	131
Work with parents to Help their children	3.7	3.7	4.5	13.4	6.7	67.9	134
Refer students to other sources of help	5.1	1.5	5.1	13.9	2.9	71.5	137
Refer parents to other sources of help	2.9	0.7	5.1	11.8	7.4	72.1	136
<b>Presence at School Events</b>							
Present at athletic events	15.1	10.8	5.8	7.2	3.6	57.6	139
Present for school social events (e.g. dances, open houses)	12.6	7.0	9.1	16.1	7.0	48.3	143
Present for school performances (e.g. school plays, concerts)	9.7	3.4	9.0	15.2	3.4	59.3	145
Chaperone school field Trips	1.4	1.4	2.8	6.3	3.5	84.5	142
Present at award ceremonies	5.6	2.1	3.5	10.5	3.5	74.8	143

### Safety Plans and Meetings with Law Enforcement

In addition to questions about law enforcement activities in schools, we asked questions about school safety plans and meetings with law enforcement. Table 4.10 shows the percentage of schools that have plans for crisis events, and principals' perceptions of law enforcement involvement in school safety issues. The vast majority stated that they had written plans to deal with bomb scares/comparable school-wide threats and shootings. Further, emergency plan agreements with law enforcement and school safety committees were very common among schools. Regularly scheduled meetings with private security to discuss general school issues (4.2%) and specific incidents (3.8%) were relatively rare.

TABLE 4.10. SAFETY PLANS AND MEETINGS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCORDING TO SCHOOL RESPONSES

	Yes (%)	No (%)	N
<b>School had the following plans/meetings:</b>			
Emergency plan agreement with law enforcement	86.3	13.7	1359
Written plan to deal with shootings	84.7	15.3	1358
Written plan to deal with riots or large-scale fights	68.3	31.7	1352
Written plan to deal with bomb scares or comparable school-wide threats (not including fire)	94.4	5.6	1367
Written plan to deal with hostages	77.7	22.3	1352
School safety committee	81.3	18.7	1361
Law enforcement attend school safety meetings	47.4	52.6	1350
Regularly scheduled meetings with public law enforcement to discuss general school issues	32.3	67.7	1322
Regularly scheduled meetings with private security to discuss general school issues	4.2	95.8	1322
Regularly scheduled meetings with public law enforcement to discuss specific incidents	29.8	70.2	1305
Regularly scheduled meetings with private security to discuss specific incidents	3.8	96.2	1304
Law enforcement work with school on developing written plans for crisis situations	54.6	45.4	1361
Law enforcement work with school on reviewing school discipline practices and procedures	30.3	69.7	1356
Law enforcement work with school on developing programs to prevent or reduce violence	31.2	68.8	1354
Law enforcement conduct risk assessment of security of building or grounds	42.2	57.8	1352
Law enforcement work to develop a plan for increased levels of security	38.8	61.2	1355

### Comparison of Police Involvement in Schools by Whether School had School Resource Officer

In addition to learning principal perceptions of police involvement in schools, we were interested in comparing police involvement in schools that had school resource officers with those that did not have school resource officers. As can be seen in Table 4.11, schools that had school resource officers had significantly greater levels of law enforcement involvement for every type of activity. It was hypothesized that schools with school resource officers would have more involvement in at least certain types of activities, such as mentoring, but clearly schools with SROs have greater law enforcement involvement across a wide range of activities. While it cannot be determined that in all cases school resource officers participated in these activities, it appears that schools with school resource officers have significantly greater law enforcement involvement.



TABLE 4.11. COMPARISON OF POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS BY WHETHER SCHOOL HAD SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

	Schools with SRO		Schools without SRO		SRO schools N	Non-SRO schools N
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)		
<b>Type of Activity</b>						
<b>Law Enforcement Activities</b>						
Patrol school facilities**	81.6	18.4	61.7	38.3	581	634
Patrol school grounds**	85.0	15.0	72.1	27.9	581	635
Patrol drug-free zones beyond school boundaries**	74.3	25.7	63.0	37.0	544	603
Patrol student travel routes**	78.1	21.9	70.0	30.0	558	613
Operate metal detectors**	12.0	88.0	3.1	96.9	583	639
Conduct safety and security inspections**	59.4	40.6	41.4	58.6	577	640
Respond to crime/disorder reports from school staff**	88.3	11.7	75.9	24.1	588	651
Respond to crime/disorder reports from students**	67.4	32.6	38.0	62.0	589	637
Investigate staff leads about crime/disorder**	71.6	28.4	52.7	47.3	581	628
Investigate student leads about crime/disorder**	65.8	34.2	43.8	56.2	579	621
Make arrests**	54.2	45.8	34.0	66.0	581	636
Issue citations**	56.8	43.2	36.3	63.7	585	633
Write disciplinary reports**	46.0	54.0	25.7	74.3	581	637
Write police reports**	78.0	22.0	61.7	38.3	582	634
Enforce truancy laws or policies**	55.4	44.6	36.7	63.3	579	646
Solve crime-related problems**	70.2	29.8	45.3	54.7	578	629
Perform traffic patrol on or around campus**	70.3	29.7	62.2	37.8	583	645
Perform sweeps for drugs**	40.2	59.8	28.8	71.2	584	636

TABLE 4.11 COMPARISON OF POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS BY WHETHER SCHOOL HAD SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (CONTINUED)

	Schools with SRO		Schools without SRO		SRO schools N	Non-SRO schools N
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)		
Perform sweeps for weapons**	31.4	68.6	13.8	86.2	576	
<b>Advise/Mentoring Activities with Staff</b>						
Advise staff on school policy changes**	45.0	55.0	25.1	74.9	576	641
Advise staff on school procedure changes**	44.2	55.8	23.4	76.6	575	637
Advise staff on physical environment changes**	43.3	56.7	20.5	79.5	575	635
Advise staff on problem solving**	50.9	49.1	22.4	77.6	574	635
Mediate disputes among staff**	15.1	84.9	3.6	96.4	577	634
Advise staff on avoiding violence/victimization**	48.1	51.9	20.0	80.0	574	636
Advise staff on student behavior modification**	43.1	56.9	17.3	82.7	575	636
Advise staff on student rule/sanction enforcement**	42.5	57.5	17.0	83.0	574	635
Advise staff on law-related issues**	61.8	38.2	30.0	70.0	576	637
<b>Advise/Mentoring with Groups</b>						
Advise parent-teacher organizations (e.g. PTOs, PTAs)**	47.8	52.2	28.3	71.7	582	635
Advise police athletic/activities league (PALs)	23.8	76.2	12.8	87.2	564	610
Advise school athletic teams**	26.1	73.9	12.4	87.6	568	612
Advise community outreach programs**	44.9	55.1	21.5	78.5	566	608

TABLE 4.11 COMPARISON OF POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS BY WHETHER SCHOOL HAD SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (CONTINUED)

	Schools with SRO		Schools without SRO		SRO	Non-
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	SRO schools N	SRO schools N
<b>Advise/Mentoring with Students or Families</b>						
Mentor/provide guidance to individual students**	78.8	21.2	48.2	51.8	585	618
Help students with court involvement or intervention**	59.6	40.4	36.1	63.9	574	607
Work with parents to Help their children**	72.9	27.1	49.1	50.9	580	599
Refer students to other sources of help**	66.3	33.7	41.1	58.9	576	601
Refer parents to other sources of help**	69.6	30.4	43.1	56.9	576	599
<b>Presence at School Events</b>						
Present at athletic events**	60.2	39.8	51.5	48.5	565	617
Present for school social events (e.g. dances, open houses)**	69.2	30.8	54.2	45.8	584	627
Present for school performances (e.g. school plays, concerts)**	60.1	39.9	40.4	59.6	579	627
Chaperone school field trips**	33.4	66.6	9.1	90.9	578	624
Present at award ceremonies**	56.5	43.5	33.7	66.3	579	629

Schools that had school resource officers also seemed to have greater levels of police teaching activities (Table 4.12). With the exception of D.A.R.E. for which there were no significant differences, schools served by school resource officers are significantly more likely to have police teaching all of the courses listed in the survey.

TABLE 4.12. COMPARISON OF PERCEPTIONS OF POLICE TEACHING ACTIVITY IN SCHOOLS BY WHETHER SCHOOL HAD SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

	Schools with SRO		Schools without SRO		SRO schools N	Non-SRO schools N
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)		
<b>Teaching Activity</b>						
D.A.R.E.	54.5	45.5	49.0	51.0	602	665
Other anti-drug classes**	46.2	53.8	23.7	76.3	595	655
Alcohol awareness or DUI prevention**	41.9	58.1	21.1	78.9	594	648
Anti-gang classes**	32.4	67.6	11.5	88.5	586	643
Anti-bullying classes**	32.7	67.3	11.4	88.6	590	649
Anti-hate classes**	21.6	78.4	5.4	94.6	583	645
Law-related classes**	33.8	66.2	9.3	90.7	588	646
Firearm safety classes**	14.2	85.8	9.1	90.9	583	649
Other safety education classes**	34.0	66.0	16.3	83.7	585	645
Crime awareness or prevention**	37.6	62.4	13.7	86.3	585	648
Career training**	27.0	73.0	14.1	85.9	586	646
Conflict resolution**	38.4	61.6	11.4	88.6	588	649
Problem solving**	35.0	65.0	10.9	89.1	534	599

\*SRO and Non-SRO school responses are significantly different at the .05 level

\*\*SRO and Non-SRO school responses are significantly different at the .01 level

Schools with school resource officers are also significantly more likely to have law enforcement involvement in safety plans and meetings. For example, 44.2% of schools with SROs reported that law enforcement was involved in developing programs to prevent or reduce violence, with only 20.9% of schools without SROs reporting this type of activity. The only two activities that were not significantly different by group were regularly scheduled meetings with private security to discuss general school issues and specific incidents. These activities were also the least common for both groups.

TABLE 4.13. COMPARISON OF SAFETY PLANS AND MEETINGS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT BY WHETHER SCHOOL HAD SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

	Schools with SRO		Schools without SRO		SRO schools N	Non-SRO schools N
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)		
	<b>Did you work together to:</b>	91.8	8.2	83.0		
Have an emergency plan agreement**	89.2	10.8	81.3	18.7	621	673
Create a written plan to deal with shootings**	75.6	24.4	62.4	37.6	619	670
Create written plan to deal with riots or large-scale fights**	91.8	8.2	83.0	17.0	621	672
Create written plan to deal with bomb scares or comparable school-wide threats (not including fire)**	97.1	2.9	92.6	7.4	625	677
Create written plan to deal with hostages*	80.6	19.4	75.8	24.2	619	670
Have law enforcement attend school safety meetings**	58.0	42.0	40.3	59.7	619	667
Have regularly scheduled meetings with public law enforcement to discuss general school issues**	42.4	57.6	24.7	75.3	608	655
Have regularly scheduled meetings with private security to discuss general school issues	5.1	94.9	3.8	96.2	608	655
Have regularly scheduled meetings with public law enforcement to discuss specific incidents**	39.3	60.7	23.3	76.7	600	647
Have regularly scheduled meetings with private security to discuss specific incidents	4.3	95.7	3.6	96.4	599	647
Develop written plans for crisis situations**	63.9	36.1	47.8	52.2	620	676
Review school discipline practices and procedures**	38.8	61.2	23.9	76.1	618	674
Develop programs to prevent or reduce violence**	44.2	55.8	20.9	79.1	616	674
Conduct risk assessment of security of building or grounds**	54.3	45.7	33.5	66.5	617	671
Develop a plan for increased levels of security**	49.3	50.7	31.0	69.0	617	674

\*school and police responses are significantly different at the .05 level

\*\*school and police responses are significantly different at the .01 level

## Crime/Disorder in Schools

In addition to questions about the role of law enforcement in schools, we were interested in school problems. Table 4.14 shows the percentage of principals reporting the frequencies of crime/disorder in their schools. Principals were asked to report actual events and also asked to indicate how many of these events were reported to the police. It is possible that principals were uncomfortable in reporting actual levels of crime and disorder in schools. Many times schools have been known not to officially report offense behaviors for fear of the effects of bad publicity. Nonetheless, the majority of respondents reported some levels of crime and disorder in their schools. The table below represents the actual events reported by principals (for a comparison of school and police perceptions of reported events, see Chapter 6). Eighteen percent of principals reported zero incidents at their schools. When examining only serious crimes such as homicide, rape, robbery, and fights with weapons the vast majority of schools (82%) had no serious incidents. Further, only 8 schools reported more than 10 violent incidents, suggesting that violent crime is rare for most schools. The majority of schools also reported zero incidents of possession of firearms/explosive devices, with 69 schools having one such event. Incidents involving possession of knives/sharp objects were relatively common. For example, in 243 schools principals reported one such incident, 178 schools reported 2 incidents, and 101 schools reported 3 incidents. The majority of principals (1070) reported there were zero incidents of distribution of illegal drugs. Physical fights without weapons were fairly common, with only 500 schools reporting no incidents. Table 4.15 summarizes the total number of incidents described by principals (only the cases which had non-missing information on all of the questions regarding school incidents are included in this table). As can be seen in this table, 17.5% of schools had no incidents. While not reported in the table, the mean number of incidents was 21.67, median score

was 8, and the mode was 0. These data appear to be consistent with other sources that indicate schools are generally safe locations.

TABLE 4.14. INCIDENTS AT SCHOOLS ACCORDING TO PRINCIPALS (PERCENTAGE)

<b>Type of Offense</b>	<b>Number of Incidents</b>					<b>N</b>
	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2-5</b>	<b>6-9</b>	<b>10+</b>	
Homicide	99.7	0.1	0.2	0	0	1325
Rape or attempted rape	98.8	0.8	0.4	0	0	1320
Sexual battery (other than rape)	95.9	2.4	1.7	0	0	1312
Physical fights with weapon	94.0	2.9	2.7	0.2	0.3	1277
Threats of physical attack with weapon	86.8	6.0	6.2	0.5	0.6	1275
Robberies with weapon	99.3	0	0.6	0	0.1	1300
Robberies without weapon	92.3	3.1	3.7	0.3	0.7	1268
Possession of firearm/explosive device	93.0	5.2	1.8	0	0	1316
Possession of knife/sharp object	52.5	18.5	26.6	1.2	1.4	1310
Distribution of illegal drugs	81.2	7.6	8.7	1.3	1.3	1317
Physical fights without weapon	40.1	6.3	26.0	7.9	19.7	1247
Threats of physical attack without weapon	47.7	6.7	23.1	5.1	17.4	1233
Thefts/larcenies	52.9	12.5	23.4	2.4	8.8	1285
Possession or use of illegal drugs	67.6	8.8	15.1	3.5	5.0	1313
Sexual harassment	66.4	9.4	17.8	2.8	3.6	1301
Vandalism	48.9	14.6	28.3	3.9	4.3	1300
Events in which students used firearms with intent to harm	99.8	0.2	0	0	0	1279
Number of times school activities were disrupted by incidents such as bomb threats	88.2	7.3	4.0	0.3	0.2	1350



## SUMMARY

We received responses from nearly half of the principals we surveyed. Comparison of the characteristics of the schools whose principals responded with the total population of schools included in the Common Core of Data indicates there were some differences. The principals from whom we received responses were at schools that were less likely to be urban, had smaller proportions of minority students, and fewer students eligible for free lunch programs. Our responding principals were also more likely to work at elementary schools. Taken together, if anything, our data might underestimate police involvement in schools.

Responses to the survey of principals indicate that schools rely primarily on public law enforcement. Less than half the principals reported the presence of a school resource officer in their school, but where resource officers were assigned principals reported higher levels and frequency of police involvement. In the main, police were reported to devote most of their time to law enforcement activities of patrol and investigation. Principals report relatively little involvement of police in mentoring, advising, and teaching. Principal reports of crime and disorder in schools indicate that crime is relatively rare and that violent crime is exceptionally rare in the schools we studied. While some schools reported multiple instances of crime and even some serious crimes, the overwhelming majority of principals reported no violent crimes other than instances of unarmed fights among students.

## **CHAPTER 5: LAW ENFORCEMENT SURVEY FINDINGS**

This chapter presents findings from the law enforcement surveys. Agencies that principals indicated were their primary law enforcement agency are the focus of this chapter, since these agencies are more involved with schools and make up the majority of respondents. Results from the agencies schools relied on secondarily, however, are also included in a separate section (see section: Findings from Secondarily Relied upon Law Enforcement Agencies). Since we only received surveys from 4 private security companies, we do not present tables for these results, but briefly discuss the findings (see section: Private Security Agency Results).

### School Resource Officers

We asked police their perceptions about why their corresponding schools did or did not have school resource officers. Tables 5.1 and 5.2 show these results. Of the listed choices, the most common reason for the school getting an SRO was disorder problems (23.5%). The “other” category, however, was the most common response (49.3%). Many of these other reasons were combinations of the listed choices (including all of the above), to be proactive in school-police relations, crime prevention, as part of D.A.R.E. or other drug prevention program, grants, education, and school safety. The most common reason given for why schools do not have an SRO was inadequate funds (42.7%), followed by there was no need for an SRO (28.2%) and “other” (28.1%). The other category included combinations of listed choices, funding/personnel limitations, SROs were needed more at other schools, other agency provides SROs, and “don’t know.” Further, 70.5% of police agencies thought that schools would benefit from having a school resource officer.

TABLE 5.1. PRIMARY REASON FOR SCHOOL GETTING A SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER ACCORDING TO PRIMARY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Reason</b>		
Level of violence in the school	3.8	18
Disorder problems (e.g. rowdiness, vandalism)	23.5	111
Parents wanted an officer in the school	6.8	32
National media attention about school violence	16.7	79
Other	49.3	233

N=473

TABLE 5.2. PRIMARY REASON SCHOOL DID NOT HAVE A SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER ACCORDING TO PRIMARY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Reason</b>		
There was no need for a school resource officer	28.2	170
School had adequate technology (e.g. cameras, alarm system, metal detectors) to handle problems	0.2	1
Inadequate funds	42.7	257
Parents did not want an officer in the school	0.8	5
Other	28.1	169

N=602

### Frequency of Primary Public Law Enforcement Activities

As can be seen in Table 5.3, patrolling school facilities, grounds, drug-free zones beyond school boundaries, student travel routes, and traffic patrol were the most commonly reported police activities. In general, law enforcement related activities were more frequent than other categories of police activity. Further, advice/mentoring activities with students or families were generally more typical than advising staff or groups. The least common activity reported was operating metal detectors, with 92.5% of law enforcement agencies reporting that they never do this.

TABLE 5.3. PERCENTAGE OF PRIMARY PUBLIC LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES REPORTING THE FREQUENCY OF POLICE ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS

	Daily	1-4 times per week	1-3 times per month	1-3 times per semester	Once per year	Never	N
<b>Type of Activity</b>							
<b>Law Enforcement Activities</b>							
Patrol school facilities	48.4	22.4	10.0	8.5	2.1	8.6	1009
Patrol school grounds	51.8	23.0	9.3	7.2	1.7	7.1	1014
Patrol drug-free zones beyond school boundaries	47.5	25.4	10.7	6.7	2.0	7.7	988
Patrol student travel routes	46.6	22.5	13.6	6.5	1.8	8.9	998
Operate metal detectors	1.0	.8	1.2	2.1	2.4	92.5	1002
Conduct safety and security inspections	6.6	7.0	8.6	15.9	23.2	38.6	995
Respond to crime/disorder reports from school staff	10.8	16.7	20.5	31.9	10.7	9.4	1009
Respond to crime/disorder reports from students	9.8	14.3	15.6	24.3	14.3	21.7	1006
Investigate staff leads about crime/disorder	8.4	14.1	18.0	28.9	15.5	15.2	1008
Investigate student leads about crime/disorder	7.7	12.6	16.7	23.4	17.6	22.0	1000
Make arrests	3.2	8.0	14.9	25.5	17.8	30.6	996
Issue citations	4.4	10.1	15.7	24.1	11.2	34.5	992
Write disciplinary reports	3.3	7.6	14.5	23.4	28.3	71.7	1000
Write police reports	8.6	14.0	21.3	33.4	12.1	10.7	994
Enforce truancy laws or policies	8.0	5.8	12.3	19.8	15.0	39.1	992
Solve crime-related Problems	9.6	11.0	18.5	31.9	15.7	13.3	991
Perform traffic patrol on or around campus	36.8	18.3	12.3	11.3	5.8	15.6	1008
Perform sweeps for drugs	3.0	2.8	7.4	16.8	19.1	50.9	1004

TABLE 5.3. PERCENTAGE OF PRIMARY PUBLIC LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES REPORTING THE FREQUENCY OF POLICE ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS (continued)

	Daily	1-4 times per week	1-3 times per month	1-3 times per semester	Once per year	Never	N
<b>Law Enforcement Activities</b>							
Perform sweeps for weapons	3.1	2.6	4.9	12.5	14.6	62.4	1003
<b>Advise/Mentoring Activities with Staff</b>							
Advise staff on school policy changes	2.3	2.6	7.9	13.2	20.2	53.8	992
Advise staff on school procedure changes	2.1	2.1	5.9	13.3	18.8	57.8	991
Advise staff on physical environment changes	2.0	1.5	6.9	14.5	21.1	53.9	990
Advise staff on Problem solving	3.5	3.9	10.3	17.4	21.2	43.7	987
Mediate disputes among staff	1.9	.7	2.5	5.5	8.6	80.7	991
Advise staff on avoiding violence/victimization	2.4	1.9	8.3	17.9	24.7	44.8	992
Advise staff on student behavior modification	2.8	2.7	7.9	15.9	16.4	54.3	989
Advise staff on student rule/sanction enforcement	3.1	3.1	6.8	11.5	15.5	60.0	989
Advise staff on law-related issues	4.3	7.0	12.8	25.1	23.6	27.2	993
<b>Advise/Mentoring with Groups</b>							
Advise parent–teacher organizations (e.g. PTOs, PTAs)	.7	.5	3.9	20.0	29.0	45.9	992
Advise police athletic/activities league (PALs)	1.3	1.7	2.7	5.6	7.1	81.5	986
Advise school athletic Teams	1.7	1.7	4.5	9.8	11.9	70.4	984
Advise community outreach programs	.6	1.9	7.3	16.2	20.7	53.3	983

TABLE 5.3. PERCENTAGE OF PRIMARY PUBLIC LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES REPORTING THE FREQUENCY OF POLICE ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS (continued)

	Daily	1-4 times per week	1-3 times per month	1-3 times per semester	Once per year	Never	N
<b>Advise/Mentoring with Students or Families</b>							
Mentor/provide guidance to individual students	11.8	13.2	15.4	21.3	9.8	28.5	984
Help students with court involvement or intervention	3.6	7.5	12.4	17.6	13.4	45.5	987
Work with parents to Help their children	7.4	10.0	18.2	27.7	12.9	23.8	992
Refer students to other sources of help	6.5	11.6	16.8	27.5	13.2	24.4	992
Refer parents to other sources of help	5.9	10.0	17.5	31.2	13.7	21.7	994
<b>Presence at School Events</b>							
Present at athletic events	7.5	21.0	21.1	13.0	7.0	30.5	1001
Present for school social events (e.g. dances, open houses)	6.3	12.0	18.5	27.2	12.0	24.0	1011
Present for school performances (e.g. school plays, concerts)	4.9	10.8	12.8	23.5	14.9	33.0	1005
Chaperone school field trips	2.4	2.5	5.1	11.9	13.2	64.8	997
Present at award ceremonies	3.0	4.8	7.2	16.3	28.3	40.4	996

## Teaching Activities of Primary Law Enforcement Agencies

Table 5.4 describes the teaching activities reported by primary police departments.

Teaching classes was a fairly common activity according to primary law enforcement agencies.

Slightly more than half of the police departments reported that officers taught anti-drug classes and safety education. The least commonly taught class was firearm safety.

TABLE 5.4. PERCENTAGE OF PRIMARY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES REPORTING POLICE TEACHING ACTIVITIES

	<b>Yes (%)</b>	<b>No (%)</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Teaching Activity</b>			
D.A.R.E.	46.8	53.2	1004
Other anti-drug classes	51.6	48.4	996
Alcohol awareness or DUI prevention	50.0	50.0	992
Anti-gang classes	35.2	64.8	984
Anti-bullying classes	33.8	66.2	990
Anti-hate classes	24.9	75.1	976
Law-related classes	44.0	56.0	992
Firearm safety classes	21.5	78.5	986
Other safety education classes	50.6	49.4	991
Crime awareness or prevention	46.3	53.7	992
Career training	33.6	66.4	994
Conflict resolution	37.8	62.2	993
Problem solving	36.9	63.1	905



## Safety Plans and Meetings with Schools

The most common safety plan reported by law enforcement was working with schools to create written plans to deal with bomb scares or other school-wide threats (64.2%). Other plans that were common were creating written plans to deal with shootings (61.0%), developing written plans for crisis situations (58.9%), conducting risk assessments of the security of the building or grounds (53.4%), and creating written plans to deal with hostages (55.2%). Law enforcement tended not to review school discipline practices and procedures.

TABLE 5.5. SAFETY PLANS AND MEETINGS WITH SCHOOLS ACCORDING TO PRIMARY LAW ENFORCEMENT REPOSES

	Yes (%)	No (%)	N
<b>Did your agency work with the school to:</b>			
Create a written plan to deal with shootings	61.0	39.0	1027
Create written plan to deal with riots or large-scale fights	46.1	53.9	1021
Create written plan to deal with bomb scares or comparable school-wide threats (not including fire)	64.2	35.8	1029
Create written plan to deal with hostages	55.2	44.8	1022
Have law enforcement attend school safety meetings	47.7	52.3	991
Have regularly scheduled meetings with school discuss general school issues	42.1	57.9	1014
Have regularly scheduled meetings with school to discuss Specific school incidents	41.6	58.4	1012
Develop written plans for crisis situations	58.9	41.1	1012
Review school discipline practices and procedures	27.4	72.6	1008
Develop programs to prevent or reduce violence	40.0	60.0	1009
Conduct risk assessment of security of building or grounds	53.4	46.6	1010
Develop a plan for increased levels of security	49.3	50.7	1008

## Crime/Disorder in Schools Reported to Police According to Primary Law Enforcement

Tables 5.6 through 5.24 describe the incidents of crime/disorder reported to the police. For most crimes, the vast majority of schools reported no such incidents. For example, 85.3% of schools reported no incidents of physical fight with a weapon, according to police respondents. Not surprisingly, less serious offenses were more common. Physical fights without a weapon were fairly common with only 36% of schools reporting no incidents, 39.4% reported 1-5 incidents and 12.3% of schools reporting 6-10 incidents. While there were a small percentage of schools that reported hundreds of fights, most schools reported relatively few fights. Table 5.24 shows a summary of the total number of incidents reported to the police. Only respondents that answered all of the incident questions are included in this table.

TABLE 5.6. REPORTED HOMICIDES AT SCHOOLS

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Number of reported homicides</b>		
0	99.8	971
1	0.1	1
2	0.1	1

N=973

TABLE 5.7. REPORTED RAPES OR ATTEMPTED RAPES AT SCHOOLS

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Number of reported rapes or attempted rapes</b>		
0	94.7	918
1	3.3	32
2	1.0	10
3	0.6	6
4	0.2	2
7	0.1	1

N=969

TABLE 5.8. REPORTED SEXUAL BATTERIES OTHER THAN RAPE AT SCHOOLS

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Number of reported sexual batteries</b>		
0	84.5	816
1	7.9	76
2	3.3	32
3	2.1	20
4	0.8	8
5	0.6	6
6	0.3	3
8	0.1	1
10	0.3	3
12	0.1	1

N=966

TABLE 5.9. REPORTED PHYSICAL FIGHTS WITH WEAPON AT SCHOOLS

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Number of reported physical fights with weapon</b>		
0	85.3	780
1	6.5	59
2	3.9	36
3	1.6	15
4	0.2	2
5	1.2	11
6	0.2	2
8	0.1	1
10	0.2	2
11	0.1	1
15	0.1	1
18	0.1	1
25	0.1	1
107	0.1	1
122	0.1	1

N=914

TABLE 5.10. REPORTED THREATS OF PHYSICAL ATTACK WITH WEAPON AT SCHOOLS

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Number of reported threats of physical attack with weapon</b>		
0	78.0	710
1	6.0	55
2	6.7	61
3	2.7	25
4	0.8	7
5	2.2	20
6	0.4	4
7	0.5	5
8	0.2	2
9	0.3	3
10	0.8	7
11	0.1	1
12	0.1	1
15	0.1	1
16	0.1	1
20	0.2	2
25	0.1	1
30	0.2	2
60	0.1	1
439	0.1	1

N=910

TABLE 5.11. REPORTED ROBBERIES WITH WEAPON AT SCHOOLS

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Number of reported robberies with weapon</b>		
0	97.8	923
1	1.3	12
2	0.5	5
3	0.1	1
5	0.1	1
9	0.1	1
19	0.1	1

N=944

TABLE 5.12. REPORTED ROBBERIES WITHOUT WEAPON AT SCHOOLS

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Number of reported robberies without weapon</b>		
0	93.8	861
1	1.1	10
2	2.2	20
3	0.7	6
4	0.7	6
5	0.8	7
6	0.2	2
8	0.1	1
9	0.2	2
10	0.3	3

N=918

TABLE 5.13. REPORTED POSSESSION OF FIREARMS/EXPLOSIVE DEVICES AT SCHOOLS

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Number of reported possession of firearms/explosive devices</b>		
0	87.1	837
1	7.4	71
2	3.1	30
3	0.9	9
4	0.2	2
5	0.6	6
9	0.1	1
10	0.2	2
12	0.1	1
19	0.1	1
313	0.1	1

N=961

TABLE 5.14. REPORTED POSSESSION OF KNIVES/SHARP OBJECTS AT SCHOOLS

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Number of reported possession of knives/sharp objects</b>		
0	59.9	573
1	14.7	141
2	9.0	86
3	4.3	41
4	2.3	22
5	4.0	38
6	1.5	14
7	0.3	3
8	0.3	3
9	0.1	1
10	2.0	19
11	0.1	1
12	0.4	4
13	0.1	1
15	0.3	3
17	0.1	1
20	0.1	1
21	0.1	1
25	0.1	1
62	0.1	1
150	0.1	1

N=956

TABLE 5.15. REPORTED DISTRIBUTION OF ILLEGAL DRUGS

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Number of reported distribution of illegal drugs</b>		
0	71.0	677
1	7.5	71
2	7.2	69
3	3.8	36
4	2.0	19
5	3.3	31
6	0.4	4
7	0.4	4
8	0.4	4
10	1.8	17
11	0.2	2
12	0.4	4
13	0.1	1
15	0.2	2
18	0.1	1
20	0.4	4
25	0.1	1
30	0.1	1
35	0.1	1
60	0.1	1
100	0.2	2
141	0.1	1

N=953



TABLE 5.16. REPORTED PHYSICAL FIGHTS WITHOUT WEAPON

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Number of reported physical fights without weapon</b>		
0	36.0	334
1-5	39.4	366
6-10	12.3	114
11-15	4.5	42
16-20	2.7	25
21-25	1.3	12
26-1264	3.9	36

N=929

TABLE 5.17. REPORTED THREATS OF PHYSICAL ATTACK WITHOUT WEAPON

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Number of reported threats of physical attack without weapon</b>		
0	43.0	392
1-5	32.7	298
6-10	10.8	98
11-15	4.5	41
16-20	2.7	25
21-25	1.8	16
26-150	4.5	41

N=911

TABLE 5.18. REPORTED THEFTS/LARCENIES

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Number of reported thefts/larcenies</b>		
0	34.0	318
1-5	41.3	386
6-10	10.6	99
11-15	4.2	39
16-20	3.6	34
21-25	1.4	13
26-269	4.9	46

N=935

TABLE 5.19. REPORTED POSSESSION OR USE OF ILLEGAL DRUGS

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Number of reported possession or use of illegal drugs</b>		
0	56.3	543
1-5	29.1	281
6-10	6.9	67
11-15	2.4	23
16-20	2.4	23
21-25	0.7	7
26-1063	2.2	21

N=965

TABLE 5.20. REPORTED SEXUAL HARASSMENT

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Number of reported incidents of sexual harassment</b>		
0	78.7	746
1-5	16.5	156
6-10	2.4	23
11-15	0.5	5
16-20	1.1	10
21-25	0.2	2
26-50	0.6	6

N=948

TABLE 5.21. REPORTED VANDALISM

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Number of reported incidents of vandalism</b>		
0	32.7	312
1-5	47.8	456
6-10	11.7	112
11-15	2.6	25
16-20	2.2	21
21-25	0.8	8
26-178	2.1	20

N=954

TABLE 5.22. REPORTED EVENTS IN WHICH STUDENTS USED FIREARMS WITH INTENT TO HARM

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Reported number of events</b>		
0	99.7	931
1	0.1	1
2	0.1	1
4	0.1	1

N=934

TABLE 5.23. REPORTED NUMBER OF TIMES SCHOOL ACTIVITIES WERE DISRUPTED BY INCIDENTS SUCH AS BOMB THREATS

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Number of events</b>		
0	71.2	679
1	13.7	131
2	6.8	65
3	2.6	25
4	2.1	20
5	1.4	13
6	0.2	2
7	0.1	1
8	0.5	5
10	0.4	4
12	0.1	1
14	0.1	1
15	0.1	1
20	0.1	1
23	0.1	1
25	0.2	2
34	0.1	1
62	0.1	1

N=954

TABLE 5.24. TOTAL NUMBER OF INCIDENTS ACCORDING TO POLICE

	<b>Police (%)</b>	<b>Police N</b>
<b>Total Number of Incidents</b>		
0	13.8	98
1-5	24.0	170
6-10	12.3	87
11-15	7.2	51
16-20	6.9	49
21-30	8.5	60
31-40	5.9	42
41-50	4.9	35
51-577	16.4	116

N=708

### Findings from Secondarily Relied Upon Law Enforcement Agencies

As can be seen in Table 5.25, there are few activities that secondary law enforcement agencies are involved in on a daily basis. The most common daily activities were patrolling student travel routes (50.6%), patrolling school grounds (44.2%), patrolling drug-free zones beyond school boundaries (40.3%), and patrolling school facilities (37.7%). Advising/mentoring activities with staff and groups were uncommon, with the majority of agencies reporting that they never participate in most of these activities.

In general, secondary police agencies are also not very involved in teaching activities (Table 5.26). The most commonly taught class was D.A.R.E (41.6%). For most classes, the overwhelming majority of agencies reported that they did not teach such courses.

The majority of agencies reported that they did not have safety plans and meetings with schools (Table 5.27). The most common plans were developing plans for crisis situations (40%), plans to deal with bomb scares or comparable school-wide threats (39.7%), and plans to deal with shootings (38.5%).

TABLE 5.25. PERCENTAGE OF SECONDARY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES REPORTING ON THE FREQUENCY OF POLICE ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS

Type of Activity	Daily	1-4 times per week	1-3 times per month	1-3 times per semester	Once per year	Never	N
<b>Law Enforcement Activities</b>							
Patrol school facilities	37.7	19.5	3.9	11.7	2.6	24.7	77
Patrol school grounds	44.2	15.6	9.1	7.8	2.6	20.8	77
Patrol drug-free zones beyond school boundaries	40.3	15.6	11.7	9.1	2.6	20.8	77
Patrol student travel routes	50.6	15.6	11.7	3.9	2.6	15.6	77
Operate metal detectors	1.3	1.3	0	1.3	0	96.0	75
Conduct safety and security inspections	7.0	1.4	5.6	8.5	14.1	63.4	71
Respond to crime/disorder reports from school staff	2.8	5.6	20.8	38.9	11.1	20.8	72
Respond to crime/disorder reports from students	2.8	4.2	11.3	31.0	15.5	35.2	71
Investigate staff leads about crime/disorder	1.4	4.2	13.9	33.3	15.3	31.9	72
Investigate student leads about crime/disorder	1.4	4.3	8.7	27.5	15.9	42.0	69
Make arrests	1.4	1.4	12.7	16.9	12.7	54.9	71
Issue citations	2.7	1.4	16.2	20.3	12.2	47.3	74
Write disciplinary reports	0	1.4	4.3	12.9	5.7	75.7	70
Write police reports	4.1	5.4	14.9	33.8	13.5	28.4	74
Enforce truancy laws or policies	4.1	0	5.4	20.3	13.5	56.8	74
Solve crime-related Problems	5.6	4.2	11.1	22.2	20.8	36.1	72
Perform traffic patrol on or around campus	20.8	19.5	11.7	10.4	5.2	32.5	77
Perform sweeps for drugs	0	1.4	5.4	10.8	17.6	64.9	74

TABLE 5.25. PERCENTAGE OF SECONDARY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES REPORTING ON THE FREQUENCY OF POLICE ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS (continued)

	Daily	1-4 times per week	1-3 times per month	1-3 times per semester	Once per year	Never	N
<b>Law Enforcement Activities</b>							
Perform sweeps for weapons	0	0	2.7	8.0	16.0	73.3	75
<b>Advise/Mentoring Activities with Staff</b>							
Advise staff on school Policy changes	0	1.3	3.9	6.5	15.6	72.7	77
Advise staff on school procedure changes	0	0	5.3	5.3	14.5	75.0	76
Advise staff on physical environment changes	0	0	4.0	6.7	12.0	77.3	75
Advise staff on problem solving	2.7	1.3	4.0	9.3	17.3	65.3	75
Mediate disputes among staff	0	0	0	0	9.3	90.7	75
Advise staff on avoiding violence/victimization	0	2.6	1.3	11.8	22.4	61.8	76
Advise staff on student behavior modification	0	2.6	3.9	3.9	18.4	71.1	76
Advise staff on student rule/sanction enforcement	0	0	2.7	9.3	12.0	76.0	75
Advise staff on law-related issues	0	2.7	5.3	20.0	26.7	45.3	75
<b>Advise/Mentoring with Groups</b>							
Advise parent–teacher organizations (e.g. PTOs, PTAs)	0	0	6.7	6.7	25.3	61.3	75
Advise police athletic/activities league (PALs)	0	0	6.8	4.1	8.2	80.8	73
Advise school athletic teams	1.4	1.4	4.1	2.7	5.4	85.1	74
Advise community outreach programs	0	2.7	6.8	5.4	12.2	73.0	74

TABLE 5.25. PERCENTAGE OF SECONDARY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES REPORTING ON THE FREQUENCY OF POLICE ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS (continued)

	Daily	1-4 times per week	1-3 times per month	1-3 times per semester	Once per year	Never	N
<b>Advise/Mentoring with Students or Families</b>							
Mentor/provide guidance to individual students	1.4	5.5	15.1	15.1	11.0	52.1	73
Help students with court involvement or intervention	0	2.7	6.8	11.0	12.3	67.1	73
Work with parents to Help their children	2.7	6.8	11.0	19.2	13.7	46.6	73
Refer students to other sources of help	2.7	5.5	6.8	21.9	12.3	50.7	73
Refer parents to other sources of help	1.4	5.5	11.0	21.9	15.1	45.2	73
<b>Presence at School Events</b>							
Present at athletic Events	11.8	6.6	11.8	14.5	6.6	48.7	76
Present for school social events (e.g. dances, open houses)	5.3	5.3	9.2	18.4	15.8	46.1	76
Present for school performances (e.g. school plays, concerts)	4.0	4.0	8.0	18.7	16.0	49.3	75
Chaperone school field trips	1.3	2.6	2.6	6.6	11.8	75.0	76
Present at award ceremonies	2.6	2.6	1.3	18.4	19.7	55.3	76



TABLE 5.26 PERCENTAGE OF SECONDARY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES REPORTING POLICE TEACHING ACTIVITIES

<b>Teaching Activity</b>	<b>Yes (%)</b>	<b>No (%)</b>	<b>N</b>
D.A.R.E.	41.6	58.4	77
Other anti-drug classes	25.3	74.7	79
Alcohol awareness or DUI prevention	26.6	73.4	79
Anti-gang classes	23.4	76.6	77
Anti-bullying classes	23.4	76.6	77
Anti-hate classes	17.3	82.7	75
Law-related classes	17.1	82.9	76
Firearm safety classes	19.7	80.3	76
Other safety education classes	25.0	75.0	76
Crime awareness or prevention	28.0	72.0	75
Career training	28.4	71.6	74
Conflict resolution	18.4	81.6	76
Problem solving	19.7	80.3	71

TABLE 5.27 SAFETY PLANS AND MEETINGS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCORDING TO SECONDARY POLICE AGENCY REPOSSES

	Yes (%)	No (%)	N
<b>Did your agency work with the school to:</b>			
Create a written plan to deal with shootings	38.5	61.5	78
Create written plan to deal with riots or large-scale fights	22.1	77.9	77
Create written plan to deal with bomb scares or comparable school-wide threats (not including fire)	39.7	60.3	78
Create written plan to deal with hostages	32.1	67.9	78
Have law enforcement attend school safety meetings	30.1	69.9	73
Have regularly scheduled meetings with school discuss general school issues	26.0	74.0	73
Have regularly scheduled meetings with school to discuss specific school incidents	33.3	66.7	72
Develop written plans for crisis situations	40.0	60.0	75
Review school discipline practices and procedures	20.0	80.0	75
Develop programs to prevent or reduce violence	24.0	76.0	75
Conduct risk assessment of security of building or grounds	32.4	67.6	74
Develop a plan for increased levels of security	27.0	73.0	74

### Findings from Private Security Surveys

We received four surveys from private security agencies out of ten sent. Given the small number of responses, the findings are summarized without tables. In terms of frequency of activities, three of the four respondents indicated that they never do most of the activities listed. Those activities in which they did participate tended to be relatively infrequent. The other respondent indicated that the agency patrolled school facilities and grounds on a daily basis. Also performed on a daily basis were write discipline reports, enforce truancy laws or policies, and being present for athletic events. One to four times per week, this same agency reported that they participated in several activities in the category of advice/mentoring with students or families. Other activities were rare or never occurred.

The private security surveys also included questions about teaching activities. Three out of four reported that they did not do any teaching at the school. One respondent reported

teaching most of the classes listed. Specifically, the agency taught: an anti-drug class (not a D.A.R.E class); alcohol awareness or DUI prevention; anti-gang class; anti-bullying class; law-related class; other safety education class, crime awareness or prevention; conflict resolution; and problem solving.

Responses were more mixed in terms of safety plans and meetings with the schools. Three agencies reported that they had worked with the school to create written plans to deal with shooting, riots (or large-scale fights), bomb scares (or comparable school-wide threats, not including fire), and hostages. Two of the agencies had regularly scheduled meetings with school officials to discuss general school issues and specific school incidents. All of the agencies had worked with the school to develop written plans for crisis situations.

#### Comparison of Law Enforcement Responses

When we compare primary and secondary public law enforcement responses we find several differences. Not surprisingly, primary law enforcement agencies are consistently more frequently involved in law enforcement related activities, advising/mentoring activities, and presence at school events than secondary agencies. Similarly, primary police agencies are more likely to be involved in teaching activities and safety plans/meetings than secondary agencies.

When comparing the primary and secondary public law enforcement responses with the private security responses, we find that generally public law enforcement seems to be more frequently involved in most activities. Further, three out of the four private security responses indicated that they do not participate in any teaching activities. One of these agencies however, taught most of the classes listed. The generalization that public law enforcement is more involved in schools than private security does not apply for all types of involvement. For example, for safety plans/meetings, private security seemed as involved, or in some cases more

involved than public law enforcement. Given the small number of private security responses (n=4) however, these results should be interpreted with caution.

### Summary

Principals responding to our survey identified the law enforcement and private security agencies on which their schools relied. Relatively few principals identified private security firms as the primary resource for law and order. We surveyed police and security agencies identified by principals with over 75% of police agencies responding to our survey. Most schools relied on public police and public police were involved more often and in more types of activities with schools than were those private security agencies which responded to our survey. Not surprisingly, in schools served by more than one law enforcement agency, the primary agency (which would be called by the school in the event of an emergency) reported higher levels and frequencies of involvement in all sorts of activities. The most common activities of law enforcement in public schools were patrol and responding to calls for service. Law enforcement respondents reported somewhat higher levels of crime and disorder in schools than did principals, but the relative frequencies of these events were similar to those reported by principals. That is, serious crime, especially violent crime was relatively rare in the schools we asked about. Some schools were reported to have substantial amounts of crime, but the typical school did not experience much serious crime according to law enforcement reports. Based on little data from private security respondents, it appears that public police are involved in a wider range of activities in schools than are private security personnel. Law enforcement respondents report that collaborating with schools in the development of safety and emergency plans is a relatively common practice.

## **CHAPTER 6: COMPARISON OF SCHOOL AND PRIMARY POLICE FINDINGS**

This chapter compares principal and police responses regarding the current role of law enforcement in schools. All comparisons include schools and their primary public law enforcement agency. The first section of this chapter compares perceptions using our sample of respondents from schools and police agencies (hence there will be different N's for schools and police). The second section of this chapter uses only matched responses. In other words, if a principal gave a valid response for a given question, and the corresponding police agency also had a valid response, both responses are included in the analysis for that question. If either a principal or the corresponding police agency did not have a valid response for a question, both responses were excluded from the analysis for that question (hence there will be the same N for school and police responses for any given question).

### Comparison of All School and Primary Law Enforcement Responses

As Table 6.1 describes, schools and police had significantly different explanations for why the school had a school resource officer. Level of violence in the school was equally cited by schools (3.7%) and police (3.8%), but was not a major factor for either group. "Disorder problems" was a more common response, though police cited this more frequently than schools. National media attention about school violence was a more common reason chosen by schools than by police. For both groups, the "other" category was the most common response. We asked respondents to describe what the other reason was, and for both groups there was a range of reasons such as "all of the above," a grant, part of community policing, part of a drug awareness program, to improve school safety, and to build relationships with students. There appear to be a wide variety of perceptions as to precisely why schools came to have school resource officers, and often there are multiple reasons.

TABLE 6.1 PRIMARY REASON FOR GETTING A SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER ACCORDING TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS\*

Reason	School (%)	Police (%)
Level of violence in the school	3.7	3.8
Disorder problems (e.g. rowdiness, vandalism)	17.5	23.5
Parents wanted an officer in the school	6.1	6.8
National media attention about school violence	24.5	16.7
Other	48.2	49.3

n=571 for schools

n=473 for police

chi-square=12.311

\*school and police responses are significantly different at the .05 level

We also asked respondents to describe the primary reason why a school might not have a school resource officer (Table 6.2). School principal and police official responses were significantly different at the .01 probability level. Most school principals (66.2%) stated that there was no need for a school resource officer, whereas only 28.2% of police thought this was the reason. The most common reason stated by police (42.7%) was inadequate funds. One of the least common reasons stated by both types of respondents was that parents did not want an officer in the school (0.5% for principals, 0.8% for police).

TABLE 6.2 PRIMARY REASON SCHOOL DID NOT HAVE A SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER ACCORDING TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS\*\*

Reason	School (%)	Police (%)
There was no need for a school resource officer	66.2	28.2
School had adequate technology (e.g. cameras, alarm system, metal detectors) to handle problems	2.4	0.2
Inadequate funds	22.2	42.7
Parents did not want an officer in the school	0.5	0.8
Other	8.7	28.1

n=761 for schools

n=602 for police

chi-square=228.723

\*\*school and police responses are significantly different at the .01 level. Note: these findings should be interpreted with caution since one cell in the contingency table had an expected count of fewer than 5 cases.

In addition, we asked schools and police agencies if they thought the school would benefit from having a school resource officer (if there was not currently an SRO at the school). The majority of schools that answered this question reported that they did not think the school would benefit from having an SRO (54.9%), though close to half of the schools (45.1%) reported that the school would benefit. Police responses were significantly different (at the .01 level), with the majority of police (70.5%) reporting they thought the school would benefit from having an SRO, and only 29.5% reporting the school would not benefit.

When we compare perceptions of the types of activities performed by law enforcement in schools, we see that our samples of school and police respondents have significantly different perceptions of police involvement across almost every category. For almost every type of activity, a higher percentage of police officials than school principals state that police are involved in that activity at the school and most of these differences are statistically significant.

For example, 92.3% of police state that they patrol drug-free zones beyond school boundaries, whereas only 66.8% of principals state that police do this. It may be that school officials are simply not aware of all the patrol activities of police, especially if these occur beyond the school boundaries or when school is not in session. One interesting difference is that principals perceived that police were largely involved in mentoring/providing guidance to individual students (61.7%), yet only 28.5% of police officials reported such activities. Perhaps there are issues with school principals and police officials defining activities differently. Some difference may also exist since the responses are not matched in this analysis (also see section titled, “comparing matched responses of police involvement in schools”), so some schools are in the analysis for which there is no police response.



TABLE 6.3 COMPARISON OF PERCEPTIONS OF POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

	Schools		Police		School N	Police N
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)		
<b>Type of Activity</b>						
<b>Law Enforcement Activities</b>						
Patrol school facilities**	69.7	30.3	91.4	8.6	1262	1009
Patrol school grounds**	76.5	23.5	92.9	7.1	1263	1014
Patrol drug-free zones beyond school boundaries**	66.8	33.2	92.3	7.7	1193	988
Patrol student travel routes**	72.5	27.5	91.1	8.9	1217	998
Operate metal detectors	7.1	92.9	7.5	92.5	1271	1002
Conduct safety and security inspections**	48.9	51.1	61.4	38.6	1266	995
Respond to crime/disorder reports from school staff**	80.1	19.9	90.6	9.4	1289	1009
Respond to crime/disorder reports from students**	50.8	49.2	78.3	21.7	1275	1006
Investigate staff leads about crime/disorder**	60.0	40.0	84.8	15.2	1259	1008
Investigate student leads about crime/disorder**	52.8	47.2	78.0	22.0	1249	1000
Make arrests**	42.4	57.6	69.4	30.6	1266	996
Issue citations**	45.0	55.0	65.5	34.5	1267	992
Write disciplinary Reports**	34.3	65.7	28.3	71.7	1267	1000
Write police reports**	67.8	32.2	89.3	10.7	1265	994
Enforce truancy laws or policies**	44.4	55.6	60.9	39.1	1274	992
Solve crime-related problems**	55.7	44.3	86.7	13.3	1257	991
Perform traffic patrol on or around campus**	64.8	35.2	84.4	15.6	1277	1008
Perform sweeps for drugs**	33.2	66.8	49.1	50.9	1269	1004
Perform sweeps for weapons**	21.5	78.5	37.6	62.4	1263	1003

TABLE 6.3 COMPARISON OF PERCEPTIONS OF POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS (continued)

	Schools		Police		School N	Police N
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)		
<b>Advise/Mentoring Activities with Staff</b>						
Advise staff on school policy changes**	33.9	66.1	46.2	53.8	1266	992
Advise staff on school procedure changes**	32.5	67.5	42.2	57.8	1261	991
Advise staff on physical environment changes**	30.4	69.6	46.1	53.9	1259	990
Advise staff on problem solving**	35.1	64.9	56.3	43.7	1258	987
Mediate disputes among staff**	8.8	91.2	19.3	80.7	1260	991
Advise staff on avoiding violence/victimization**	32.6	67.4	55.2	44.8	1259	992
Advise staff on student behavior modification**	28.7	71.3	45.7	54.3	1260	989
Advise staff on student rule/sanction enforcement**	28.2	71.8	40.0	60.0	1257	989
Advise staff on law- related issues**	44.0	56.0	72.8	27.2	1262	993
<b>Advise/Mentoring with Groups</b>						
Advise parent-teacher organizations (e.g. PTOs, PTAs)**	36.8	63.2	54.1	45.9	1263	992
Advise police athletic/activities league (PALs)	17.7	82.3	18.5	81.5	1220	986
Advise school athletic teams**	18.7	81.3	29.6	70.4	1226	984
Advise community outreach programs**	32.0	68.0	46.7	53.3	1219	983
<b>Advise/Mentoring with Students or Families</b>						
Mentor/provide guidance to individual students**	61.7	38.3	28.5	71.5	1246	984

TABLE 6.3 COMPARISON OF PERCEPTIONS OF POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS (continued)

	Schools		Police		School N	Police N
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)		
<b>Advise/Mentoring with Students or Families</b>						
Help students with court involvement or intervention**	46.2	53.8	54.5	45.5	1224	987
Work with parents to Help their children**	59.5	40.5	76.2	23.8	1222	992
Refer students to other sources of help**	52.0	48.0	75.6	24.4	1220	992
Refer parents to other sources of help**	54.7	45.3	78.3	21.7	1218	994
<b>Presence at School Events</b>						
Present at athletic events**	54.4	45.6	69.5	30.5	1227	1001
Present for school social events (e.g. dances, open houses)**	60.2	39.8	76.0	24.0	1258	1011
Present for school performances (e.g. school plays, concerts)**	48.9	51.1	67.0	33.0	1252	1005
Chaperone school field Trips**	20.3	79.7	35.2	64.8	1246	997
Present at award ceremonies**	43.7	56.3	59.6	40.4	1252	996

\*school and police responses are significantly different at the .05 level

\*\*school and police responses are significantly different at the .01 level

Table 6.4 compares school and police perceptions of police teaching activity. With the exception of D.A.R.E., police reported significantly more teaching activity in schools. It is possible that school principals did not remember all of the courses taught by police, or that police reported their teaching activities for the school district and not the school. It is also likely that professional educators such as school principals may define teaching differently than did police respondents. If this were the case, it may be that police respondents report “guest lectures” or presentations in classes as teaching while principals might only include courses offered by police.

TABLE 6.4. COMPARISON OF PERCEPTIONS OF POLICE TEACHING ACTIVITY IN SCHOOLS

	School		Police		School N	Police N
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)		
<b>Teaching Activity</b>						
D.A.R.E.*	51.6	48.4	46.8	53.2	1326	1004
Other anti-drug classes**	33.9	66.1	51.6	48.4	1304	996
Alcohol awareness or DUI prevention**	30.4	69.6	50.0	50.0	1295	992
Anti-gang classes**	20.9	79.1	35.2	64.8	1282	984
Anti-bullying classes**	21.0	79.0	33.8	66.2	1293	990
Anti-hate classes**	12.7	87.3	24.9	75.1	1280	976
Law-related classes**	20.3	79.7	44.0	56.0	1286	992
Firearm safety classes**	11.1	88.9	21.5	78.5	1284	986
Other safety education classes**	24.2	75.8	50.6	49.4	1283	991
Crime awareness or prevention**	24.3	75.7	46.3	53.7	1286	992
Career training**	19.8	80.2	33.6	66.4	1285	994
Conflict resolution**	23.6	76.4	37.8	62.2	1290	993
Problem solving**	21.7	78.3	36.9	63.1	1177	905

\*school and police responses are significantly different at the .05 level

\*\*school and police responses are significantly different at the .01 level

We also compared school principal and police responses regarding law enforcement involvement in safety plans/meetings (Table 6.5). While most of the responses were significantly different, in some cases principals reported more involvement by police and in other instances police reported greater involvement. For example, principal perceptions of police involvement were significantly greater than police responses for creating written plans to deal with shootings, large-scale fights, bomb scares or comparable school-wide threats, and hostage situations. Police reported greater levels of involvement than school responses for several activities, including: regularly scheduled meetings with the school to discuss general school issues and specific incidents; developing programs to prevent or reduce violence and increasing security; and conducting risk assessment for security of building or grounds.

TABLE 6.5. COMPARISON OF SAFETY PLANS AND MEETINGS ACCORDING TO SCHOOLS AND PRIMARY LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSES

	School		Police		School N	Police N
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)		
<b>Did you work together to:</b>						
Create a written plan to deal with shootings**	84.7	15.3	61.0	39.0	1358	1027
Create written plan to deal with riots or large-scale fights**	68.3	31.7	46.1	53.9	1352	1021
Create written plan to deal with bomb scares or comparable school-wide threats (not including fire)**	94.4	5.6	64.2	35.8	1367	1029
Create written plan to deal with hostages**	77.7	22.3	55.2	44.8	1352	1022
Have law enforcement attend school safety meetings	47.4	52.6	47.7	52.3	1350	991
Have regularly scheduled meetings with school discuss general school issues**	32.3	67.7	42.1	57.9	1322	1014
Have regularly scheduled meetings with school to discuss specific school incidents**	29.8	70.2	41.6	58.4	1305	1012
Develop written plans for crisis situations*	54.6	45.4	58.9	41.1	1361	1012
Review school discipline practices and procedures	30.3	69.7	27.4	72.6	1356	1008
Develop programs to prevent or reduce violence**	31.2	68.8	40.0	60.0	1354	1009
Conduct risk assessment of security of building or grounds**	42.2	57.8	53.4	46.6	1352	1010
Develop a plan for increased levels of security**	38.8	61.2	49.3	50.7	1355	1008

\*school and police responses are significantly different at the .05 level

\*\*school and police responses are significantly different at the .01 level

## Comparison of Matched School and Primary Law Enforcement Responses

It seemed important in addition to comparing principal responses with police responses generally, that we compare matched responses. This type of analysis may provide a better comparison since cases were “matched.” In other words, we only included those cases for which there was a valid response for both the school and its corresponding law enforcement agency. This provides an anchored comparison since principals and law enforcement agencies are referring to police involvement at the same schools. The following section includes matched school and primary police responses.

### **Comparison of Matched Responses of Police Involvement in Schools**

Responses were coded as yes/no (yes=1, no=0), so there is no reference to how frequently police conducted an activity at a given school, just whether they conducted the activity. Therefore, all mean scores had a range from a low score of 0 to a high score of 1. As is seen in Table 6.6, school and police respondents had significantly different perceptions of police involvement in schools across almost all types of activities. The mean can also be interpreted as a percentage, with 71% of schools reporting that police patrolled school facilities, and 92% of police reporting that police patrolled school facilities. These perceptions were significantly different at the .01 probability level. A negative t-value indicates that the school mean was lower than the police mean. One non-significant difference in perceptions was for “operate metal detectors.” In almost all cases, police perceptions of police involvement were significantly higher than school perceptions. One exception was for “write disciplinary reports” in which schools had a significantly higher mean score than police responses. Schools also had a higher mean score for “advise police athletic league,” but it was not significantly higher than the police score. Also, in

general, patrol activities were the most common type of police involvement in schools (according to both schools and police).



TABLE 6.6 COMPARISON OF MATCHED PERCEPTIONS OF POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

	<b>Schools (mean)</b>	<b>Police (mean)</b>	<b>T-value</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Type of Activity</b>					
<b>Law Enforcement Activities</b>					
Patrol school facilities	.71	.92	-12.850	.000	918
Patrol school grounds	.77	.93	-10.186	.000	922
Patrol drug-free zones beyond school boundaries	.68	.92	-13.164	.000	847
Patrol student travel routes	.74	.91	-9.913	.000	876
Operate metal detectors	.07	.07	-.436	.663	906
Conduct safety and security inspections	.50	.61	-5.827	.000	906
Respond to crime/disorder reports from school staff	.81	.91	-6.412	.000	929
Respond to crime/disorder reports from students	.53	.79	-13.869	.000	918
Investigate staff leads about crime/disorder	.63	.85	-12.074	.000	911
Investigate student leads about crime/disorder	.55	.78	-12.797	.000	900
Make arrests	.45	.70	-14.191	.000	906
Issue citations	.47	.67	-10.503	.000	902
Write disciplinary reports	.36	.28	3.659	.000	908
Write police reports	.69	.90	-12.538	.000	906
Enforce truancy laws or policies	.47	.61	-7.532	.000	908
Solve crime-related problems	.59	.87	-15.099	.000	891
Perform traffic patrol on or around campus	.67	.84	-9.849	.000	926
Perform sweeps for drugs	.35	.50	-8.208	.000	911
Perform sweeps for weapons	.23	.38	-8.587	.000	909

TABLE 6.6. COMPARISON OF MATCHED PERCEPTIONS OF POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS  
(continued)

	<b>Schools (mean)</b>	<b>Police (mean)</b>	<b>T-value</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Advise/Mentoring Activities with Staff</b>					
Advise staff on school policy changes	.37	.46	-4.774	.000	904
Advise staff on school procedure changes	.35	.43	-3.754	.000	898
Advise staff on physical environment changes	.34	.47	-6.282	.000	896
Advise staff on problem solving	.38	.58	-9.531	.000	894
Mediate disputes among staff	.09	.20	-7.137	.000	896
Advise staff on avoiding violence/victimization	.34	.56	-10.987	.000	899
Advise staff on student behavior modification	.32	.47	-7.029	.000	896
Advise staff on student rule/sanction enforcement	.30	.41	-4.843	.000	893
Advise staff on law- related issues	.47	.74	-13.747	.000	904
<b>Advise/Mentoring with Groups</b>					
Advise parent-teacher organizations (e.g. PTOs, PTAs)	.39	.55	-7.795	.000	894
Advise police athletic/activities league (PALs)	.19	.18	.132	.895	857
Advise school athletic teams	.20	.30	-5.775	.000	862
Advise community outreach programs	.34	.47	-5.639	.000	860
<b>Advise/Mentoring with Students or Families</b>					
Mentor/provide guidance to individual students	.66	.73	-3.707	.000	877

TABLE 6.6. COMPARISON OF PERCEPTIONS OF POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS  
(continued)

	<b>Schools (mean)</b>	<b>Police (mean)</b>	<b>T-value</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Advise/Mentoring with Students or Families</b>					
Help students with court involvement or intervention	.48	.55	-3.975	.000	863
Work with parents to Help their children	.64	.77	-6.847	.000	866
Refer students to other sources of help	.55	.76	-10.808	.000	867
Refer parents to other sources of help	.58	.79	-11.005	.000	863
<b>Presence at School Events</b>					
Present at athletic events	.55	.71	-8.864	.000	880
Present for school social events (e.g. dances, open houses)	.61	.76	-8.247	.000	910
Present for school performances (e.g. school plays, concerts)	.50	.68	-9.287	.000	901
Chaperone school field trips	.21	.36	-8.523	.000	894
Present at award ceremonies	.45	.60	-7.534	.000	898

## Comparing Matched Responses of Police Teaching in Schools

In almost all cases, police perceptions of police teaching activities are significantly higher (at the .01 level) than school perceptions. The only exception is D.A.R.E., for which 53% of schools stated that police taught D.A.R.E. and 48% of police stated they taught D.A.R.E. This difference is significant at the .05 probability level. The least common class taught, according to both school and police responses, was firearm safety. These perceptions are still significantly different however, with only 12% of schools reporting that police taught firearm safety, and 22% of police reporting they taught such a class.

TABLE 6.7. COMPARISON OF MATCHED PERCEPTIONS OF POLICE TEACHING IN SCHOOLS

<b>Class</b>	<b>Schools (mean)</b>	<b>Police (mean)</b>	<b>T-value</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>N</b>
D.A.R.E.	.53	.48	2.545	.011	941
Other anti-drug classes	.35	.52	-8.551	.000	925
Alcohol awareness or DUI prevention	.31	.50	-9.427	.000	918
Anti-gang classes	.22	.34	-6.758	.000	902
Anti-bullying classes	.22	.34	-6.130	.000	913
Anti-hate classes	.14	.25	-6.468	.000	893
Law-related classes	.22	.44	-11.890	.000	912
Firearm safety classes	.12	.22	-6.466	.000	902
Other safety education classes	.26	.50	-12.322	.000	905
Crime awareness or prevention	.26	.46	-10.128	.000	908
Career training	.21	.34	-7.065	.000	911
Conflict resolution	.25	.37	-6.323	.000	915
Problem solving	.23	.36	-6.657	.000	758

## **Comparing Matched Responses of Police Meeting with Schools and Creating Safety Plans**

Table 6.8 compares matched perceptions of safety plans and meetings in schools. This table shows that in several instances, schools perceive police involvement as greater than what is reported by the police. For example, 95% of schools reported that police were involved with the school in creating a written plan to deal with bomb scares or comparable school-wide threats, whereas only 64% of police stated that they were involved in creating such a plan. School and law enforcement perceptions were similar in terms of law enforcement attendance at school safety meetings, law enforcement involvement in developing written plans for crisis situations, and law enforcement involvement in reviewing school discipline practices and procedures.

TABLE 6.8. COMPARISON OF MATCHED PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY PLANS AND MEETINGS IN SCHOOLS

	<b>Schools (mean)</b>	<b>Police (mean)</b>	<b>T-value</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Did you work together to:</b>					
Create a written plan to deal with Shootings	.85	.61	13.636	.000	990
Create written plan to deal with riots or large-scale fights	.69	.46	10.973	.000	981
Create written plan to deal with bomb scares or comparable school-wide threats (not including fire)	.95	.64	18.886	.000	999
Create written plan to deal with Hostages	.79	.55	12.264	.000	983
Have law enforcement attend school safety meetings	.50	.48	.988	.323	952
Have regularly scheduled meetings with school discuss general school issues	.34	.43	-4.625	.000	955
Have regularly scheduled meetings with school to discuss specific school incidents	.33	.41	-4.452	.000	943
Develop written plans for crisis Situations	.57	.59	-.962	.336	978
Review school discipline practices and procedures	.30	.27	1.695	.090	970
Develop programs to prevent or reduce violence	.32	.40	-3.896	.000	972
Conduct risk assessment of security of building or grounds	.45	.53	-4.399	.000	968
Develop a plan for increased levels of security	.40	.49	-4.973	.000	969

### **Comparison of Matched Reported Crimes**

In addition to comparing matched perceptions of police involvement in schools, we compared perceptions of school crime/disorder. We compared what schools reported to the police with what the police state was reported to them. As can be seen in Table 6.9, for the majority of activities, police perceptions of school crime were significantly higher than what school principals reported. There was also agreement in many cases including: homicides; threats of physical attack with weapon; robberies with weapon; robberies without weapon; possession of firearm/explosive device; possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs; and events in which students used firearms with intent to harm. A possible explanation for these differences is that schools and police agencies may have different ways of recording crimes at schools. Police may have records of crime/disorder by date, but perhaps not cross-referenced by schools, or perhaps only by school districts. It is also unknown how the majority of schools record such incidents. Further, while police keep records of incidents occurring any day of the week and any time of day, schools may only keep records of incidents that occur during school hours. Finally, it is likely that many schools and law enforcement agencies did not have complete records and therefore estimated the number of incidents.

TABLE 6.9. COMPARISON OF MATCHED PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME IN SCHOOLS

<b>Crime</b>	<b>Schools (mean)</b>	<b>Police (mean)</b>	<b>T-value</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>N</b>
Homicides	.00	.00	.00	1.0	752
Rapes**	.03	.09	-3.415	.001	744
Sexual batteries**	.08	.36	-7.067	.000	735
Physical fights with weapon*	.10	.68	-2.422	.016	683
Physical fights without weapon*	3.29	7.42	-2.016	.044	654
Threats of physical attack with weapon	.41	1.53	-1.648	.100	675
Threats of physical attack without weapon*	2.01	7.27	-2.548	.011	632
Robberies with weapon	.08	.07	.091	.928	719
Robberies without weapon	.23	.23	.049	.961	691
Thefts/Larcenies**	2.01	5.84	-7.171	.000	691
Possession of firearm/explosive device	.10	.68	-1.384	.167	740
Possession of knife or sharp object**	.76	1.53	-3.316	.001	716
Distribution of illegal drugs**	.56	1.39	-3.486	.001	726
Possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs	1.71	4.41	-1.865	.063	739
Sexual harassment**	.52	1.31	-2.569	.010	701
Vandalism**	1.40	4.07	-7.227	.000	714
Events in which students used firearms with intent to harm	.00	.01	-8.53	.394	844
Number of times school activities disrupted by bomb threats, etc.**	.25	.83	-5.506	.000	909

## SUMMARY

We compared the responses of school principals with those we received from law enforcement officials. In the aggregate, school principals reported lower levels and frequency of police involvement in schools in almost all activities than did law enforcement officials. Principals were more likely to report police involvement in safety planning and teaching of D.A.R.E. than were police officials, but police officials reported higher levels of involvement in



schools in almost every other category. When principal reports were matched with those from the law enforcement agency serving the school, the tendency for police to report significantly higher levels of involvement persisted.

Law enforcement respondents indicated more police involvement in all sorts of activities. It is likely that principals and law enforcement officials had different understandings of some of the issues. Police respondents indicated higher levels of crime and disorder in the schools than did principals, and reported more teaching activity by police. It may be that the police have better records of crime, or are counting events during non-school hours of which principals are not aware. Similarly, it is likely that police definitions of “teaching” are different from those of professional educators, or that appearances in particular classes are not known to school principals. Regardless of differences in terms of the absolute numbers and frequencies of law enforcement involvement in schools, the relative involvement of the police is similar across both groups of respondents. That is, both principals and law enforcement officials report the most common activities of police in schools to include patrol and responding to calls for service.

When asked about the role of school resource officers, law enforcement respondents and principals demonstrated different understandings. While over seventy percent of law enforcement officials reported schools would benefit from the presence of resource officers, fewer than half of the principals at schools without such officers felt the school would benefit. In addition, law enforcement respondents indicated a lack of funding as the reason for some schools not having resource officers while principals were more likely to report a lack of need for the services of school resource officers. For those schools served by resource officers, the most common explanations given for creating the positions were combinations of reasons. Principals were more likely to report the creation of school resource officers as a response to national

reports of school violence and the availability of grant funds. Law enforcement officials were most likely to report school resource officers were assigned in response to levels of disorder in the schools, as well as the availability of funding.

## CHAPTER 7: CORRELATES OF LAW ENFORCEMENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

This chapter describes the correlates of law enforcement involvement in schools. First, a series of bivariate relationships are presented that describe the significant relationships between several school/contextual characteristics and the *level* of law enforcement involvement in schools (defined as the number of activities in which the police are involved). Second, a series of bivariate relationships are presented that describe the significant relationships between school/contextual characteristics and the *frequency* (activities categorized as either frequent or infrequent/never) of law enforcement involvement in schools. The school variables examined include: school level, amount of school crime, percentage of minority students, school wealth (expenditure per student), percent of students eligible for free lunch, and school size (number of students). Contextual factors include: urbanism, region, and neighborhood crime level. Multivariate models are also presented in this chapter and include an examination of both level and frequency of law enforcement involvement. All data in this chapter are based on school principal responses.

### Level of Law Enforcement Involvement

We first examined the level of involvement for each type of activity by creating a score based on the total number of activities participated in within that category. For interval/ratio level independent variables such as school size, bivariate correlation coefficients are presented. For nominal/ordinal variables such as urbanism and school level, crosstabulations are presented. In order to create an ordinal level variable representing level of law enforcement involvement for these analyses, frequencies were then run on the distribution of these scores, and divided into approximately three equal parts based on the distribution. For example, a score for law

enforcement-related activities was calculated by totaling the number of law enforcement-related activities the school stated officers conducted (a total of 19 possible activities). These scores were then coded as low/none, moderate, or high. In this case, 34.2% of respondents reported between 0-6 activities (low/none), 33.4% reported between 7 and 13 activities (moderate), and 32.4% reported 14-19 activities (high).

It is also important to note that for some of the activities, the lower third of the distribution of scores (indicating a low/none score) refers exclusively to 0 activities being conducted within that category. This was due to the somewhat small number of activities in some categories, or many respondents reporting 0 activities within a category. Further, respondents were only included in a given analysis if they answered every question in that category (e.g. respondent answered every question within the law enforcement related activities section).

## **Urbanism**

Urbanism was a contextual factor that we thought might be correlated with the level of law enforcement involvement in schools. Given that location and community characteristics have been shown to be associated with school disorder (Gottfredson and Gottfredson, 1985) and violence (Cantor and Wright, 2001), we examined whether urbanism is related to the role of law enforcement in schools. It should also be noted that we received less than the expected response from urban schools, slightly less than the expected response from suburban schools, and greater than the expected response from rural schools (see Chapter 4 for exact differences).

Table 7.1 describes level of law enforcement involvement by school urbanism. There appears to be a significant relationship between level of law enforcement-related activities and urbanism. Urban school principals were more likely to report high levels of law enforcement-related activities than suburban and rural school principals. Rural schools (38.9%) reported low

levels police involvement, whereas urban (28.3%) and suburban (28.8%) schools were less likely to report low levels of law enforcement related activities.

TABLE 7.1. LEVEL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT-RELATED ACTIVITIES BY URBANISM (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Urban (%) (N=166)</b>	<b>Suburban (%) (N=288)</b>	<b>Rural (%) (N=545)</b>	<b>TOTAL (%) (N=999)</b>
<b>Level of Law Enforcement-Related Activities</b>				
Low/None (N=342)	28.3	28.8	38.9	34.2
Moderate (N=333)	36.7	39.2	29.2	33.3
High (N=324)	34.9	31.9	31.9	32.4
<b>TOTAL (%) (N=999)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*law enforcement related-activities and urbanism are significantly related at the .01 level  
chi-square=14.436

The level of police advising staff activities by urbanism is represented in Table 7.2.

Almost half of the rural school principals (47.3%) reported low levels of police advising/mentoring staff. Urban schools were most likely to report high levels of involvement (41.2%), followed by suburban schools (37.6%) and rural schools (29.3%).

TABLE 7.2. LEVEL OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING STAFF BY URBANISM (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Urban (%)</b> <b>(N=216)</b>	<b>Suburban (%)</b> <b>(N=372)</b>	<b>Rural (%)</b> <b>(N=645)</b>	<b>TOTAL (%)</b> <b>(N=1233)</b>
<b>Level of Police Advising/Mentoring Staff</b>				
Low/None (N=534)	38.9	39.0	47.3	43.3
Moderate (N=281)	19.9	23.4	23.4	22.8
High (N=418)	41.2	37.6	29.3	34.0
<b>TOTAL (%)</b> <b>(N=1233)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*level of police advising staff activities and urbanism are significantly related at the .01 level chi-square=14.847

As can be seen in Table 7.3, there are significant differences in level of police advising/mentoring with groups across different settings. While urban, suburban, and rural schools were all most likely to report low levels of this type of advising, there are significant differences. 32.9% of urban schools reported high levels of advising, with 31.4% of suburban schools and only 24.3% of rural schools reporting high levels of advising. The majority of rural schools (59.1%) reported low levels of police advising/mentoring with groups.

TABLE 7.3. LEVEL OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING GROUPS BY URBANISM (PERCENT)\*\*

	Urban (%) (N=213)	Suburban (%) (N=354)	Rural (%) (N=626)	TOTAL (%) (N=1193)
<b>Level of Police Advising/Mentoring Groups</b>				
Low/None (N=635)	48.4	45.8	59.1	53.2
Moderate (N=225)	18.8	22.9	16.6	18.9
High (N=333)	32.9	31.4	24.3	27.9
<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1193)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*advising/mentoring with groups and urbanism are significantly related at the .01 level chi-square=19.762

As seen with several other types of activities, urban school principals were more likely than suburban and rural school principals to report high levels of advising/mentoring with students or families by police (Table 7.4). While the differences between urban and suburban schools are not extreme, rural schools were more likely than other types of schools to have low levels of police advising/mentoring of students or families, and less likely to have moderate or high levels of this activity than other types of schools.

TABLE 7.4. LEVEL OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING STUDENTS OR FAMILIES BY URBANISM (PERCENT)\*

	Urban (%) (N=216)	Suburban (%) (N=359)	Rural (%) (N=614)	TOTAL (%) (N=1189)
<b>Level of Police Advising/Mentoring Students or Families</b>				
Low/None (N=357)	25.5	25.9	34.0	30.0
Moderate (N=386)	35.2	35.9	29.5	32.5
High (N=446)	39.4	38.2	36.5	37.5
<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1189)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*level of police advising/mentoring students or families and urbanism are significantly related at the .05 level  
chi-square=10.739



Level of police teaching appears to vary significantly by urbanism (Table 7.5). Urban schools were the most likely to have high levels of police teaching (44.3%), followed by suburban schools (42.2%), and rural (32.9%). Rural schools were the most likely to report moderate levels of teaching (39.6%), followed by suburban (35.1%), and urban (27.3%) schools. While urban schools were more likely than schools located in other regions to have low levels of teaching by police (28.4%), this was followed closely by rural schools (27.5%).

TABLE 7.5. LEVEL OF POLICE TEACHING IN SCHOOLS BY URBANISM (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Urban (%) (N=194)</b>	<b>Suburban (%) (N=348)</b>	<b>Rural (%) (N=593)</b>	<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1135)</b>
<b>Level of Police Teaching in Schools</b>				
Low/None (N=297)	28.4	22.7	27.5	26.2
Moderate (N=410)	27.3	35.1	39.6	36.1
High (N=428)	44.3	42.2	32.9	37.7
<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1135)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*level of police teaching and urbanism are significantly related at the .01 level  
chi-square=16.448

Level of police involvement in school safety plans and meetings also appears to be significantly related to urbanism (Table 7.6). Urban schools were more likely than schools in other regions to report high levels of police involvement in safety plans/meetings (40.8%). Rural schools were the most likely to report low levels of involvement (39.7%).

TABLE 7.6. LEVEL OF POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL SAFETY PLANS AND MEETINGS BY URBANISM (PERCENT)\*

	<b>Urban (%) (N=218)</b>	<b>Suburban (%) (N=369)</b>	<b>Rural (%) (N=635)</b>	<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1222)</b>	<b>Total N</b>
<b>Level of Police Involvement in Safety Plans and Meetings</b>					
Low/None (N=439)	30.3	32.8	39.7	35.9	439
Moderate (N=352)	28.9	30.4	27.9	28.8	352
High (N=431)	40.8	36.9	32.4	35.3	431
<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1222)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1222

level of police involvement in safety plans and meetings and urbanism are significantly related at the .05 level  
chi-square=9.555

## Region

In addition to urbanism, we were also interested in exploring whether there were differences in law enforcement involvement in schools by region of the country. It seemed possible that different regions of the country might have different amounts of police involvement in schools. As previously stated in Chapter 4, it should be noted that our respondents differ from the population of schools. Specifically, we had less than the expected response from schools located in the North and West, greater than the expected response from schools in the Midwest, and about the expected response from schools in the South (see Table 4.2 for exact differences).

Table 7.7 describes the level of law enforcement-related activities (e.g. patrol, making arrests) by region. Schools in the North were most likely to report having low levels of law enforcement-related activities (42.9%). High levels of law enforcement-related activities were most common in schools located in the South (38.2%), followed by schools in the West (35.7%), Midwest (29.7%), and North (19.8%).

TABLE 7.7. LEVEL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT-RELATED ACTIVITIES BY REGION (PERCENT)\*\*

	North (%) (N=126)	South (%) (N=330)	Midwest (%) (N=344)	West (%) (N=199)	TOTAL(%) (N=999)
<b>Level of Law Enforcement-Related Activities</b>					
Low/None (N=342)	42.9	31.5	34.9	32.2	34.2
Moderate (N=333)	37.3	30.3	35.5	32.2	33.3
High (N=324)	19.8	38.2	29.7	35.7	32.4
<b>TOTAL(%) (N=999)</b>	126	330	344	199	100.0

\*\*level of law-enforcement related activities and region are significantly related at the .01 level. chi-square=16.787

Level of police advising/mentoring students or families does appear to significantly differ by region (Table 7.8). Schools in the West were the mostly likely to have high levels of this activity (40.8%), followed by schools in the South (38.7%), Midwest (38.1%), and North (27.8%). Further, schools in the North had a tendency to report low levels of police advising/mentoring students or families (39.7%) compared to other regions.

TABLE 7.8. LEVEL OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING STUDENTS OR FAMILIES BY REGION (PERCENT)\*

	North (%) (N=151)	South (%) (N=411)	Midwest (%) (N=394)	West (%) (N=233)	TOTAL(%) (N=1189)
<b>Level of Police Advising/Mentoring Students or Families</b>					
Low/None (N=357)	39.7	29.9	30.7	22.7	30.0
Moderate (N=386)	32.5	31.4	31.2	36.5	32.5
High (N=446)	27.8	38.7	38.1	40.8	37.5
<b>TOTAL(%) (N=1189)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*level of police advising/mentoring with students or families and region are significantly related at the .05 level.

chi-square=15.039

Level of police presence at school events is another activity that appears to differ significantly by region (Table 7.9). Schools in the South were more likely than other regions to report high levels of police presence at events (35.1%), however, across most regions schools tended to report a moderate level of police presence at events.

TABLE 7.9. LEVEL OF POLICE PRESENCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS BY REGION (PERCENT)\*\*

	North (%) (N=157)	South (%) (N=405)	Midwest (%) (N=402)	West (%) (N=235)	TOTAL(%) (N=1199)
<b>Level of Police Presence at School Events</b>					
Low/None (N=331)	32.5	22.7	25.6	36.2	27.6
Moderate (N=493)	39.5	42.2	43.8	35.7	41.1
High (N=375)	28.0	35.1	30.6	28.1	31.3
<b>TOTAL(%) (N=1199)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*level of police presence at school events and region are significantly related at the .01 level. chi-square=17.453

There appear to be significant differences across regions in terms of level of police teaching activities (Table 7.10). Southern schools were the most likely to have high levels of police teaching activity (40.8%), followed by schools in the Midwest (37.3%), schools in the West (35.1%), and schools in the North (34.9%). Schools in the Midwest were most likely to report moderate levels of police teaching activity (42.3%), with only 20.5% of schools in the Midwest reporting low levels.

TABLE 7.10. LEVEL OF POLICE TEACHING IN SCHOOLS BY REGION (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>North (%) (N=149)</b>	<b>South (%) (N=380)</b>	<b>Midwest (%) (N=381)</b>	<b>West (%) (N=225)</b>	<b>TOTAL(%) (N=1135)</b>
<b>Level of Police Teaching in Schools</b>					
Low/None (N=297)	28.2	26.6	20.5	33.8	26.2
Moderate (N=410)	36.9	32.6	42.3	31.1	36.1
High (N=428)	34.9	40.8	37.3	35.1	37.7
<b>TOTAL(%) (N=1135)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*teaching and region are significantly related at the .01 level  
chi-square=18.491

## **School Level**

School level is another possible correlate of law enforcement involvement in schools. It was hypothesized that secondary schools would generally have greater levels of police involvement than elementary schools. Schools were classified as: elementary, middle, junior high, junior/senior high, high, and other (other typically refers to K-12 schools). As stated in Chapter 4, our sample of respondents differ from the population of schools in several ways, including a lower than expected response from elementary schools and a higher than expected response from high schools.

Table 7.11 describes the level of law enforcement-related activities by school level. There appears to be a significant relationship between these variables, with Junior High schools the most likely to have high levels of law enforcement-related activities (68.8%), followed by High schools (66.5%). Given the ages of the students, it is not surprising that most elementary schools (51.9%) reported low levels of law enforcement-related activities. While there were only 16 responses from junior high schools<sup>2</sup>, it is still interesting to note that none of them reported low levels of law enforcement-related activities.

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<sup>2</sup> Junior high schools comprise approximately 1% of all public schools.

TABLE 7.11. LEVEL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT-RELATED ACTIVITIES BY SCHOOL LEVEL  
(PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Elementary</b> (%) (N=563)	<b>Middle</b> (%) (N=159)	<b>Jr High</b> (%) (N=16)	<b>Jr/Sr High</b> (%) (N=43)	<b>High</b> (%) (N=191)	<b>Other</b> (%) (N=27)	<b>TOTAL</b> (%) (N=999)
<b>Level of Law Enforcement-Related Activities</b>							
Low/None (N=342)	51.9	12.6	0	18.6	7.3	29.6	34.2
Moderate (N=333)	34.6	35.8	31.3	39.5	26.2	33.3	33.3
High (N=324)	13.5	51.6	68.8	41.9	66.5	37.0	32.4
<b>TOTAL (%)</b> (N=999)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*level of law enforcement-related activities and school level are significantly related at the .01 level. chi-square=282.405



There also appear to be significant differences across school level when examining level of police advising/mentoring staff activities (Table 7.12). As seen with law enforcement-related activities, junior high schools (56.3%) and high schools (53.5%) were the most likely to report high levels of police advising/mentoring staff activities. Additionally, the majority of elementary schools (54.3%) reported low levels of this activity.

TABLE 7.12. LEVEL OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING STAFF BY SCHOOL LEVEL (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Elementary (%) (N=685)</b>	<b>Middle (%) (N=195)</b>	<b>Jr High (%) (N=16)</b>	<b>Jr/Sr High (%) (N=56)</b>	<b>High (%) (N=243)</b>	<b>Other (%) (N=38)</b>	<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1233)</b>
<b>Level of Police Advising/ Mentoring Staff</b>							
Low/None (N=534)	54.3	31.3	25.0	42.9	23.5	42.1	43.3
Moderate (N=281)	23.4	21.5	18.8	25.0	23.0	15.8	22.8
High (N=418)	22.3	47.2	56.3	32.1	53.5	42.1	33.9
<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1233)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*level of police advising/mentoring staff and school level are significantly related at the .01 level

chi-square=118.157

Note: these results should be interpreted with caution since one cell in the contingency table had an expected value less than 5.

Table 7.13 shows the significant relationship between level of police advising/mentoring groups and school level. Middle schools were the most likely to report high levels of this activity and elementary schools were the least likely to report high levels. Surprisingly, the majority of junior/senior high schools had low levels of police advising/mentoring groups, but this trend is not seen for high schools. Since our sample of responses for high schools is much larger than for junior/senior high schools, this may account for some of these findings.

TABLE 7.13. LEVEL OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING GROUPS BY SCHOOL LEVEL (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Elementary (%) (N=666)</b>	<b>Middle (%) (N=190)</b>	<b>Jr High (%) (N=18)</b>	<b>Jr/Sr High (%) (N=55)</b>	<b>High (%) (N=230)</b>	<b>Other (%) (N=34)</b>	<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1193)</b>
<b>Level of Police Advising/ Mentoring Groups</b>							
Low/None (N=635)	62.0	37.9	27.8	63.6	37.4	70.6	53.2
Moderate (N=225)	19.5	17.4	38.9	9.1	20.9	5.9	18.9
High (N=333)	18.5	44.7	33.3	27.3	41.7	23.5	27.9
<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1193)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*level of police advising/mentoring groups and school level are significantly related at the .01 level. Note: 1 cell had less than the expected count of 5.  
chi-square=101.370

School level also appears to be an important correlate for level of police advising/mentoring students or families (Table 7.14). The majority of junior high schools (73.7%), high schools (68%), and middle schools (54.9%) reported high levels of police advising/mentoring students or families, while only 20.9% of elementary schools reported high levels of this activity.

TABLE 7.14. LEVEL OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING STUDENTS OR FAMILIES BY SCHOOL LEVEL (PERCENT)\*\*

	Elementary (%) (N=670)	Middle (%) (N=184)	Jr High (%) (N=19)	Jr/Sr High (%) (N=51)	High (%) (N=228)	Other (%) (N=37)	TOTAL (%) (N=1189)
<b>Level of Police Advising/ Mentoring Students or Families</b>							
Low/None (N=357)	39.9	16.3	10.5	25.5	16.2	21.6	30.0
Moderate (N=386)	39.3	28.8	15.8	29.4	15.8	43.2	32.5
High (N=446)	20.9	54.9	73.7	45.1	68.0	35.1	37.5
<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1189)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*level of police advising/mentoring students or families and school level are significantly related at the .01 level.  
chi-square=212.092

Level of presence at school events also appears to be significantly related to school level (Table 7.15). Junior high schools (70.6%) were more likely than other types of schools to report high levels of police presence at school events. Only 18.7% of elementary schools and 19.4% of schools in the “other” category reported high levels of police presence at school events.

TABLE 7.15. LEVEL OF POLICE PRESENCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS BY SCHOOL LEVEL (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Elementary (%) (N=664)</b>	<b>Middle (%) (N=194)</b>	<b>Jr High (%) (N=17)</b>	<b>Jr/Sr High (%) (N=54)</b>	<b>High (%) (N=234)</b>	<b>Other (%) (N=36)</b>	<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1199)</b>
<b>Level of Police Presence at School Events</b>							
Low/None (N=331)	40.5	12.9	5.9	11.1	7.7	33.3	27.6
Moderate (N=493)	40.8	42.3	23.5	55.6	38.0	47.2	41.1
High (N=375)	18.7	44.8	70.6	33.3	54.3	19.4	31.3
<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1199)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*level of police advising/mentoring groups and school level are significantly related at the .01 level. Note: 1 cell had less than the expected count of 5.  
chi-square=197.307

Table 7.16 shows the level of police teaching in schools by school level. As has been seen with many of police activities in school, junior high schools were more likely than other types of schools to report high levels of this activity. The majority of junior high schools (55.6%) and high schools (52.3%) reported high levels of police teaching

TABLE 7.16. LEVEL OF POLICE TEACHING IN SCHOOLS BY SCHOOL LEVEL (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Elementary</b> (%) (N=637)	<b>Middle</b> (%) (N=184)	<b>Jr High</b> (%) (N=18)	<b>Jr/Sr</b> <b>High</b> (%) (N=48)	<b>High</b> (%) (N=216)	<b>Other</b> (%) (N=32)	<b>TOTAL</b> (%) (N=1135)
<b>Level of Police Presence at School Events</b>							
Low/None (N=297)	24.0	22.8	27.8	29.2	31.9	43.8	26.2
Moderate (N=410)	45.8	30.4	16.7	39.6	15.7	18.8	36.1
High (N=428)	30.1	46.7	55.6	31.3	52.3	37.5	37.7
<b>TOTAL (%)</b> (N=1135)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*level of police advising/mentoring groups and school level are significantly related at the .01 level. Note: 1 cell had less than the expected count of 5.  
chi-square=84.409

Level of police involvement appears to vary significantly by school level (Table 7.17). Junior high schools (66.7%) were the most likely of all schools to report high levels of police presence at events followed by high schools (55.1%). Elementary schools (45.6%), jr/sr high schools (44.1%), and “other” schools (40.5) were the most likely to report low levels of this activity.

TABLE 7.17. LEVEL OF POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL SAFETY PLANS AND MEETINGS BY SCHOOL LEVEL (PERCENT)\*\*

	Elementary (%) (N=680)	Middle (%) (N=186)	Jr High (%) (N=21)	Jr/Sr High (%) (N=59)	High (%) (N=234)	Other (%) (N=42)	TOTAL (%) (N=1222)
<b>Level of Police Presence at School Events</b>							
Low/None (N=439)	45.6	23.1	9.5	44.1	17.5	40.5	35.9
Moderate (N=352)	30.0	27.4	23.8	32.2	27.4	21.4	28.8
High (N=431)	24.4	49.5	66.7	23.7	55.1	38.1	35.3
<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1222)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*level of police advising/mentoring groups and school level are significantly related at the .01 level.  
chi-square=123.187

TABLE 7.18. PRESENCE OF SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER BY SCHOOL LEVEL

	<b>Elementary (%) (N=736)</b>	<b>Middle (%) (N=204)</b>	<b>Jr High (%) (N=21)</b>	<b>Jr/Sr High (%) (N=59)</b>	<b>High (%) (N=259)</b>	<b>Other (%) (N=41)</b>	<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1320)</b>
<b>Whether school had school resource officer</b>							
Yes (N=631)	43.9	52.9	66.7	20.3	59.8	46.3	47.8
N (N=689)	56.1	47.1	33.3	79.7	40.2	53.7	52.2
<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1320)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

## **Neighborhood Crime Level**

One contextual factor that we thought might be an important correlate of the level of law enforcement involvement in schools was the crime level in the neighborhood in which the school was located. The school survey included a question about whether the respondent would classify the neighborhood crime level as low, moderate, high, or mixed. Given the ambiguity of “mixed”, this was combined with moderate. It seems reasonable to suggest that if crime were perceived as generally low or high, that respondents would probably select one of these two options. Mixed was therefore combined with moderate, since these responses seem to suggest that the crime level is perceived as neither high nor low.



Table 7.19 shows the level of law enforcement-related activities by neighborhood crime level. It appears that level of law enforcement-related activities differs significantly by neighborhood crime level. Schools located in neighborhoods that are perceived to be high crime areas were the most likely to have high levels of law enforcement-related activities (43.8%), schools in moderate crime neighborhoods were the most likely to report moderate levels (40.0%), and schools in low crime neighborhoods were the most likely to report low/none of this activity.

TABLE 7.19. LEVEL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT-RELATED ACTIVITIES BY NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME LEVEL (PERCENT)\*

	<b>Low Crime (%) (N=779)</b>	<b>Moderate Crime (%) (N=175)</b>	<b>High Crime (%) (N=32)</b>	<b>TOTAL (%) (N=986)</b>
<b>Level of Law Enforcement-Related Activities</b>				
Low/None (N=336)	36.5	25.7	21.9	34.1
Moderate (N=329)	31.8	40.0	34.4	33.4
High (N=321)	31.7	34.3	43.8	32.5
<b>TOTAL (%) (N=986)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*law enforcement related-activities and neighborhood crime level are significantly related at the .05 level  
chi-square=10.714

Table 7.20 shows the level of police advising/mentoring of staff by level of neighborhood crime. Almost half of the schools located in high crime neighborhoods (47.7%) had high levels of police advising/mentoring staff. Similarly, almost half (46%) of schools in low crime areas had low levels of this activity. Further, among schools located in moderate crime neighborhoods the most common response (41.2%) was high levels of police advising/mentoring staff.

TABLE 7.20. LEVEL OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING STAFF BY NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME LEVEL (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Low Crime (%) (N=927)</b>	<b>Moderate Crime (%) (N=245)</b>	<b>High Crime (%) (N=44)</b>	<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1216)</b>
<b>Level of Police Advising/Mentoring Staff</b>				
Low/None (N=529)	46.0	36.3	31.8	43.5
Moderate (N=275)	22.8	22.4	20.5	22.6
High (N=412)	31.3	41.2	47.7	33.9
<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1216)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*level of police advising/mentoring staff and neighborhood crime level are significantly related at the .01 level  
chi-square=13.900

Results regarding the bivariate relationship between level of police advising/mentoring groups and neighborhood crime level are described in Table 7.21. Schools located in high crime areas appear to be the most likely to have high levels of police advising/mentoring groups. The majority of schools in low crime neighborhoods (55.7%) reported low levels of this activity.

TABLE 7.21. LEVEL OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING GROUPS BY NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME LEVEL (PERCENT)\*

	<b>Low Crime (%) (N=909)</b>	<b>Moderate Crime (%) (N=227)</b>	<b>High Crime (%) (N=43)</b>	<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1179)</b>
<b>Level of Police Advising/Mentoring Groups</b>				
Low/None (N=628)	55.7	45.8	41.9	53.3
Moderate (N=222)	17.9	22.9	16.3	18.8
High (N=329)	26.4	31.3	41.9	27.9
<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1179)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*level of police advising/mentoring groups and neighborhood crime level are significantly related at the .05 level  
chi-square=11.603

Table 7.22 illustrates the relationship between level of police advising/mentoring students or families by neighborhood crime level. Interestingly, the most common response across crime categories was a high level of police advising/mentoring students or families. The differences among these groups, however, were significant. Almost half of schools in high crime neighborhoods reported high levels of this activity, while schools in low crime neighborhoods tended to be fairly evenly divided among levels of this activity.

TABLE 7.22. LEVEL OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING STUDENTS OR FAMILIES BY NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME LEVEL (PERCENT)\*

	<b>Low Crime (%) (N=901)</b>	<b>Moderate Crime (%) (N=230)</b>	<b>High Crime (%) (N=44)</b>	<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1175)</b>
<b>Level of Police Advising/Mentoring Students or Families</b>				
Low/None (N=628)	32.5	19.6	29.5	29.9
Moderate (N=222)	32.0	37.4	22.7	32.7
High (N=329)	35.5	43.0	47.7	37.4
<b>TOTAL (%) (N=1175)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*level of police advising/mentoring groups and neighborhood crime level are significantly related at the .01 level  
chi-square=17.394

Table 7.23 presents the bivariate correlations between level of law enforcement involvement and total number of students, percentage of minority students, percent of students eligible for free lunch, expenditure per student/year, and total number of school crimes. Total number of students was significantly and positively correlated with every group of activities. Percentage of minority students was significantly and positively correlated with most of the activities, with the exception of presence at events and safety plans/meetings. Percent of students eligible for free lunch was only significantly (and negatively) correlated with safety plans/meetings. Surprisingly, expenditure per student/year was not significantly correlated with any of the activities. Total number of school crimes was significantly and positively associated with every type of activity.

TABLE 7.23. BIVARIATE CORRELATIONS-LEVEL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT INVOLVEMENT AND INTERVAL/RATIO LEVEL VARIABLES

	<b>Total Number of Students</b>	<b>Percentage of Minority Students</b>	<b>Percentage of Students Eligible for Free Lunch</b>	<b>Expenditure per student/year</b>	<b>Total number of school crimes</b>
<b>Total Number of Law-Enforcement-Related Activities</b>					
Pearson Correlation	.341**	.085**	-.009	-.017	.405**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.009	.797	.650	.000
N	995	957	822	742	754
<b>Total Number of Advice/Mentoring Activities with Staff</b>					
Pearson Correlation	.268**	.117**	.006	.008	.320**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.839	.808	.000
N	1228	1180	1021	899	907
<b>Total Number of Advice/Mentoring Activities with Groups</b>					
Pearson Correlation	.241**	.089**	-.013	-.007	.215**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.003	.678	.838	.000
N	1187	1137	984	863	885
<b>Total Number of Advice/Mentoring Activities with Students or Families</b>					
Pearson Correlation	.300**	.081**	-.036	-.030	.320**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.006	.254	.381	.000
N	1183	1135	981	864	882

TABLE 7.23. BIVARIATE CORRELATIONS-INTERVAL/RATIO LEVEL VARIABLES AND LEVEL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT INVOLVEMENT (CONTINUED)

	<b>Total Number of Students</b>	<b>Percentage of Minority Students</b>	<b>Percentage of Students Eligible for Free Lunch</b>	<b>Expenditure per year per student</b>	<b>Total number of school crimes</b>
<b>Total Number of Presence at Events</b>					
Pearson Correlation	.264**	.039	-.057	.019	.220**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.182	.075	.584	.000
N	1193	1151	992	866	884
<b>Total Number of Teaching Activities</b>					
Pearson Correlation	.301**	.120**	.007	-.020	.314**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.828	.573	.000
N	1131	1086	940	826	838
<b>Total Number of Safety Plans/Meeting Activities</b>					
Pearson Correlation	.312**	.000	-.098**	.056	.236**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.992	.002	.096	.000
N	1218	1170	1013	893	905
<b>Total Level of Police Involvement in Schools</b>					
Pearson Correlation	.393**	.094*	-.046	-.007	.437**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.017	.278	.879	.000
N	679	653	557	515	531

Table 7.24 shows results from the linear regression analysis of school/contextual factors and the level of law enforcement-related activities in schools<sup>1</sup>. Since region and urbanism are nominal level variables, it should be noted how they were coded so that the results may be interpreted correctly (region: 1=North, 2=South, 3=Midwest and 4=West; urbanism: 1=urban, 2=suburban, and 3=rural). While it is perhaps less than ideal to include nominal and ordinal level variables in a regression equation, given the robust nature of multiple regression and that the dependent variable was at the ratio level, it seemed worthwhile to explore these relationships. This table shows that the level of law enforcement-related activities is significantly and positively related to the number of students, school level, and school crime. In other words, large schools, secondary schools, and high crime schools are more likely to have police involvement in a large number of law enforcement-related activities than other types of schools. This model also explains much of the variation in law enforcement-related involvement (34%), though it is unknown what other variables would help to explain the rest of the variation in this activity.

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<sup>1</sup> The diagnostics indicated multicollinearity and percent minority students should be removed from all models predicting level of law enforcement involvement. For this model, percent free-lunch students becomes statistically significant once percent minority students is removed.



TABLE 7.24 LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING LEVEL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT-RELATED ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS

<b>Independent Variable</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b><i>t</i></b>	<b>Significance</b>
Expenditure per student/year	-.000064	.000	-.056	-1.436	.152
Total number of students**	.002	.001	.150	30.34	.003
Region	.145	.242	.023	.600	.549
Urbanism	.476	.384	.058	1.241	.215
School Level**	1.388	.152	.394	9.109	.000
School Crime**	.035	.008	.198	4.151	.000
Percent Minority Students	.952	1.254	.044	.759	.448
Neighborhood Crime	-.349	.546	-.029	-.640	.523
Percent Free-Lunch Students	2.315	1.423	.085	1.627	.104

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01

R<sup>2</sup>=.346

Results from the linear regression analysis predicting level of police advising staff in schools is presented in Table 7.25. When controlling for other variables in the model, the only two statistically significant variables are school level and school crime. Secondary schools with higher levels of crime are more likely to have higher levels of police advising staff than other types of schools. This equation only explains 17% of the variation in the level of police involvement in this activity.

TABLE 7.25 LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING LEVEL OF POLICE ADVISING STAFF IN SCHOOLS

Independent Variable	Standard		Beta	t	Significance
	B	Error			
Expenditure per student/year	.0000045	.000	-.008	-.205	.838
Total number of students	.000	.000	.060	1.185	.237
Region	-.240	.134	-.072	-1.786	.075
Urbanism	-.042	.220	-.009	-.190	.849
School Level**	.369	.082	.196	4.484	.000
School Crime**	.017	.004	.210	4.285	.000
Percent Minority Students	1.321	.717	.115	1.843	.066
Neighborhood Crime	.067	.308	.010	.218	.827
Percent Free-Lunch Students	-.271	.780	-.019	-.348	.728

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01

R<sup>2</sup>=.173

In Table 7.26, results from the regression analysis predicting level of police advising/mentoring groups are presented. The level of police involvement in this activity is positively and significantly related to the total number of students and school level, and negatively and significantly related to region. Level of advising/mentoring groups had not been significantly related to region in the bivariate analysis, but becomes significant in the multivariate model. This can be interpreted as a higher percentage of schools in the North reported high levels of police involvement in this activity than other regions. This model only explains 11% of the variation in this activity, so there are clearly other variables that should be explored in the future as possible correlates of police advising/mentoring groups in schools.

TABLE 7.26 LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING LEVEL OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING GROUPS IN SCHOOLS

Independent Variable	Standard		Beta	t	Significance
	B	Error			
Expenditure per student/year	-.000010	.000	-.044	-1.037	.300
Total number of students**	.001	.000	.151	2.808	.005
Region*	-.120	.061	-.083	-1.963	.050
Urbanism	-.033	.096	-.018	-.344	.731
School Level**	.120	.037	.151	3.253	.001
School Crime	.003	.002	.078	1.507	.132
Percent Minority Students	.311	.317	.063	.979	.328
Neighborhood Crime	.067	.138	.024	.482	.630
Percent Free-Lunch Students	-.153	.347	-.025	-.441	.659

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01

R<sup>2</sup>=.115

Results from the linear regression analysis predicting level of police advising/mentoring of students or families are presented below in Table 7.27. Total number of students, school level, and school crime are significant correlates of the level of advising/mentoring students or families. This model explains 20% of the variation in the level of this activity.

TABLE 7.27 LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING LEVEL OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING STUDENTS OR FAMILIES IN SCHOOLS

Independent Variable	Standard		Beta	t	Significance
	B	Error			
Expenditure per student/year	-.000010	.000	-.027	-.680	.497
Total number of students**	.001	.000	.139	2.726	.007
Region	.068	.092	.030	.738	.461
Urbanism	.019	.147	.006	.127	.899
School Level**	.279	.057	.216	4.901	.000
School Crime**	.012	.003	.182	3.688	.000
Percent Minority Students	.666	.488	.084	1.367	.172
Neighborhood Crime	.171	.217	.037	.790	.430
Percent Free-Lunch Students	-.114	.531	-.012	-.216	.829

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01

R<sup>2</sup>=.200

Results from the linear regression analysis predicting level of police presence at school events are presented below in Table 7.28. Total number of students, region, and school level are all significantly related to police presence at school events. This model explains 20% of the variation in police presence at school events.

TABLE 7.28 LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING LEVEL OF POLICE PRESENCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS

Independent Variable	Standard		Beta	t	Significance
	B	Error			
Expenditure per student/year	-.000005	.000	-.018	-.437	.662
Total number of students**	.001	.000	.200	4.083	.000
Region**	-.247	.077	-.129	-3.220	.001
Urbanism	.227	.124	.090	1.829	.068
School Level**	.318	.046	.302	6.898	.000
School Crime	.002	.002	.047	1.033	.302
Percent Minority Students	.235	.401	.036	.586	.558
Neighborhood Crime	-.091	.178	-.024	-.514	.608
Percent Free-Lunch Students	.243	.443	.030	.550	.582

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01

R<sup>2</sup>=.200

Table 7.29 shows the results for the linear regression analysis predicting level of police teaching in schools. The level of teaching is significantly related to region and school crime (positively). Schools in the West are less likely than schools in other regions to have police teach in their schools, and schools with higher crime are more likely to have police teaching classes. This model explains 12% of the variation in police teaching levels.

TABLE 7.29 LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING LEVEL OF POLICE TEACHING IN SCHOOLS

Independent Variable	Standard		Beta	t	Significance
	B	Error			
Expenditure per student/year	-.000001	.000	-.003	-.062	.951
Total number of students	.001	.000	.059	1.086	.278
Region*	-.365	.158	-.100	-2.318	.021
Urbanism	-.165	.252	-.034	-.655	.512
School Level	.174	.096	.084	1.802	.072
School Crime**	.020	.005	.229	4.327	.000
Percent Minority Students	.702	.836	.055	.840	.401
Neighborhood Crime	-.103	.356	-.014	-.291	.771
Percent Free-Lunch Students	.220	.926	.014	.238	.812

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01

R<sup>2</sup>=.126

In Table 7.30 results from the regression analysis of predicting level of police involvement in safety plans/meetings with schools are presented. Level of police involvement in safety plans/meetings is significantly and positively related at the .01 probability level to total number of students and school level. Additionally, region is significantly related to the level of this activity at the .05 probability level. This model explains 18% of the variation in the level of police involvement in safety plans/meetings with schools.

TABLE 7.30 LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING LEVEL OF POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN SAFETY PLANS/MEETINGS WITH SCHOOLS

Independent Variable	Standard		Beta	t	Significance
	B	Error			
Expenditure per student/year	.000010	.000	.018	.443	.658
Total number of students**	.002	.000	.221	4.589	.000
Region*	-.339	.145	-.094	-2.343	.020
Urbanism	.143	.229	.030	.625	.532
School Level**	.458	.085	.229	5.360	.000
School Crime	.005	.003	.066	1.424	.155
Percent Minority Students	.164	.743	.014	.221	.825
Neighborhood Crime	.413	.329	.058	1.254	.210
Percent Free-Lunch Students	-.802	.831	-.052	-.965	.335

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01

R<sup>2</sup>=.182

Table 7.31 presents the results from the regression analysis predicting total level of police involvement in schools. Total involvement refers to a sum of all of the possible activities in which police may be involved. The three significant variables in this model are presence of an SRO, school level, and school crime. Schools that have a SRO, at the secondary level, and have higher levels of school crime were the most likely to have higher levels of total police involvement. This model explains 42% of the variation of level of total police involvement in schools. Region approached significance (greater involvement in schools in the South).

TABLE 31. LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING TOTAL LEVEL OF POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

Independent Variable	Standard		Beta	t	Significance
	B	Error			
Expenditure per student/year	.000	.000	-.001	-.020	.984
Total number of students	.003	.002	.074	1.227	.221
Region	-1.460	.772	-.084	-1.891	.060
Urbanism	-1.213	1.226	-.052	-.990	.323
School Level**	2.631	.468	.279	5.625	.000
School Crime**	.095	.025	.222	3.858	.000
Percent Minority Students	1.437	3.946	.024	.364	.716
Neighborhood Crime	-1.820	1.664	-.055	-1.093	.275
Percent Free-Lunch Students	1.130	4.289	.015	.263	.792
Presence of SRO**	11.400	1.510	.364	7.550	.000

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01

R<sup>2</sup>=.425

Note: The presence of an SRO is significantly and positively related to total level of police involvement.

#### Frequency of Law Enforcement Involvement

In addition to examining the level of police involvement in schools (measured as the number of activities in which police were engaged), we also wanted to better understand the



frequency of police involvement in these activities. The survey included questions about the frequency of involvement for all of the activities previously mentioned in this report with the exceptions of teaching and safety plans/meetings with schools. As described in Chapter 4, respondents were asked to report whether a given activity was performed by the police on a daily basis, 1-4 times per week, 1-3 times per month, 1-3 times per semester, once per year, or never. For analyses involving nominal/ordinal level independent variables, we dichotomized these responses into frequent (includes daily, 1-4 times per week, and 1-3 times per month) and infrequent/never (1-3 times per semester, once per year, and never). Using this categorization allowed us to create a measure of frequency of activities within categories. For example, if a school reported that police performed more than half of the activities within advising/mentoring activities with staff on a frequent basis, then that school was categorized as having frequent participation by police for that group of activities. For analyses involving interval/ratio level independent variables, we simply used a score of the number of frequent activities within each category as the dependent variable.

## Urbanism

Table 7.32 describes the frequency of law enforcement-related activities by urbanism.

Urban schools were the more likely than other types of schools to report these types of activities as frequent. While law enforcement-related activities tended to be infrequent across categories of urbanism, suburban (83.7%) and rural (83.3%) schools were more likely than urban (73.5%) to report infrequent levels of this activity.

TABLE 7.32. FREQUENCY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT-RELATED ACTIVITIES BY URBANISM (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Urban (%) (N=166)</b>	<b>Suburban (%) (N=288)</b>	<b>Rural (%) (N=545)</b>	<b>Total (%) (N=999)</b>
<b>Frequency of Law Enforcement-Related Activities</b>				
Infrequent/Never (N=817)	73.5	83.7	83.3	81.8
<b>Frequent (N=182)</b>	26.5	16.3	16.7	18.2
<b>Total (%) (N=999)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*frequency of law enforcement related-activities and urbanism are significantly related at the .01 level  
chi-square=9.196

Table 7.33 describes the frequency of police advising/mentoring by urbanism. It appears that the frequency of this activity is significantly related to urbanism. 13.4% of urban schools reported that police advising/mentoring staff was a frequent event, while only 5.6% of suburban schools and 2.5% of rural schools reported that police frequently conducted this activity.

TABLE 7.33. FREQUENCY OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING STAFF BY URBANISM (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Urban (%) (N=216)</b>	<b>Suburban (%) (N=372)</b>	<b>Rural (%) (N=645)</b>	<b>Total (%) (N=1233)</b>
<b>Frequency of Police Advising/Mentoring Staff</b>				
Infrequent/Never (N=1167)	86.6	94.4	97.5	94.6
<b>Frequent (N=66)</b>	13.4	5.6	2.5	5.4
<b>Total (%) (N=1233)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*frequency of police advising/mentoring staff and urbanism are significantly related at the .01 level  
chi-square=38.353

## Region

In Table 7.34 the bivariate relationship between frequency of law enforcement-related activities and region is described. While the majority of schools in all regions tended to report an infrequent amount of this type of activity in their schools, schools located in the North were more likely than schools in other regions to report infrequent law enforcement-related activities. Further, schools in the South were the most likely (25.2%) to report that law enforcement-related activities were frequent.

TABLE 7.34. FREQUENCY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT-RELATED ACTIVITIES BY REGION (PERCENT)\*\*

	North (%) (N=126)	South (%) (N=330)	Midwest (%) (N=344)	West (%) (N=199)	Total (%) (N=999)
<b>Frequency of Law Enforcement-Related Activities</b>					
Infrequent/Never (N=817)	92.9	74.8	85.8	79.4	81.8
<b>Frequent</b> (N=182)	7.1	25.2	14.2	20.6	18.2
<b>Total (%)</b> (N=999)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*frequency of law enforcement-related activities and region are significantly related at the .01 level  
chi-square=25.427

Table 7.35 shows the relationship between frequency of police advising/mentoring staff and region. There appear to be some significant differences in this activity by region. For example, schools in the South were more likely than schools in other regions to report that police advising/mentoring staff was a frequent activity.

TABLE 7.35. FREQUENCY OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING STAFF BY REGION (PERCENT)\*

	<b>North (%) (N=165)</b>	<b>South (%) (N=411)</b>	<b>Midwest (%) (N=411)</b>	<b>West (%) (N=246)</b>	<b>Total (%) (N=1233)</b>
<b>Frequency of Police Advising/Mentoring Staff</b>					
Infrequent/Never (N=1167)	94.5	92.0	96.1	96.7	94.6
<b>Frequent (N=66)</b>	5.5	8.0	3.9	3.3	5.4
<b>Total (%) (N=1233)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*frequency of police advising/mentoring staff and region are significantly related at the .05 level chi-square=9.686

As seen below in Table 7.36, there appears to be a significant relationship between the frequency of police presence at school events and region. As previously seen with other activities, schools in the South appear more likely than schools in other regions to report that police presence at school events was frequent. Schools located in the West were the most likely of all regions to report that this activity was infrequent.

TABLE 7.36. FREQUENCY OF PRESENCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS BY REGION (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>North (%) (N=157)</b>	<b>South (%) (N=405)</b>	<b>Midwest (%) (N=402)</b>	<b>West (%) (N=235)</b>	<b>Total (%) (N=1199)</b>
<b>Frequency of Presence at School Events</b>					
Infrequent/Never (N=967)	84.1	74.6	81.8	86.8	80.7
<b>Frequent (N=232)</b>	15.9	25.4	18.2	13.2	19.3
<b>Total (%) (N=1199)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*frequency of presence at school events and region are significantly related at the .01 level  
chi-square=16.858

## School Level

There appears to be a significant relationship between frequency of law enforcement-related activities and school level (Table 7.37). The majority of junior high schools (62.5%) reported that this activity was frequent, while only 47.1% of high schools, and 25.2% of middle schools reported that law enforcement-related activities were frequent. Elementary schools (94.8%) were the most likely to report law enforcement-related activities as infrequent.

TABLE 7.37. FREQUENCY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT-RELATED ACTIVITIES BY SCHOOL LEVEL (PERCENT)\*\*

	Elementary (%) (N=563)	Middle (%) (N=159)	Jr High (%) (N=16)	Jr/Sr High (%) (N=43)	High (%) (N=191)	Other (%) (N=27)	Total (%) (N=999)
<b>Frequency of Law Enforcement-Related Activities</b>							
Infrequent/Never (N=817)	94.8	74.8	37.5	81.4	52.9	81.5	81.8
Frequent (N=182)	5.2	25.2	62.5	18.6	47.1	18.5	18.2
<b>Total (%) (N=999)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*frequency of law enforcement-related activities and school level are significantly related at the .01 level. Note: 2 cells have an expected count of less than 5.  
chi-square=197.811

The frequency of advising/mentoring staff also appears to be significantly related to school level (Table 7.38). Middle schools (10.8%), high schools (10.3%), and “other” schools (10.5%) were the most likely to report that this activity was frequent. The overwhelming majority of all types of schools, however, reported that this type of activity was infrequent.

TABLE 7.38. FREQUENCY OF ADVISING/MENTORING STAFF BY SCHOOL LEVEL (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Elementary</b> (%) (N=685)	<b>Middle</b> (%) (N=195)	<b>Jr High</b> (%) (N=16)	<b>Jr/Sr High</b> (%) (N=56)	<b>High</b> (%) (N=243)	<b>Other</b> (%) (N=38)	<b>Total</b> (%) (N=1233)
<b>Frequency of Advising/Mentoring Staff</b>							
Infrequent/Never (N=1167)	98.0	89.2	93.8	98.2	89.7	89.5	94.6
Frequent (N=66)	2.0	10.8	6.3	1.8	10.3	10.5	5.4
<b>Total (%) (N=1233)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*frequency of advising/mentoring staff and school level are significantly related at the .01 level.  
 Note: 3 cells have an expected count of less than 5.  
 chi-square=41.219



Table 7.39 describes the relationship between frequency of advising/mentoring students or families by school level. Junior high schools (73.7%) were the most likely to report that police frequently advised/mentored students or families. This activity was most infrequent among elementary schools.

TABLE 7.39. FREQUENCY OF ADVISING/MENTORING STUDENTS OR FAMILIES BY SCHOOL LEVEL (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Elementary</b> (%) (N=670)	<b>Middle</b> (%) (N=184)	<b>Jr High</b> (%) (N=19)	<b>Jr/Sr High</b> (%) (N=51)	<b>High</b> (%) (N=228)	<b>Other</b> (%) (N=37)	<b>Total</b> (%) (N=1189)
<b>Frequency of Advising/Mentoring Students or Families</b>							
Infrequent/Never (N=941)	92.4	69.0	26.3	92.2	50.9	73.0	79.1
Frequent (N=248)	7.6	31.0	73.7	7.8	49.1	27.0	20.9
<b>Total (%) (N=1189)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*frequency of advising/mentoring students or families and school level are significantly related at the .01 level. Note: 1 cell has an expected count of less than 5.  
chi-square=231.181

The relationship between frequency of presence at school events and school level is described below in Table 7.40. Junior high schools were the most likely to report that police presence at school events was frequent. The overwhelming majority of elementary schools (90.5%) reported that this police activity was infrequent at their schools.

TABLE 7.40. FREQUENCY OF PRESENCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS BY SCHOOL LEVEL (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Elementary</b> (%) (N=664)	<b>Middle</b> (%) (N=194)	<b>Jr High</b> (%) (N=17)	<b>Jr/Sr High</b> (%) (N=54)	<b>High</b> (%) (N=234)	<b>Other</b> (%) (N=36)	<b>Total</b> (%) (N=1199)
<b>Frequency Presence at School Events</b>							
Infrequent/Never (N=967)	90.5	74.7	47.1	81.5	60.7	75.0	80.7
Frequent (N=232)	9.5	25.3	52.9	18.5	39.3	25.0	19.3
<b>Total (%) (N=1199)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*frequency of presence at school events and school level are significantly related at the .01 level. Note: 1 cell has an expected count of less than 5.  
chi-square=118.551

## Neighborhood Crime Level

Frequency of law enforcement-related activities appears to be related to neighborhood crime level (Table 7.41). Schools in high crime areas were more likely than schools in lower crime areas to report more frequent law enforcement-related activities. Similarly, frequent law enforcement-related activities were least common among schools in low crime neighborhoods.

TABLE 7.41. FREQUENCY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT-RELATED ACTIVITIES BY NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME LEVEL (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Low Crime (%) (N=779)</b>	<b>Moderate/Mixed Crime (%) (N=175)</b>	<b>High Crime (%) (N=32)</b>	<b>Total (%) (N=986)</b>
<b>Frequency of Law Enforcement-Related Activities</b>				
Infrequent/Never (N=807)	84.5	73.1	65.6	81.8
Frequent (N=179)	15.5	26.9	34.4	18.2
<b>Total (%) (N=986)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*frequency of law enforcement related-activities and neighborhood crime level are significantly related at the .01 level  
chi-square=18.190

Table 7.42 describes the relationship between police advising/mentoring staff and neighborhood crime level. The majority of schools in all types of neighborhoods reported that police advising/mentoring staff was infrequent. Despite this trend, there were significant differences in the frequency of this activity by neighborhood crime level. For example, schools located in low crime neighborhoods were more likely than schools located in higher crime neighborhoods to report that police advising/mentoring activities were infrequent.

TABLE 7.42. FREQUENCY OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING STAFF BY NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME LEVEL (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Low Crime (%) (N=927)</b>	<b>Moderate/Mixed Crime (%) (N=245)</b>	<b>High Crime (%) (N=44)</b>	<b>Total (%) (N=1216)</b>
<b>Frequency of Police Advising/Mentoring Staff</b>				
Infrequent/Never (N=1151)	96.3	90.2	84.1	94.7
Frequent (N=65)	3.7	9.8	15.9	5.3
<b>Total (%) (N=1216)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*frequency of advising/mentoring staff and neighborhood crime level are significantly related at the .01 level. Note: 1 cell has an expected count of less than 5.  
chi-square=24.452

The frequency of police advising/mentoring students or families also appears to vary significantly by neighborhood crime level (Table 7.43). Schools located in high crime areas were more likely than schools in lower crime areas to report that police advising/mentoring students or families was frequent. Similarly, the overwhelming majority of schools in low crime areas reported that this police activity was infrequent.

TABLE 7.43. FREQUENCY OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING STUDENTS OR FAMILIES BY NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME LEVEL (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Low Crime (%) (N=901)</b>	<b>Moderate/Mixed Crime (%) (N=230)</b>	<b>High Crime (%) (N=44)</b>	<b>Total (%) (N=1175)</b>
<b>Frequency of Police Advising/Mentoring Students or Families</b>				
Infrequent/Never (N=931)	81.6	72.6	65.9	79.2
Frequent (N=244)	18.4	27.4	34.1	20.8
<b>Total (%) (N=1175)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*frequency of advising/mentoring students or families and neighborhood crime level are significantly related at the .01 level.  
chi-square=13.888

Frequency of presence at school events by neighborhood crime level can be seen in Table 7.44. While schools in all types of neighborhoods were most likely to report infrequent police presence at school events, there were significant differences by neighborhood crime level. For example, 83.1% of schools located in low crime neighborhoods reported infrequent police presence, 72.7% of schools in moderate/mixed crime areas, and 74.4% of schools in high crime areas reported infrequent police presence at school events.

TABLE 7.44. FREQUENCY OF PRESENCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS BY NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME LEVEL (PERCENT)\*\*

	<b>Low Crime (%) (N=909)</b>	<b>Moderate/Mixed Crime (%) (N=231)</b>	<b>High Crime (%) (N=43)</b>	<b>Total (%) (N=1183)</b>
<b>Frequency of Presence at School Events</b>				
Infrequent/Never (N=955)	83.1	72.7	74.4	80.7
Frequent (N=228)	16.9	27.3	25.6	19.3
<b>Total (%) (N=1183)</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*\*frequency of presence at school events and neighborhood crime level are significantly related at the .01 level.  
chi-square=13.777

Table 7.45 shows the bivariate correlations between frequency of law enforcement involvement and interval/ratio level school and contextual characteristics. The frequency score of all activities was significantly and positively related to total number of students and total number of school crimes. Somewhat surprisingly, none of the activities were significantly related to expenditure per student/year.

TABLE 7.45. BIVARIATE CORRELATIONS-FREQUENCY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT INVOLVEMENT AND INTERVAL/RATIO LEVEL VARIABLES

	Total Number of Students	Percentage of Minority Students	Percentage of Students Eligible for Free Lunch	Expenditure per year per student	Total number of school crimes
<b>Total Number of Law-Enforcement-Related Activities</b>					
Pearson Correlation	.442**	.146**	.019	.011	.481**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.587	.762	.000
N	995	957	822	742	754
<b>Total Number of Advice/Mentoring Activities with Staff</b>					
Pearson Correlation	.234**	.208**	.085**	.008	.308**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.006	.814	.000
N	1228	1180	1021	899	907
<b>Total Number of Advice/Mentoring Activities with Groups</b>					
Pearson Correlation	.129**	.074*	.065*	-.027	.086**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.012	.041	.432	.010
N	1187	1137	984	863	885
<b>Total Number of Advice/Mentoring Activities with Students or Families</b>					
Pearson Correlation	.368**	.107**	-.010	.014	.404**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.762	.674	.000
N	1183	1135	981	864	882



TABLE 7.45. BIVARIATE CORRELATIONS-FREQUENCY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT INVOLVEMENT AND INTERVAL/RATIO LEVEL VARIABLES (CONTINUED)

	<b>Total Number of Students</b>	<b>Percentage of Minority Students</b>	<b>Percentage of Students Eligible for Free Lunch</b>	<b>Expenditure per year per student</b>	<b>Total number of school crimes</b>
<b>Total Number of Presence at Events</b>					
Pearson Correlation	.257**	.053	-.024	-.014	.214**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.070	.444	.670	.000
N	1193	1151	992	866	884
<b>Total Frequency of Police Involvement in Schools</b>					
Pearson Correlation	.346**	.122*	.018	.010	.363**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.588	.771	.000
N	1052	1013	871	773	793

Table 7.46 describes the results from the linear regression analysis predicting the frequency of police involvement in law enforcement-related activities<sup>2</sup>. Total number of students, school level, and school crime are all significant correlates of the frequency of this group of activities. This model explains 43% of the variation in the frequency of law enforcement-related activities in schools.

TABLE 7.46. LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING FREQUENCY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT-RELATED ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS

Independent Variable	Standard		Beta	t	Significance
	B	Error			
Expenditure per student/year	.0000041	.000	.004	.122	.903
Total number of students**	.003	.001	.219	4.749	.000
Region	-.100	.180	-.020	-.553	.581
Urbanism	.467	.286	.071	1.632	.103
School Level**	1.017	.114	.361	8.952	.000
School Crime**	.034	.006	.242	5.439	.000
Percent Minority Students	1.448	.935	.083	1.548	.122
Neighborhood Crime	.288	.407	.029	.707	.480
Percent Free-Lunch Students	1.488	1.061	.068	1.403	.161

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01

R<sup>2</sup>=.431

<sup>2</sup> The diagnostics indicated multicollinearity and percent minority should be removed from all of the models predicting frequency of law enforcement involvement. When percent minority students is removed from some of the models, percent free-lunch students becomes statistically significant.

Results from the regression analysis predicting frequency of police advising staff in schools are presented in Table 7.47. School level, school crime, and percentage of minority students are all significant and positively related correlates of the frequency of police advising staff in schools. 15% of the variation in frequency of this activity is explained by this model.

TABLE 7.47. LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING FREQUENCY OF POLICE ADVISING STAFF IN SCHOOLS

Independent Variable	Standard		Beta	t	Significance
	B	Error			
Expenditure per student/year	.00000064	.000	.002	.052	.959
Total number of students	-.0000204	.000	-.005	-.090	.928
Region	-.096	.075	-.052	-1.283	.200
Urbanism	-.094	.122	-.038	-.770	.442
School Level**	.155	.046	.149	3.370	.001
School Crime**	.010	.002	.222	4.479	.000
Percent Minority Students*	.929	.400	.147	2.325	.020
Neighborhood Crime	.065	.172	.018	.379	.705
Percent Free-Lunch Students	.144	.435	.018	.330	.741

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01

R<sup>2</sup>=.152

Table 7.48 presents the linear regression analysis predicting the frequency of police advising/mentoring groups in schools. The only significant variable in this model is the number of students. This model explains only 4% of the variation in the frequency of police advising/mentoring groups in schools. This indicates that future research is needed to explore additional variables as possible correlates.

TABLE 7.48. LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS FREQUENCY OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING GROUPS IN SCHOOLS

Independent Variable	Standard		Beta	t	Significance
	B	Error			
Expenditure per student/year	-.000005	.000	-.052	-1.195	.233
Total number of students	.000	.000	.071	1.266	.206
Region	-.042	.028	-.066	-1.511	.132
Urbanism	-.026	.044	-.032	-.607	.544
School Level*	.037	.017	.108	2.233	.026
School Crime	.000	.001	.014	.263	.793
Percent Minority Students	.094	.143	.044	.654	.514
Neighborhood Crime	-.060	.063	-.049	-.956	.339
Percent Free-Lunch Students	.151	.157	.057	.964	.335

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01

R<sup>2</sup>=.04

Table 7.49 presents the results from the regression analysis of frequency of police advising/mentoring students or families in schools. Frequency of this activity is positively and significantly related to total number of students, school level, and school crime. This model explains 30% of the variation in frequency of police advising/mentoring students or families in schools.

TABLE 7.49. LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING FREQUENCY OF POLICE ADVISING/MENTORING STUDENTS OR FAMILIES IN SCHOOLS

Independent Variable	Standard		Beta	t	Significance
	B	Error			
Expenditure per student/year	.0000068	.000	.024	.628	.530
Total number of students**	.001	.000	.211	4.441	.000
Region	-.042	.066	-.024	-.628	.530
Urbanism	.182	.106	.078	1.717	.086
School Level**	.262	.041	.264	6.397	.000
School Crime**	.011	.002	.218	4.742	.000
Percent Minority Students	.502	.351	.082	1.432	.153
Neighborhood Crime	.131	.156	.037	.842	.400
Percent Free-Lunch Students	.087	.382	.012	.229	.819

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01

R<sup>2</sup>=.301

In Table 7.50, results from the linear regression analysis predicting frequency of police presence at school events are presented. According to this model, frequency of police presence at school events is significantly related to region (negatively), urbanism (positively), and school level (positively). Due to the way that urbanism was coded, this should be interpreted as rural schools are more likely to have frequent police presence at school events. This model explains 25% of the variation in the frequency of this activity.

TABLE 7.50. LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING FREQUENCY OF POLICE PRESENCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS

Independent Variable	Standard		Beta	t	Significance
	B	Error			
Expenditure per student/year	-.000017	.000	-.071	-1.845	.066
Total number of students**	.001	.000	.159	3.361	.001
Region**	-.183	.060	-.117	-3.041	.002
Urbanism**	.296	.097	.144	3.043	.002
School Level**	.328	.036	.383	9.090	.000
School Crime	.002	.002	.057	1.284	.200
Percent Minority Students	.395	.314	.075	1.257	.209
Neighborhood Crime	.059	.139	.019	.427	.669
Percent Free-Lunch Students	.391	.346	.059	1.127	.260

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01

R<sup>2</sup>=.256

Table 7.51 shows the results from the linear regression analysis predicting total frequency of police involvement in schools. The dependent variable is a sum of frequency scores for all activities. Several variables are significantly and positively related to this total frequency, including school level, school crime, total number of students, and urbanism. Presence of a SRO is positively related to total frequency of law enforcement involvement in schools. This model explains 51% of the variation in this variable.

TABLE 7.51. LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING TOTAL FREQUENCY OF POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

<b>Independent Variable</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Expenditure per student/year	.000	.000	.028	.777	.438
Total number of students**	.004	.001	.195	3.891	.000
Region	-.392	.327	-.044	-1.198	.232
Urbanism*	-1.063	.523	-.091	-2.035	.043
School Level**	1.740	.197	.362	8.819	.000
School Crime**	.043	.011	.187	4.016	.000
Percent Minority Students	1.355	1.685	.045	.805	.422
Neighborhood Crime	.105	.715	.006	.147	.883
Percent Free-Lunch Students	2.752	1.829	.073	1.504	.133
Presence of SRO**	4.524	.641	.281	7.054	.000

\*p<.05

\*\*p<.01

R<sup>2</sup>=.515

Note:

The negative relationship for urbanism indicates that urban schools were less likely to have frequent law enforcement involvement

## SUMMARY

Principal reports of law enforcement involvement in public schools indicate that the police engage in activities in schools differently depending upon certain school characteristics. In general the police are more involved and more frequently involved in larger, higher level schools (middle, junior high, and high schools), and those schools with higher levels of reported crime and disorder. Schools to which a school resource officer has been assigned report both greater levels of police involvement and higher frequency of police involvement. Law enforcement officers engage in more activities in schools locating in the South and West than they do in Midwestern or Northern schools. Law enforcement officers are less frequently involved in activities in schools located in urban settings.

School size was positively related to law enforcement, advising groups, advising students/families, police presence at school events, police involvement in safety plans, and total level of police involvement in school. Region was related to advising groups (least common in Northern schools), police presence at school events (most common in Southern schools and least common in Western schools), police teaching in schools (most common in Southern schools), participation in safety plans (Southern). Reported level of school crime and disorder was associated with law enforcement activities, advising staff, advising students/families, teaching in schools, involvement in safety planning, and total police involvement. School level was correlated with all police activities in schools except teaching. It is likely that programs, including D.A.R.E. account for higher levels of police teaching in elementary schools. Otherwise, all sorts of police involvement in schools are more common in higher levels schools (especially senior high schools) than in elementary schools.



Slightly less than half of the principals indicated there was a school resource officer assigned to their school. Over half of those reporting the presence of a SRO also reported police involvement in at least 26 of the 42 activities about which we asked. In contrast, more than half of those principals indicating there was no SRO assigned to their school reported police involvement in only eight or fewer of the activities. It seems clear that resource officers engage in more activities, more often, than officers not so designated.

Principal responses to our survey indicate that public schools, for the most part, are safe environments. They view the current role of law enforcement in schools to be largely preventive and reactive involving patrol, taking complaints, investigating crimes, and writing reports. Police are less often involved in elementary schools and in schools with small student populations. The multivariate models indicate that certain school characteristics, including level, rates of crime and disorder, and presence of a SRO are important predictors of both the level and frequency of law enforcement involvement in schools.

## **CHAPTER 8: SUMMARY OF SITE VISIT FINDINGS**

### Introduction

Site visits were conducted at a sample of fourteen schools from those that responded to the initial survey, along with their corresponding law enforcement agencies and/or private security providers. These site visits provided a wealth of information that could not have been obtained through basic survey and quantification, and allowed the research team to better understand the security measures schools take for their staff and students. A number of trends were found among schools as a result of the site visits, including common problems, major safety issues, school attempts to address problems and safety issues, and the role of law enforcement.

Problems that were repeatedly described included a lack of parental involvement, inadequate funding, and disciplinary issues. Sources of disciplinary issues were described as ranging from lack of respect on the part of students to lack of reciprocal support among administration, staff, and parents. At the junior and senior high school levels, cliques and social issues also generated a variety of problems that affected both academic progress and social quality of life.

Major safety issues tended to focus on a smaller number of precise problems common to most of the schools visited. Primarily, staff, parents, and students were concerned with unauthorized access to campus. Concerns with younger student populations focused on the potential dangers of abduction and abuse; as the student population aged, concerns focused more on the potential for drug sales and use, and physical violence. The presence of weapons and

drugs was a common concern at all levels, whether or not the school had experienced violence or drug abuse on its campus. Even at schools where the presence of weapons and drugs was not considered a problem, individuals were concerned that it may become a problem if left unchecked. General physical safety was also a common concern among all schools, ranging from the use of playground equipment and athletic fields to vehicular traffic. Finally, changing demographics in many of the schools was described as having potential to create problems as communities and educators adjusted to changing social and academic needs of the student population.

School administrations attempted to address problems and safety issues, frequently using similar measures. Schools with the poorest parental involvement frequently had staff assigned specifically to involve parents, or relied heavily on parent-teacher organizations to rouse support. Most schools had clear policies about visitors on campus, use of equipment, and behavioral expectations, and staff were strongly supportive of creating environments to encourage academic success. Staff were generally aware of the procedures for locking a school down in response to a serious threat, understood weaknesses in the procedures, and were alert to the possibility of such threats and weaknesses.

The role of law enforcement was generally consistent, as well. Police officers were welcome in the schools where they had permanent or full-time positions on campus, and their assistance was welcome on those campuses where they were not a regular presence. Police, administrators, teachers, or parents in those schools serving younger populations generally did not regard full-time presence as necessary or even desirable. There was some support for more police presence at this level in some of the schools, but it was very rare to find support for full-time presence. As student populations aged, support for a full-time officer presence on campus

increased in most of the schools that participated. Schools where there was little or no support for more police presence on campus tended to serve small communities and described few disciplinary problems among students. Police were most frequently in schools because funding had become available; they were most frequently not in schools because administration or parents did not perceive a need for them. Students in most schools did not express dissatisfaction with having an officer present. Students did, however, want to see officers attending more to safety and security issues and less to students' "personal business."

Police officers serving as resource officers tended to describe their role and activity in the schools much more broadly than students, parents, or administrators. Police saw themselves as counselors, educators, and role models, rather than simply enforcers of the law. Resource officers often commented that by being thoroughly involved in multiple aspects of the educational process, they were better able to serve the police officer roles of law enforcer and peace keeper.

### **Sampling Procedure and Selection**

Surveys sent to the schools requested that each school identify their primary and secondary law enforcement providers. Surveys were then sent to those identified agencies. Schools were placed into a site visit pool if both a school survey and a law enforcement survey were received.

In order to select schools to visit, we generated a list of schools that were grouped into 16 clusters. These 16 cluster groupings reflected combinations of how the schools rated on four factors: levels of response by public law enforcement (e.g., responding to crime); aid from public law enforcement (e.g., mentoring); response from private security; and written plans of action (e.g., plans for bomb threats). Each cluster indicated whether the school was high, medium, or

low on these factors. For example, Cluster 9, which had the largest number of schools, included schools that were medium on levels of response by public law enforcement, high on aid from public law enforcement, low on response by private security, and high on written plans of action. The analysis included only the cases with non-missing information on the survey question items considered (N=1,008).

We initially attempted to select a school from each cluster to contact for potential site visits. We started the selection process with the clusters that had the fewest number of cases. For example, if a cluster had only one school in it, we selected that school (so essentially there was not a choice within those clusters). This was problematic for two reasons. First, there were no cases in one of the clusters, so we selected two schools from the largest cluster. Second, all of the schools within several of the smaller clusters refused to participate. Since we were unable to visit a sample of schools by cluster, we looked at the list of schools that were already selected and attempted to select a representative sample of schools. We selected schools based on region, urbanism, school level, and state. For example, if we already had four schools in the Midwest, we would no longer consider schools in the Midwest. If we already had several elementary schools, we would choose only non-elementary schools. We also tried not to select two schools from the same state, but ultimately did have two schools from one state, since the school selected was the best remaining option on all of the other variables. We knew states in which the schools were located (and therefore region) but did not know the exact location when the selections were made.

Selected schools were contacted by phone and asked to participate in the study. This process began in January of 2003, and continued through the first visits until all fourteen of the site visits were scheduled. The process was very time consuming and met with no small amount

of resistance from the schools – the research team was calling through the month of June to secure and confirm site visits. We attempted to speak with the principal at each of the schools called, give them a summary of what a site visit would entail, and requested that they allow us to visit their campus. Over one hundred schools were contacted during this process, resulting in the cooperation of the fourteen campuses that are included in this report.

### **Refusal to Participate**

Schools offered distinct reasons for their inability or refusal to participate. Many of the administrators who were contacted were reluctant to continue participating in further research; they indicated that they had completed our survey, and believed their obligation to us ended with that. Some administrators were unable to participate further due to restraints placed on them by their school boards, frequently related to legal or safety issues that limited allowing research to be done on their campuses. Many principals stated that they did not have time to assist in the preparations for such a visit, were unable to accommodate us because faculty and staff did not wish to participate, or they believed parents and students would not participate. A few schools indicated that they would have liked to participate, but due to factors such as construction, impending consolidation, or graduation preparations, their calendars were simply too full at this time. One school initially agreed to participate, but withdrew just days before the site visit was scheduled because they were unable to get volunteers among staff and parents, and teachers opposed the release of students from class to participate.

### **Participation**

Some of the schools that agreed to participate were unable to recruit parents, students, or staff to participate in the numbers the research team had hoped for. One school that initially declined to participate due to lack of time to assist in coordination changed their position; they

were unable to provide student and parent feedback, but a large number of staff volunteered to be interviewed and researchers were given a warm welcome and allowed to view the buildings and grounds at length. Other schools, notably in areas where many parents were likely to be non-documented aliens, tried to recruit parental participation but were unsuccessful.

All of the schools that participated attempted to accommodate our research, but at varying levels of effort. Some administrators did little or nothing to prepare for the site visit, and researchers recruited volunteers and coordinated appointments and meetings while onsite. Other administrators prepared detailed agendas, aggressively recruited participants in advance, and made a community event of the visit. One principal ordered pizza and brought in beverages for parent and student focus groups under his own initiative.

### **Research Teams**

Research teams were comprised of two individuals per site visit, and up to three site visits were conducted at the same time in different locations. Team members included the principal investigator, project director, research assistant, and three doctoral students acting as research associates. All team members functioned as facilitators, interviewers, and recorders as the situation demanded. Some of the focus groups were recorded electronically to provide researchers with reference material, and detailed notes were taken manually during all interviews and focus groups.

### **Sample Description**

The sample included fourteen schools, representing all levels of education and all types of communities. At the community level, we collected data from four urban schools, four suburban schools, and six rural schools. At the educational level, we were able to collect data from five elementary schools, two junior high schools, and seven senior high schools.

## **Site Visit Preparation**

Participating schools were provided with a list of tasks to be accomplished prior to our arrival, along with electronic and paper copies of forms to assist them in completing these tasks. The research assistant also made follow-up phone calls and communicated with administrators via email in an attempt to ensure that tasks were being accomplished in a timely manner and necessary preparations were made prior to the team's arrival.

All schools were asked to solicit faculty and staff to participate in individual interviews and circulate sign-up sheets so they could select times convenient to their schedules and workloads. It was emphasized that participation must be voluntary; staff were not to be required to participate in the study. Some of the schools were provided with a copy of the interview schedule in order to better explain to staff the nature and content of the interview process. Approximately half of the sites made these preparations in advance; some of the schools waited until the arrival of the research team to solicit staff to participate; a few of the schools made no preparations and researchers solicited participants upon their arrival.

All schools were also asked to solicit parents to participate in a focus group; the school was at liberty to establish the date and time for the convenience of participants thereby ensuring maximum participation. Administrators were advised that parent focus groups should ideally have a maximum of ten parents per group, and that one to two groups should be scheduled. Again, a copy of the interview schedule was provided to some of the schools at their request in order to allow them to explain the nature and content of the focus group meeting. Some of the schools acknowledged immediately that they would be delegating this task to their parent-teacher organization, in order to provide us with a greater chance of parent interest. Some of the schools



were not able to recruit more than a few parents; a small number of the schools were unable to recruit parents to participate at all. There was little consistency to the reasons for lack of parental participation. In those schools where parents were more likely to be non-documented aliens living in the United States, we had very little to no parental participation. Researchers considered that parents may have not wanted to be involved with anything having to do with police in these instances, but other factors may certainly have been responsible. In schools that served high socioeconomic classes, there was a similar lack of interest on the part of parents. One school that caters to a very wealthy community was able to recruit only four parents to participate.

Due to the University's restrictions on the use of human subjects, the study did not seek the feedback of students under the age of twelve. Schools that did serve students over the age of twelve (junior and senior high schools) were asked to recruit students in advance to participate in student focus groups much like the parent focus groups. It was again stressed that participation must be voluntary; students could not be forced to participate either by staff or parents. Schools were provided with document formats to secure permission from parents for students to participate. In addition to parental permission, students were also required to provide their own consent and asked to sign a corresponding form. Both parent and student consent forms (appended) were to be obtained prior to the arrival of the research team, and students were not permitted to participate if both forms were not submitted. A small number of schools (including both of the junior high schools involved in the study) were unable to secure students to participate; the schools were cooperative in participation, but did not have sufficient staff to free someone for the tasks of coordinating volunteers and securing permission forms.

Schools were asked to provide a copy of the itinerary they had established for the visit, and these itineraries were distributed to the researchers prior to their arrival. Some of the sites

did not provide schedules in advance, and researchers had to make last minute arrangements upon arrival. Schools were advised that duplication and other administrative expenses associated with setting up the site visit would be reimbursed.

### Description of the Site Visit Process

Each site visit involved two researchers interviewing school faculty, staff, and resource officers, law enforcement officers that serve the school and their top administrators, conducting at least one focus group with students (in applicable schools) and at least one focus group with parents. Copies of the interviews and focus group schedules are available in the appendix of this report. In addition, researchers completed a climate survey (one per researcher) that noted physical and behavioral details of the campus and its environment. A copy of this form is also available in the appendix. Site visits were scheduled for two to three days per campus, depending upon the availability of the school.

Researchers reported to the main office of each campus upon arrival, and were directed to the areas where they would be conducting interviews and focus groups from there. Most of the schools required that some kind of identification be worn by visitors to identify them as such. Visitor identification most commonly involved signing in at the main office and wearing a name badge that said "Visitor." Some of the schools had visitor identification procedures, but did not ask the researchers to wear badges because their presence was expected and they were identifiable to most of the staff through introductions.

### **Climate Survey**

During periods when interviews and focus groups were not being conducted, researchers walked through the campus and buildings to take notes on physical structures, look for such things as signs of student ownership and basic security measures, and observe student and staff

interaction. Researchers returned to campus during the evening to take similar notes on lighting and access after dark. Researchers later compared notes and clarified perceptions of what they had observed. A copy of the climate survey is available in the appendix of this report.

### **Staff Interviews**

Ideally, staff were to be interviewed individually in private rooms dedicated for this purpose, with one or both of the researchers present. During each interview, the staff member was introduced to the researchers, given a brief description of the study being conducted and how this school came to be involved, advised of the confidential and voluntary nature of the interview, and asked to sign a form indicating their consent to participate. After consent was obtained, the interviewee was provided with contact information in the event that he or she had questions for the research team in the future. One researcher conducted the interview while the other researcher took written notes. At the conclusion of the interview, researchers thanked staff members for their cooperation.

Two of the schools did not arrange individual interviews, but rather posted an announcement to staff that a single, brief meeting would be held and interested parties were encouraged to attend. Because numbers and time constraints made individual interviews impossible in these instances, researchers distributed copies of the interview instrument as an individual survey in order to glean the most information possible from each individual in the time allotted. Consent was obtained from these participants in the same manner as in individual interviews, prior to completing the "survey."

### **Law Enforcement and Resource Officer Interviews**

Law enforcement personnel and resource officers were interviewed in the same manner as school staff, including obtaining consent and providing contact information and a description

of the study. At each campus, the research team attempted to interview the top administrator of the law enforcement agency (e.g., Chief of Police, Sheriff); at those sites where this individual was not available for interview, the highest-ranking officer who was available was interviewed. Generalized patrol officers participated at a number of the sites, either at the request of the school or the police agency, because they were most familiar with the campus and the surrounding neighborhood or community. This was especially common at those sites where a full-time officer was not assigned to the school.

In all cases, school resource officers were agents of police organizations, and so they were interviewed using the law enforcement interview instrument rather than the faculty/staff instrument. Private security officers or security staff were interviewed using a faculty/staff instrument.

Most of the law enforcement staff interviewed were very cooperative. In some (rare) instances, resource officers appeared reluctant to cooperate; researchers suspected that officers were under the impression this study sought to evaluate their performance in some way, or jeopardized their position's funding. Researchers attempted to clarify (as necessary) that the interviews were in no way an evaluation of performance or effectiveness; the purpose of the interview and site visit was only to seek information.

### **Parent Focus Groups**

Parents were scheduled to meet in groups in order to generate discussion and a sharing of perceptions among individuals. Researchers hoped that this kind of dynamic would provide the most thorough information about parents' perspectives on law enforcement in their children's school, and help in filtering out trends in concerns and opinions. A five-question instrument was

the basis of the discussion, and was generally successful in fostering meaningful discussion. A copy of the instrument is in the appendix of this report.

Similar to the individual interview process, researchers introduced themselves, provided the group with a basic description of the research and the process that brought them to this school. Consent was obtained from all parents, and they were provided with contact information.

Parents were recruited in a variety of ways by the different schools. Some schools distributed a flyer (we provided each school with a sample flyer to be modified for their use) to all parents to solicit participants. Other schools, as mentioned earlier, delegated the focus group recruitment to their parent-teacher organization, which most frequently contacted parents individually and requested their participation. A few administrators called parents they knew to be reliable and asked them to be involved. Two of the schools relied on parents who volunteer in the classrooms to be available for interviews during their regularly scheduled presence on campus.

Staff and students were not permitted to observe parent focus groups.

### **Student Focus Groups**

Student focus groups were conducted in the same manner as parent focus groups, with the exception that parental consent was also required for a student to participate. Students, like parents, were recruited in a variety of ways by administrators. At some schools, select classrooms were solicited to participate (e.g., study hall periods, honors classes, or remedial classes). At other schools, members of student government were recruited to participate during meeting or lunch periods. None of the schools opened participation to all students enrolled (as the researchers had requested). Administrators explained that coordinating student absences from a variety of classes would have been a logistical nightmare. An attempt to recruit students to

participate outside of class time (before or after school) was not expected to produce a response by most administrators.

Most of the high schools were able to provide substantial numbers of students to participate. One of the high schools had a very small number of students participate; consent forms were distributed in advance, but only six students returned the forms necessary. Neither of the junior high schools was able to recruit student participants, even though a majority of their populations were over the age of 12. This was not a result of lack of interest on the part of the students, but rather (as mentioned earlier) insufficient staff available to coordinate the process in both instances due to the population size at both schools.

Parents and staff were not permitted to observe the student focus groups. On multiple occasions, staff members who were present when the focus group was about to begin were advised that they were welcome to be interviewed individually, but that they could not observe students for confidentiality purposes.

## **Problems**

One of the first questions asked during interviews and focus groups was what kind of problems are faced by the school. Interviewers posed and explained the question so that respondents would not just focus on law enforcement issues, but all problems faced by the school. The three problems mentioned at every single school in the survey were a lack of parental involvement, a lack of adequate funding, and disciplinary issues. Cliques and social issues was also a common theme, although limited more to the students in junior and senior high school levels. Finally, changing demographics was described as a type of catalyst for problems at many schools.

### *Lack of Parental Involvement*

At every site, the school staff and parents consistently commented that parental participation in the school was poor. Primarily, parents are not participating in their child's education. Reasons suggested for this ranged from parents who work to parents who commute long distances in order to work, to parents who simply have no interest in education or forcing their children to get one. The less educated and more impoverished a community appeared to be, the more frequently staff and parents commented that children were not motivated or encouraged at home to get a good education.

Similarly, many respondents noted that students, themselves, were not committed to the educational process. This was more common among the higher educational levels, where students are beginning to embark upon academic and career paths. Students today have added responsibilities of assisting in the support of single parent homes, providing such things as supplementary income to the household or childcare to younger siblings. These responsibilities also increased as the poverty levels of the community increased.

The lack of parental involvement was mirrored in the lack of participation on the part of parents at the majority of the schools. A small number of schools were able to recruit substantial numbers of parents to offer feedback and discuss safety issues. More common was a room where researchers were barely outnumbered by parents. When small numbers of parents turned out, these groups tended to consist of the same parents that volunteer for "everything." Their children are good students, have not been in trouble with the law, and do not necessarily represent the entire population of students. At some schools, no parents agreed to participate, despite often extensive attempts on the part of school administrators to recruit them. One of the middle schools

employs an individual specifically to coordinate parent volunteers for specific tasks and events. She was unable to get anyone to agree to participate.

### *Lack of Funding*

Money was an issue at every campus, for every type of individual and group interviewed. Schools feared that reductions in budgets were costing good teachers, good educational programs, and good security. Schools in financially depressed areas are unable to offer competitive salaries, or the community does not offer competitive quality of living (e.g., no arts, no shopping, low property values or loss of equity), and teachers take their education out of the community and away from the schools. This leads to a loss of funding for educational programming, since those funds are often based on academic performance. Commonly, schools that sought a dedicated resource officer or private security personnel did not have either because the money was not there.

Even schools that seem to be financially sound faced losses due to funding issues. One school lost their resource officer when the police department lost several staff officers to active military duty – the police department simply did not have the personnel any longer to spare an officer for use at the school. The school offered to pay for the resource officer out of their own funds, but the police chief declined. He did not want to create a position with outside funding that he may have to eliminate at some point if that funding was withdrawn. Instead, the D.A.R.E. officer position was expanded in that the officer was expected to check in with upper level schools as frequently as possible to see if they needed anything.

### *Discipline Issues and Lack of Respect by Students*

A common problem noted by staff at all levels of education was a lack of respect on the part of students. Students are discipline problems as a result, because they do not respect the



rules of the administration or their teachers. At one elementary school, many of the staff who were concerned about violence were specifically worried about students becoming violent as a result of having no respect.

Some students come to school with personal problems, which all too often become discipline issues. Two of the schools that participated have a substantial foster care population. Teachers at these schools described students who are in foster care as having "more baggage" than the average student, and less stability, support, and individual attention at home. At other schools, staff described their students as bringing problems into school from their homes, as well.

#### *Inconsistent Reciprocal Support Between Administration and Staff*

Schools where staff liked their administrators tended to report fewer and less severe disciplinary problems. Staff, parents, and students who did not like their administrators tended to focus on issues of inconsistent discipline and rule application, and administrators not standing their ground against parents and students. Interestingly, some of the student focus groups wanted to see more discipline enforced; they believed that staff did not enforce the rules because they did not believe their efforts would be supported by the administration.

In schools that described disciplinary problems as a result of lack of respect on the part of parents and/or students, it was common to find lack of support between administration and staff. Staff, like students, believed that the administration failed to sustain their efforts to discipline problem students, or enforce consistent discipline for all students at all times. At one school, a teacher wanted a student disciplined because the student had scratched her. The school's principal commented to the researcher that the teacher would not be satisfied with the outcome; he was going to require the student to apologize, and that was all.

The lack of reciprocal support and related behavioral problems were recognized for what they were. Respondents did not suggest that additional law enforcement presence would rectify this situation; some expressed their belief that police presence serves as a deterrent, but that deterrence value was limited if administration did not follow-through.

### *Cliques and Social Issues*

At most of the schools, staff, parents, and students acknowledged that social status could be a source of real problems, some of them safety related. Students who do not have the social or economic resources of their peers are targeted and victimized – some combination of teasing, bullying, gossip, and antagonistic social cliques were mentioned at most schools as problems or the source of problems or potential violence.

Students and staff at many of the schools also noted the differential treatment of students by staff and administration. Parents at some of the schools acknowledged that their athletes are not held to the same academic or disciplinary standards as other students; this included comments made by parents of athletes who recognized their children were not being disciplined as harshly as other students. Differential treatment also serves to reward some students' accomplishments while ignoring those of others. At one school, a student who was active in the school's award-winning ROTC program expressed her frustration with administrators. The school displays all of its athletic trophies in the front window of the main building, visible to everyone who enters the school. Meanwhile, ROTC trophies are stored in the closet of the ROTC office.

In some schools, uniforms were required or limited dress codes enforced. Uniforms were most commonly seen at the elementary level, while dress codes were more common in junior and senior high schools. At most of the schools, the purpose of this policy was not explained;

researchers surmised that the purpose of most policies was to reduce social stigma and reduce gang activity. Indeed, at one urban junior high school, researchers were told that the dress code removed logos that might inspire theft and indicate gang loyalties. At one urban elementary, however, teachers noted that even with the uniforms, you could tell whose uniforms cost more than others.

### **Major Safety Issues**

Interviews and focus groups also asked, specifically, what kind of safety and law-related issues the school was facing. With rare exceptions, the majority of staff at all schools said they felt safe on their campus or in their buildings. Elementary schools rarely expressed safety concerns that were related to crime or violence. The issues that were raised in many higher-level schools as safety concerns were almost theoretical, in that parents, staff, and students realized that problems occur at other schools, but not at theirs. At every campus, however, some safety concerns were evident. Those safety issues included unauthorized access to campus, buildings, or students, the presence and use of weapons and drugs, and general physical safety.

#### *Unauthorized Access and Supervision*

At least a small number of those interviewed at every campus, elementary through senior high, expressed concern with the ability of "strangers" to enter the campus or buildings and endanger students or staff. At the elementary level, this concern focused on non-custodial and emotional (e.g., depressed or angry) parents who may show up to take a child without going through the proper channels, and other threats of abduction. At higher educational levels, the concern for unauthorized access was more focused on property vandals and drug crime than personal crimes against staff or students. Staff who worked in remote or unobservable areas of

campuses at all levels expressed some concern for their own safety, but this was primarily limited to before and after school, and when the rest of the campus was dark and unoccupied.

Every school had a procedure for admitting and monitoring visitors. Visitor identification most commonly involved signing in at the main office and wearing a name badge that said "Visitor," along with other identifying information such as the date of visit, the name of the visitor, and the agency the visitor represents (or role, such as "Parent"). Even though the research teams were not always expected to wear visitor identification, it was clear that all sites had at least a moderate level of awareness that we did not belong there. On most campuses, researchers were approached by some type of staff member who asked if they could be of assistance in directing us somewhere. Even when not approached, we were obviously observed by staff members in common areas and hallways.

The most common complaint about unauthorized visitor access at the elementary level was that many parents simply walk into the building, bypassing the office or reception area, and proceed to their child's classroom. Somewhat related, many of the schools noted that the physical structure of the building or placement of the central office within the building made it difficult to monitor access to all entrances and exits where visitors may get in. For most of those interviewed, it was easy to make the leap from parent to vandal – if a parent can get in, so could anyone else who might want to.

Students at most of the schools recognized that it was possible to get into their campus without authorization, but did not express concern for their safety as a result. Students were more likely than adults to comment on the risks associated with before and after school hours, and open campus lunch breaks when students are permitted to leave campus and return. They talked about the risks of weekend parties, lunch hour drinking and drug use, and vandalism to their

parked vehicles or lockers. Only one student expressed strong concern for safety on the campus. This student described how easy it would be to stage an ambush on his campus, which is surrounded by thick tree growth and not visible from outside the grounds.

At least two of the schools (both elementary schools with substantially high Hispanic populations, but in different types of communities) described a problem with unauthorized individuals picking children up from school. In both schools there are guidelines regarding who may and may not pick a student up from the school. One school's policy is to keep a list of adults (as authorized by custodial parent(s)) on record who may retrieve the child from campus, such as father and mother, or grandmother and adult sibling. In many cases, students are met by non-adult siblings, or adult aunts, cousins, or other unauthorized individuals. It is difficult to keep track of all of the students and whom they are leaving with, especially when the student knows and identifies the individual. Participants at a third elementary school involved in the study were more concerned with very young students (i.e., kindergarteners and first graders) getting off the bus alone once they have left campus. Bus drivers with this school are not allowed to let a child get off the bus if an adult is not present at the designated stop to meet them.

### *Weapons and Drugs*

Weapons, alcohol, and illegal drugs were not permitted on any campus. They were, however, expected on most of them, even at the elementary level, by staff. One elementary school has a very strict policy on what students are allowed to possess on campus to ensure that weapons or other dangerous substances do not find their way into the school. This policy extends as far as the souvenirs students are permitted to purchase on field trips. In short, students are not permitted to have in their possession anything that resembles or may be used as a weapon. This

policy includes (but is not limited to) toy weapons such as guns, knives, and rubber darts, as well as historical souvenirs such as arrowheads.

Students were more likely than staff or parents to believe that weapons are on campus, although they were less likely to express that they felt threatened by this. Students seemed to recognize, as well, that staff and parents were not as savvy about the presence of weapons, nor did they believe parents and staff had any idea how accessible and prevalent drugs were on their campuses. On those campuses where weapons were most likely to be expected, it was acknowledged by many of those interviewed that weapons most frequently came onto campus “accidentally,” such as when students forget to remove weapons that were in their vehicles or jackets for legitimate before or after school activities such as hunting.

Drugs were not expected to be in students' possession at the elementary schools, but were expected at the junior and senior high schools by both parents and staff. Again, students confirmed that drug possession was common on most campuses; students reported that drug *use*, however, tends to be limited to off-campus sites before and after school, and during open lunch periods. Smoking was the most commonly mentioned drug problem, whether it be cigarettes or marijuana. The use of cigarettes among older students was acknowledged by parents and staff. Some staff and administrators noted that students will leave campus and smoke on sidewalks and in yards directly across from campus, where they know they can be seen, but the school is unable to take action against them. One school (in a southern, tobacco producing state) allowed students of legal possession age to smoke in designated areas on campus until recently. That campus has seen a dramatic increase in bathroom trash fires since changing their policy on student smoking.

### *General Physical Safety*

When asked about general safety issues, most teachers and parents at the elementary level focused on issues that are not crime-related, such as the condition and proper use of playground equipment, traffic patterns during arrival and dismissal, and misbehavior on buses. Burglaries and vandalism were occasionally mentioned as peripheral concerns, but not described as a major problem at any of the campuses.

The locations of campuses created unique safety challenges. Schools that are near multi-family dwellings (such as apartment buildings and complexes) are faced with such population density, they are susceptible to drug trafficking and other crime problems. In fact, at those schools where greater numbers of staff expressed that they did not feel safe in the neighborhood surrounding the campus, those neighborhoods had large numbers of transitional residents and nearby apartment buildings were identified as trouble spots.

Vehicular traffic presented a variety of concerns for different types of campuses. Elementary schools frequently described traffic safety problems with large numbers of parents dropping children off before and picking them up after school. This creates a hazard for children walking to waiting cars, as well as to general traffic on the street. High schools with student drivers have their own challenges, which are increased when the school has an open campus from which students are permitted to leave during the lunch hour. Hazards increase when campuses are situated on busy streets or major thoroughfares, where students are joining already high-volume or high-speed traffic.

### *Changing Demographics*

Many of the schools that participated noted a significant change in their population demographics over time. Some schools had seen drastic demographic change in as little as 5 years, while others had seen change over periods more gradual – 20 years or more – that more evenly paced social change across the country. The most prevalent demographic change was an increase in minority and ethnic populations, and a shift to lower economic classes. Many of the schools were originally built to serve middle class families, but are now dealing with economic and physical decline of neighborhoods and communities. This decline is attributable to an aging population, urban growth and social changes, and occasionally an influx of new populations.

This type of change was usually glossed over by participants in the interview process, but a small number of participants at every site described it. Change becomes an issue for the school – specifically a safety issue – when communities change to the point that residents and parents do not know each other. A loss of simple social unity created a loss of security in some areas, while it introduced a threat of crime or violence in others. Not surprisingly, staff who had been with the school for a long period of time were most likely to comment on this situation. They noted that in the past, parents were active in the school, knew each other, and looked out for each other’s children. Today, too many children are going to locked or empty homes after school; residents do not know neighbors in order to share responsibility for children; and diversity in neighborhood composition gives rise to more conflict than cohesion.

### **School Attempts to Address Problems and Safety Issues**

Interviewees and focus groups were asked to describe what the school has done to address problems and safety issues that were identified during the interview process. The most



commonly described efforts to address these issues included general safety measures. General safety measures for most schools focused on unauthorized access or emergency situation responses. Unauthorized access was addressed by policies and procedures for locking down facilities, locking classroom doors, and monitoring access to campus through physical and electronic surveillance. Also, as mentioned earlier, many elementary schools had policies regarding who could or could not retrieve students from campus. Emergency situation responses also focused on locking down facilities, as well as fire drills, tornado drills, and in a small number of schools, bomb threat drills.

#### *Facility Threats and Weaknesses*

The primary reasons for locking down a facility focused on external threats. Elementary schools described a need to lockdown their facilities to protect students from outside violence. One school that is situated on a busy thoroughfare and near commercial businesses has locked down when robberies are committed nearby. They are concerned that criminals may enter the building during escape or in seek of hostages.

Bomb threats were described as more of an internal concern. Schools that addressed bomb threat concerns have policies in place to evacuate students and staff, but administration admitted those plans were inadequate. One administrator described his plan for removing students from the campus to neighboring homes or adjacent structures. He admitted that the movement between buildings, however, made the students "sitting ducks" for anyone who may have purposefully initiated the evacuation to get them into the open.

Many of the sites (especially newer structures and campuses that had experienced a great deal of physical growth) were constructed in some kind of open design that made lockdown and monitoring access difficult to impossible. For schools in warmer climates, the openness was seen

in open-air hallways, passage between multiple buildings for classes, and outdoor lockers. For other schools, an open-concept design arranged numbers of classrooms into "pods," with no doors between them or into the interior hallways. Still other campuses noted the extreme number of doors that, locked or unlocked, exist to provide access and exit to the building. One high school had 49 separate exits (49 individual, independent doors) from the main building, and an unknown number of keys to each of those doors.

### *Other Measures*

Dress codes have been established at many schools in an attempt to curtail vandalism and threats of violence over socioeconomic status and differences. Most schools have some type of restrictions related to safety (e.g., one school prohibits shoes with toe thongs) or overt sexuality (e.g., most schools prohibit shirts that do not cover the midriff). Feedback from most of the schools suggested that policies such as these are inconsistently enforced, hence there was little agreement regarding how effective these types of measures have been at curbing disorder and delinquent behavior.

Restrooms were seen as a risk factor for a variety of reasons. Staff at some schools admitted they have no control over students there; there can be no electronic surveillance in these areas, and teachers cannot abandon entire classes to accompany a single student to the restroom during class periods. Between class periods, restrooms are crowded and still have no adult supervision. At one rural high school, it is not uncommon for fires to break out in the (student) women's restrooms. It is unclear whether students are being careless while smoking or starting fires intentionally, but staff now monitor entrances to all student restrooms between classes. At one site, a female teacher was overheard to announce that if the men's room was not clear before the bell, she would enter the room and clear it, personally, before returning to her classroom.

## The Role of Law Enforcement

The role of law enforcement on each campus was assessed by first reviewing the surveys from both the school and the law enforcement agency, in order to establish a baseline of what each party believed the police were doing on the campus. That role was defined by perceptions of police involvement and activity with students and on the campus, factors that led to the current level of involvement, descriptions of the most desirable level of police presence, descriptions of the ideal role of police in schools, and circumstances that would justify a change in the current role of law enforcement to the school.

### **Police Involvement and Activity**

Police agencies tend to be available to schools even when they do not play an active role on the campus or provide continuous presence. At the same time, police were not described as intrusive or too involved at any of the schools. Even in those schools with a full-time officer presence, the majority of staff described police involvement levels as “they come when they are called.” For most of the schools, this meant that the relationship between the school and police agency was good enough that when the school needed assistance or requested presence, the police provided it but did not intrude beyond that. Many schools described their police department as very helpful and cooperative. At a small number of schools, however, staff felt that police were disinterested in the school and only came to campus as required.

Schools that had resource officers or private security staff on campus were very supportive of that position. There was some debate about the quality of any given officer at any given school. No group (students, parents, or staff) at any given school had unanimous consensus among its members – some liked the officer, some did not. But most of those interviewed at

schools with resource officers or private security staff were supportive of having someone in that position.

### *Factors Leading to Current Levels of Involvement*

Two responses were most commonly provided when staff and police were asked what factors led to the current level of police involvement at this school: “We got a grant,” to explain the presence of a resource officer and “it’s safe here – we don’t need (police),” to explain why law enforcement was not more active or present.

Grants were most frequently given credit for the presence of dedicated resource officers at the junior and senior high school levels. Some schools acknowledged that they sought the federal funding because of escalating behavior problems at the school, but most described it as a proactive measure. They wanted their school to maintain its positive learning environment, not get out of control. Parents were generally supportive of having dedicated officers at this level in the schools that had them. At schools that did not have resource officers or private security, the majority of respondents indicated they did not need them, even if the money had been available.

Of those interviewed at elementary schools, almost all of the parents and staff who participated were against having an officer on the campus on a daily basis. They believed, primarily, that there was no need for that level of presence. Most parents felt their children were safe at school, and not a threat to others. Most staff were against having continuous police presence for the children because they may feel like their environment is not safe, or they may develop a "tolerance" to police and lose respect out of familiarity. For all the same reasons, most of those interviewed at high schools in rural communities and wealthier suburban communities did not want police presence in their schools on a daily basis.

### *Desirable Level of Police Presence*

The most consistent response that was received from interviews and focus groups was that staff, parents, and students wanted a balance of police presence that met their needs but did not interfere with the education or quality of life at the school. Very few participants stated that police had no place in schools at all. When asked to describe the negative aspects of having police presence on campus on an extended or full-time basis, however, an overwhelming number of participants said that officer presence gave the impression that something was wrong at the school to warrant it, and they did not want people to have that impression of their school. Police presence was generally accepted and considered desirable at those schools that had at least one dedicated officer. At *no* school did all the participants unanimously agree that they did *not* want a dedicated police officer.

Parents were very supportive of police presence in an “Officer Friendly” capacity, regardless of the level of education (elementary, junior high, or high school). Parents wanted their children to be comfortable with officers as authority figures and sources of information and assistance, rather than fearful or disrespectful of officers. In terms of the *amount* of police presence, however, parents most frequently varied by level of education in how much police presence they wanted in their schools.

Parents of elementary aged children were particularly supportive of educational programs like D.A.R.E., but for the most part did not want police or security personnel in the school on a daily basis. They tended to believe that there was no need for officer presence, either for security reasons or to take care of problems within the school (e.g., student violence). Very few parents stated that they would like to see an officer in their elementary school on a full-time basis. While the majority of elementary parents agreed they wanted their children to be comfortable with

police officers, they did not want them to feel as though they were under surveillance or that their environment was so bad that police were necessary.

Opinions of parents at the high school level varied by individual school environment, but there was little consensus among parents even within schools with regard to police presence. A small number of high schools (primarily those with very small numbers of parents participating) agreed with the Officer Friendly approach but did not believe that officers belonged in their schools on a daily basis. In these instances, parents believed that either their school was safe or their children were not threats to the security of others, or both. Interestingly, even in those groups where parents achieved some consensus that their children were safe on campus, at least one parent inevitably commented that their perception of safety on the campus was probably naïve.

The most common result, however, was a division among parents as well as students as to whether they wanted police in their schools at all times or not. Most of the parent focus groups generated substantial discussion – and achieved clear lack of consensus – on this topic. Some parents are supportive of continuous police presence in their schools while some are against it. Similarly, some students stated they would like full-time officers in their school, while others within the same groups said they would not. The difference between parents’ and students’ responses was attributable to quality of life issues. Students expressed that they did not mind police presence on a full-time basis as long as they did not feel they were being “harassed” or “treated like criminals.” Full-time officer presence was more likely to be acceptable to students in schools where existing resource officers or security staff were liked *and* respected by the student population.

Staff were similarly divided on how much presence they wanted. As with parents, very few staff in the elementary schools believed that full-time presence was warranted, or would be beneficial. As the student population aged into the junior and senior high school levels, however, there were more staff who believed that a full-time law enforcement presence was desirable. This was also true as level of community poverty increased, with poorer schools wanting more police presence to assist with behavioral problems. Schools that served more rural populations were less likely to express a desire to have full-time police presence – schools that had experienced incidents or threats of violence were not an exception. One of the schools that participated had dealt with a threat of violence around the time of the initial survey. A student had published on the Internet a list of people (including students and staff members) at the school whom he intended to kill, and on what date. Although the incident has heightened awareness for staff, parents, and students, there was no majority opinion among any of those groups that having a full-time law enforcement presence on the campus would have made a difference.

#### *Response to Police Presence*

Students at schools with dedicated resource officers or full-time private security varied in their response to having police present on their campus. Interestingly, most students did not object to the presence of officers, but rather the attitude and approach that some of the officers had. Students who felt their SRO or security officer was friendly and helpful were more positive in their responses. Students who felt the officer was too intrusive or used accusatory approaches to confrontation were more negative in their responses.

At one school, the students overwhelmingly complained about the same resource officer that the staff and parents overwhelmingly praised. Students felt he was too involved in their personal issues and not involved enough in safety. Students participating at this school were in

grades nine through twelve, and primarily in academic good standing – these were not the “problem” students. As a group, they expressed a desire to see their resource officer more active in providing them with security and education, and less active in “looking for trouble.” At this school, the officer was known to conduct random searches of student vehicles during class, looking for drugs and weapons. Students did not believe, however, that “random” searches of vehicles, lockers, or backpacks were random at all; many students commented that the same people get searched all the time, or that searches targeted specific “types” of students who were expected to have illegal substances or weapons in their possession. One honor roll student who participated in the focus group said that he was once targeted during a drug search, when a dog identified his backpack. What they found in the backpack was a sandwich, not drugs.

At another school, students complained that the resource officer, a full-time city police officer, would follow students off campus during the lunch period and observe them away from the school. Although he was technically within his jurisdiction, students felt this was an abuse of his dual position. The students who participated from this school were recruited from remedial reading classes, and exhibited challenging behavior during the focus group – they may well have been students who are more frequently targeted for surveillance by the SRO and security staff under ordinary circumstances. For the most part, however, they did not object to having an officer on campus – some even commented having the officer present made them feel safer. They simply wanted him to stay out of what they considered to be their private business.

### *Ideal Role of Police in Schools*

The ideal role of police in schools varied from respondent to respondent. There was no consistency among education levels, community types, or respondent type (staff, parent, student, or officer). There was no strong consistency among those interviewed at a single school, and no



consistency between schools and law enforcement agencies. There were vague trends only in that respondents described their ideal role in relationship to what they considered to be problems at the school – the police should be able to assist in addressing problems, but to what extent and with what level of authority varied from respondent to respondent.

Simply put, every individual had their own idea of what he or she wanted. This ranged from nothing (a very small number of respondents said they did not believe law enforcement had *any* place in schools), to "everything." Respondents said they would like to have, in varying combinations, police be educators, legal resources, security, law enforcers, disciplinarians, support to administrators, counselors, role models, mentors, and more. A few respondents indicated that they would like to see police able to act as rule enforcers for school policies, but most respondents preferred the line remain clear between administrator and police officer.

The clearest consistency among respondents was the feedback from active resource officers. These officers tended to see their role as very diverse, including a variety of roles that made them an integral part of the educational experience. These officers believed that being very involved in all aspects of the school – from daily social contact with students to counseling, educating, disciplining, and providing a role model – helped them do their jobs better. By being so involved with the students' daily activities, officers believed they were more in tune with the students' needs and potential threats to safety. Only one administrator disagreed with this attitude, saying that he placed officers in the school to act as law enforcers only.

#### *Advantages and Disadvantages to Law Enforcement Involvement*

Among the advantages to having law enforcement involvement and presence at the schools, parents and staff believed that officers act as a deterrent from misbehavior and delinquent activity, and their continuous presence means immediate emergency response; they

provide role models to all students; they present career options and an opportunity to see officers as friends for minority and disadvantaged students; and their presence makes students, staff, and parents feel safer. These were consistent responses for all of the schools in the site visit study.

About half of those interviewed said that they believed having police on campus at all times was a disadvantage. (It must be reiterated that approximately half of the schools that participated were *elementary* level schools, and respondents from elementary schools were less likely than higher-level schools to want continuous police presence.) The most common disadvantage voiced was that constant presence of an officer gives the impression that something is wrong at the school, and can generate fear among staff, parents, and students. A very small number of participants (one respondent at each of three schools) acknowledged that an officer on campus means a weapon (a gun) is on campus, and this was agreed to be a disadvantage among those who discussed it. A small number of staff at schools across the board were concerned that too much presence would allow students to become too familiar with officers, and eventually lose respect for them and their authority as they became "buddies."

#### *Circumstances that Would Justify a Change in Law Enforcement*

Universally, respondents stated that a crisis or violent outburst, such as that experienced in the Columbine shootings, would warrant a change (increase) in police presence and involvement. This was true for a substantial amount of the respondents from elementary schools, as well. Frequently, respondents commented that significant or dramatic increases in violent behavior or criminal activity at the school, by students or by parents, would warrant a change (increase) in police presence and involvement.

No viable suggestions were offered regarding what would warrant a decrease in police presence and involvement. A number of respondents joked that if crime dramatically decreased or ceased altogether, we would need less police involvement and presence in schools.

### Summary

Fourteen campuses that responded to the initial Law Enforcement in Schools Survey participated in this site visit study. Two researchers visited each campus for the purpose of interviewing staff and administrators, parents, students, and law enforcement and security providers. From these visits, researchers were able to see first-hand what role law enforcement played at each of the schools, and to get a more thorough understanding of what that role encompassed and how it was performed. From the interview and focus group processes, a number of trends were identified between schools across the country.

Schools emphasized a lack of parental interest and involvement and a lack of sufficient funds created problems for all campuses, regardless of educational level, geographic region, or community type. Most of the schools also described problems related to discipline issues and lack of respect on the part of students; these problems were often exacerbated by a lack of reciprocal support between administration and staff. Schools at all levels experienced some problems related to socioeconomic status, but these problems were more prevalent with the higher levels of junior and senior high schools.

In terms of safety, all schools were concerned to some degree with the threat of unauthorized access and the inability to supervise students at all times. The nature of threat this created varied by educational levels and community type, but not by geographical region. Weapons and drugs were a concern for all schools as well. Not only did the *nature* of these threats change with educational level and community type, but also the *amount*. Threats

increased for upper educational levels and schools with larger populations (regardless of community type, but even more so as communities approached urban status). Schools were concerned with general safety issues related to facility structures and campus location relative to commercial traffic and neighborhood characteristics. Changing demographics were often described as influential factors in behavior and safety problems at schools, as well.

All of the schools made attempts to address their general problems and safety issues within the confines of their resources and administrative authority. These measures were often described as inadequate, but were also recognized as being the best option they had available at this time.

The most common description of the role of law enforcement on each campus was that of deterrent presence (occasional or full-time) and law enforcer. Most of the individuals interviewed also saw an officer on campus in varying roles of educator, counselor, role model, and protector – resource officers frequently described their role with such variety. The relationship between law enforcement and schools was usually described as good, with schools able to seek assistance as necessary. The vast majority of law enforcement agencies were eager to assist the schools in any way possible, limited only by their resources and the needs of the rest of the community. The primary factor limiting more frequent or extensive involvement with schools by law enforcement was a lack of funds and related lack of resources; at the elementary levels, most schools did not believe they needed a substantial increase in law enforcement involvement or presence because the kinds of problems faced or created by their populations did not warrant it.

The most desirable level of police presence and involvement at every school was a balance of availability and cooperation without becoming intrusive. This meant different things

for different schools based on educational levels and population age. Participants at elementary levels wanted police to serve resource and support functions, as did higher level schools that had no history or obvious threat of crime or violence; junior and senior high schools were more likely to want a dedicated officer present at the school at all times as a proactive measure against potential threats to campus safety. Police feedback suggested that law enforcement shares these views. Officers tended to agree that full-time presence was not warranted at the elementary level in the same way that it was warranted with older student populations.

Overall, students, parents, and staff were not opposed to police having some role in their school. Similarly, law enforcement administrators were eager to provide police presence in the schools as necessary and possible. At schools with dedicated officers, there was little resistance to the presence of the officer, but rather some occasional resistance to the individual officer or the way he or she performed the duties of the position. The primary disadvantage seen (by most of the individuals interviewed, including police officers) to having an officer present was that students and the community may get the wrong impression of the need for the officer. The most commonly cited advantages, however, included the deterrence effect an officer provides and the quick response of having one on site at all times. The primary requirement for having a substantial increase in the presence or involvement of law enforcement for every campus was a response to increases in violence or a tragic event.

This conception of the justification for increasing law enforcement presence indicates the perception that the primary function of the police should be law enforcement. There appears to be a conflict between the desire to have a police presence to enhance feelings of safety and the fear that police presence indicates a school with severe crime and disorder problems. While participants at about half of the sites we visited saw no need for full-time police presence in

schools, participants in schools that had full-time law enforcement were almost uniformly supportive of that level of police involvement. No single definition of an ideal or appropriate role for law enforcement in schools emerged from our discussions with participants at any of our fourteen sites. It appears the role of law enforcement in schools varies by both the interests of the observer (students, staff, parents, etc.) and the specific problems or issues at the school.

School personnel, parents, and students all reported feeling safe at school. Some respondents raised concerns about neighborhood crime and crime on student travel routes to school. The most pressing safety issues related to vehicular traffic and things like unsafe playground equipment. While almost all parents and staff at elementary schools were opposed to the idea of having full-time police presence at the school, the overwhelming majority felt it was beneficial to have police in schools in some capacity. The ideal level of police involvement was described as a balance, different for each school, where police presence met safety needs but did not interfere with education or quality of life at the school. A source of friction between police and schools related to different expectations of the police. Police respondents frequently noted that they did not want to school disciplinarians. School personnel often reported the most beneficial effect of police presence being an improvement in student discipline. In every school we visited that had a SRO, the officer was supervised by the police agency. This posed some problems, especially for principals, who had to deal with a second authority (the officer) in their schools. We found that many resource officers worked in schools for months before receiving training in how to perform as a SRO. A lack of adequate preparation of officers often contributed to role confusion and conflicts. Nonetheless, most respondents from schools with resource officers were satisfied with the officers and supported continuing the assignment of a SRO to the school.

## **CHAPTER 9: DISCUSSION**

Concern about safety in schools has led to new strategies aimed at reducing crime and violence in schools. Greater law enforcement involvement is one way that many schools have chosen to address these concerns. This report has described the current types, level, and frequency of police involvement with public schools at the national level.

The vast majority of school principals (96.8%) reported that they relied predominantly on public law enforcement rather than private security (3.2%). Almost half of respondents also reported that they had school resource officers (47.8%). There were many reasons given for getting a school resource officer including national media attention about school violence, crime prevention, federal grants, drug awareness education, mentoring, and as part of community policing efforts.

The majority of police were involved in traditional law enforcement functions such as patrolling school grounds, school facilities, student travel routes, drug-free zones beyond school boundaries, traffic patrol on or around campus, and responding to calls for service. While less common than patrol, law enforcement officers participated in a variety of other activities in some schools including mentoring individual students, working with parents to help their children, and referring students and parents to other sources of help. Many respondents also reported that police were present at school functions such as athletic and social events.

While most school principals reported that police were largely not involved in teaching at their schools, some teaching activities were more common than others. Over 51% of the respondents stated that police taught D.A.R.E. Other anti-drug and alcohol awareness/DUI prevention courses were also fairly common, with about 34% of schools having anti-drug classes and about 30% reporting alcohol awareness classes taught by the police.

Law enforcement agencies were typically involved in safety plans and meetings with schools. The overwhelming majority (86%) of principals reported that they had an emergency plan agreement with law enforcement, and slightly more than half (55%) reported that law enforcement worked with their school to develop written plans for crisis situations. Other types of law enforcement involvement in safety plans and meetings were less common. For example, 47% of respondents reported that law enforcement officials attend school safety meetings. It is interesting to note that this focus on emergency plans happened while almost no schools reported facing these emergencies. In contrast, there was relatively little reported cooperation in general safety planning which might address the most common problems faced by schools.

We also compared law enforcement involvement with schools that had school resource officers with schools that did not have SROs. We found that schools with SROs reported greater police involvement across all types activities. Specifically, schools with SROs had greater police involvement in law enforcement-related activities, advising/mentoring, presence at school events, teaching, and school safety plans/meetings.

In addition to exploring findings from school surveys, we examined law enforcement survey results. Law enforcement-related activities such as patrol and responding to calls for service were the most frequently cited types of involvement. Primary law enforcement officers were most likely to teach anti-drug classes (52%), safety education classes (51%), and alcohol awareness/DUI prevention (50%). A variety of safety plans and meetings with schools were common, especially working with schools to create written plans to deal with bomb scares or other school-wide threats (64%). Not surprisingly, police departments that were identified as secondarily relied upon agencies tended to report less involvement in schools than those identified as primarily relied upon.



We compared our samples of school principal and police responses about law enforcement involvement in schools. There were many noteworthy differences. First, principals and police officials had significantly different perceptions of the types of activities in which law enforcement is involved. Across law enforcement-related activities, advising/mentoring, and presence at school events, a higher percentage of police respondents stated that police were involved in these activities than did school principals, and most of these differences were statistically significant. One exception was mentoring/providing guidance to individual students, for which principals perceived greater involvement (62%) than did police respondents (29%). It may be that school officials were simply not aware of all the activities of the police, which may be particularly likely for activities such as patrolling the school boundaries or grounds when school is not in session.

Additionally, we compared perceptions of police teaching activities. With the exception of teaching D.A.R.E., police reported significantly more teaching activity in schools than school principals reported. The findings were more mixed for perceptions of police involvement in school safety plans and meetings. While most of the responses were significantly different, unlike other types of activities, the police did not consistently report higher levels of involvement. Principals reported significantly greater police involvement in creating written plans to deal with shootings, large-scale fights, bomb scares or comparable school-wide threats, and hostage situations. Often these types of policies are developed at the district level, so it is possible that police underreported their involvement since they did not create these plans with individual schools.

In addition to comparing all school principal and police responses, we selected cases that “matched” (cases for which we had both a school and police response) and examined these

survey results. We continued to find differences in perceptions of police participation in activities in schools. While both principal and police responses indicated that patrol activities were the most common type of law enforcement involvement in schools, their perceptions of the level of this activity were significantly different. In fact, in almost all cases, police perceptions of their involvement in schools were significantly higher than school principal perceptions. Further, with the exception of teaching D.A.R.E., police reported significantly more teaching activity in schools than principals reported. We found more mixed results in terms of perceptions of law enforcement involvement in safety plans and meetings, with police reporting higher levels of participation in some plans and principals reporting greater police involvement in other plans.

There are several noteworthy findings when we examine multivariate models predicting level and frequency of law enforcement involvement in schools. For most of the activities, level (amount of activities participated in) and frequency (how often police participate in activities) of police involvement in schools were most consistently related to the school level, amount of school crime, and the presence of a dedicated school resource officer. Further, police involvement was significantly and positively related to these variables, suggesting that secondary schools, schools with higher levels of crime and disorder, and those with a SRO were more likely to have police involvement and this involvement was more frequent than in other types of schools. Surprisingly, police participation in activities was not significantly related to expenditure per student/year in any of the models. This is not to say that other socioeconomic variables were not related to police involvement. When percentage of minority students was removed from the models, we found that percentage of students eligible for free lunch was a significant and positive correlate for level of law enforcement-related activities, frequency of law

enforcement-related activities, frequency of police advising staff, and frequency of police presence at school events.

The site visits to fourteen schools and their corresponding law enforcement agencies provided an opportunity to better understand school problems, school/law enforcement relations, security measures, and the role of law enforcement involvement in schools. Teams of two researchers met with school administrators, teachers, staff, police officials, parents, and students. These visits allowed research teams to ask open-ended questions and therefore obtain more complete information about school safety and the extent of law enforcement involvement from a wide range of perspectives.

While the schools differed in many ways such as school level, region, and urbanism, a number of trends were found among these sites. The three problems mentioned at every school were lack of parental involvement, inadequate funding, and disciplinary issues. School staff were more likely to comment that children were not motivated or encouraged at home to value education when the school was located in a less educated and more impoverished community. School officials also expressed fear that reductions in budgets contributed to the loss of good teachers, programs, and security. Disciplinary problems were often attributed to students' lack of respect for rules and authority figures. Further, disciplinary problems were more likely to be cited as a problem in schools that reported conflicts between administration and faculty. In these types of schools, teachers often believed that the administration failed to sustain their efforts to discipline problem students. While some teachers expressed the opinion that police presence may serve as a deterrent for problem behavior, they also believed that the deterrence value was limited if the administration did not consistently enforce the rules.

In addition to lack of parental involvement, inadequate funding, and disciplinary problems, some school staff mentioned other issues. Many respondents described some sort of “critical incident” which affected attitudes or policies toward safety. One of these incidents involved a student who threatened to kill numerous students and school faculty, and described how each would be killed and the dates of their deaths. Other school staff expressed increased concerns since September 11, 2001 and potential threats toward schools. Further, changing demographics were cited as a trend that often contributed to a lack of social unity in the community, which sometimes was associated with loss of security or a rise in conflict. The location of the campus also created safety challenges. It was frequently mentioned that schools located near multi-family dwellings were susceptible to drug trafficking and other crime problems.

When asked about general safety issues, the majority of staff and students reported that they felt safe on their campuses and in their buildings. At every campus, however, some safety issues were evident. Many respondents expressed concern about potential problems with unauthorized access to the school. Specifically cited was the potential of strangers on campus, or non-custodial and emotional (e.g. depressed or angry) parents who show up to take a child without the authority to do so. While all of the schools we visited had procedures for visitors on campus, often parents were able to bypass the main office and enter their child’s classroom. Additionally, many of the schools noted that the physical structure of the building (e.g. open design, portable outbuildings, pods) or location of the main office made it difficult to monitor access to all entrances and exits where people may get in. Further, potentially dangerous traffic patterns during arrival and dismissal, and misbehavior on buses were common concerns among administrators, staff, and parents.

Other issues often mentioned during the site visits were concerns about drugs and weapons on campus. Students at the junior high and high school levels stated that drug possession was common, but that drug use tended to be limited to off-campus sites before and after school or during open lunch periods. Smoking marijuana was the most common type of drug use mentioned. Many students stated that weapon possession on campus was typically “accidental” (such as when students forget to remove hunting weapons from their vehicles).

The role of law enforcement was also explored in-depth during the site visits. The majority of school staff described current police involvement as “available as needed.” The most consistent response was that staff, parents, and students wanted a balance of police presence that met their needs but did not interfere with education or quality of life at school. There was often disagreement, however, with some parents wanting police in the schools and others disliking any police presence in schools. In some cases there appeared to be professional jealousies with teachers not wanting police to teach classes. Schools that had resource officers or private security officers tended to have staff that were very supportive of those positions. In several cases it seemed that teachers found comfort in knowing that there was an officer on campus who could use coercive force if necessary. It may be that the range of what police do is largely determined by the receptiveness of teachers.

Students who felt their SRO or security officer was friendly and helpful were supportive of police presence, but this support diminished if the officer was perceived as intrusive or confrontational with students. Opinions about police presence on campus also appeared to be associated with school level. Most of the people interviewed at elementary schools were against having an officer on campus on a daily basis. They stated that there was no need for daily police presence and that such presence may give others a bad impression of their school. In junior high

and high schools, however, we found greater levels of support for having a full-time law enforcement officer in their schools.

Opinions regarding the ideal role of police in schools varied widely among school staff, parents, and students. The general trend was that respondents thought that police should be able to assist in addressing problems, but differed in terms of to what extent and with what level of authority. Respondents stated they would like to have, in varying combinations, police as educators, legal resources, security, law enforcers, disciplinarians, counselors, role models, and mentors. The greatest consistency among respondents concerned the feedback from school resource officers. These officers tended to see their roles as diverse, with involvement in education, discipline, counseling, and serving as a role model. Further, sometimes having an officer in the school seemed to be limited to having police participate in traditional law enforcement-related activities, teaching D.A.R.E., and as security for social events. Other schools, however, seemed to view officers as a valuable resource as part of a more comprehensive school plan.

There were several advantages to law enforcement involvement in schools. Parents and staff believed that officers served several functions including: acting as a deterrent for student misbehavior and delinquent activity; availability for responding to emergencies; acting as role models; and their presence makes students, staff, and parents feel safer. Those participants that believed there were disadvantages to police involvement in schools mentioned the following: constant presence of an officer gives the impression that something is wrong at the school or might generate fear among staff, parents, and students; an officer on campus means a gun on campus which may be undesirable; and if students become too familiar with officers, they may lose respect for them and their authority if they become “buddies.” Overall, students, parents,

and staff were supportive of having police in their school. Similarly, law enforcement officials were eager to help schools if funds were available and if police presence was deemed necessary or beneficial for the school. Schools that had a substantial increase in the presence or involvement of law enforcement indicated that it was primarily a response to increases in violence or a tragic event.

This research also suggests that it is common for police roles to differ by school characteristics, such as school level. The survey results indicate that the type and frequency of police involvement in schools differs by school level and results from the site visits indicate that police, school administrators, staff, parents and students want this role to vary by school level. Generally, elementary schools have more limited roles for police. Elementary school respondents did not want police in their schools on a daily basis, but value police in a mentoring role and to be available if needed. Respondents at secondary schools generally expressed greater support for a broader and more frequent police role in their schools.

The site visits also indicated that sometimes there is conflict between schools and police. One source of conflict between police and school administrators is different expectations about the role of police in schools. We frequently heard from police that they did not want to enforce school rules. Written agreements outlining school and police expectations may help to clarify the role of police in schools and reduce conflicts and misunderstandings. Additionally, support for police in schools was higher when the administration and staff believed that their school resource officer did not overstep certain boundaries. It also became clear that officers were really supervised by their police departments rather than schools. Further, there were a variety of ways officers may be selected or volunteer to become SROs. Efforts to match school needs and with

officers who are sensitive to school concerns may result in a more appreciated and effective role for police in schools.

The site visits allowed us to better understand the role of law enforcement in schools, the relationship between schools and police, and how police became involved with the school. Additionally, we learned what type of law enforcement involvement administrators, teachers, parents, students, and police preferred. There was often disagreement and in part, this leads to the conclusion that there is no single ideal role for police in schools. The police role should vary by the needs of the school and often this was associated with school level, environmental factors, and school climate. Further, the policy of having officers assigned to several schools should be carefully examined. Officers who work at more than one school are often limited to dealing solely with security issues.

The site visits also provided an opportunity to more thoroughly explore school safety concerns in general. While some of these concerns were not crime related (e.g. playground equipment was old and not considered safe), many people were concerned about the lack of security in the school. It also became clear from these visits that the design of some school buildings contributes to security problems. While some schools attempted to reduce potential threats through the use of security technologies, the best solution was not always employed or used correctly. For example, we noticed at one site that the school had cameras, but had no one watching the cctv monitors. School personnel admitted that no one watched the monitors largely due to staffing shortages. Many schools simply lacked manpower and funds necessary for increased security. Further, some of the safety programs (e.g. a program aimed at eliminating drunk driving among students) implemented by schools have never been evaluated for their effectiveness. While many people expressed that they liked these programs, it is unknown



whether these programs had the desired, undesired, or any effect at all. Clearly, evaluating safety programs and security plans should be pursued in the interest of improving safety in our schools.

The influence of money in determining the role of police in schools cannot be overstated. The availability of grants has allowed schools to have officers that they otherwise would not be able to have. Further, some police departments indicated that without federal grants, they would not be able to continue to school resource officer programs. The uncertainty of whether there would be local money available once federal grants were exhausted deterred some police departments from hiring school resource officers.

Many questions remain unanswered. We are not aware of any data that schools or police departments may have had regarding the effectiveness of school resource officers. According to police chief responses, there did not seem to be formal systems in place to evaluate school resource officers. Since this study was not designed as an assessment of school resource officer programs, future research is needed to assess the effectiveness of school resource officer programs as well as a multitude of school safety programs that have yet to be evaluated. This will not be an easy task due to the many different ways that police may be involved in schools. Further, it is unclear whether members of the community could as effectively perform some of the duties of school resource officers. It is also unknown precisely how much schools influence the role of the police. It may be that the more involved the school is in suggesting officer activities, the broader the role of the police. Many schools seem to benefit from the range of police involvement in their schools. We do not yet know the ramifications of budget-related loss of school resource officers on the fear of crime, attitudes toward the police, and school safety.

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