

Your Question:

You asked if any jurisdictions have mandated reporting any threat of school violence to local law enforcement.

Our Response:

States and schools continue to explore how and when to involve local law enforcement in the event of a threat to school safety. In this response to your information request, we have divided policy examples into two categories: school discipline policies and general threats to school safety. We make this distinction here because we identified many school discipline policies that require involving law enforcement and found few examples of states that mandate notifying local law enforcement of general threats to school safety. These policies differ in a few key ways:

School Discipline Policies	General Threats to School Safety Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on specific violations and infractions of school policy. Generally, incident reports come from school employees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow for reporting of unspecified threats from student and unknown individuals. Allow reporting from students, parents and the public.

School Discipline

ECS recently completed a [50 state review of school discipline policies](#). In this review, we researched when schools are required to [involve law enforcement in school discipline](#), and identified at least 10 states that do not specify in statute or regulation when law enforcement must be involved. Generally, schools are required to involve law enforcement when a student:

- possesses a firearm on school grounds;
- harms or threatens harm to students, or otherwise threatens disruptive behavior;
- engages in a potentially criminal act.

In Ohio, one of the states that does not specify when law enforcement involvement is required, statute outlines when a principal may report an incident to law enforcement ([Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 3319.45](#)).

The [National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments](#) offers additional information on [school discipline laws and regulations](#). Under Monitoring and Accountability, select ‘reporting and referrals between schools and law enforcement.’

General Threats to School Safety

In the states and districts reviewed below, some have experimented with anonymous hotlines while others have created task forces to make school safety recommendations.

DC B 22-0968 (pending, 2018) would establish the Safe2Tell Act of 2018 in the Office of the Attorney General, allowing for the anonymous reporting of threats to schools. The program would establish a procedure to promptly notify the appropriate law enforcement and school officials. The bill states “the office may not be held liable for investigation of a report made to the program following confirmation of receipt of the report by the appropriate law enforcement agency, school official, or organization” (pg.2).

South Carolina HB 5008 (failed, 2018) would have required each public school to employ at least one full-time employee responsible for monitoring all school surveillance equipment. The employee would have been required to

notify administrators, the school resource officer, and if necessary, law enforcement if observed activity raised significant cause for concern.

Beginning with the [2018-2019 school year](#), Henderson County Public Schools in **North Carolina** are utilizing a “[Report It, Don’t Ignore It](#)” app. The app allows students, parents and members of the public to report concerning behaviors or threats to school administrators. The administrators can alert law enforcement if necessary. Henderson County Sheriff’s Office dispatchers [play a role](#) in monitoring reports made after school hours.

In 2016, **New Hampshire** passed [SB 370](#), which established a committee to study and make recommendations on real time threat notification systems to link schools and law enforcement. We were unable to locate any subsequent reports from the committee.

[School Safety Plans](#)

We have not completed a 50 state review of school safety plans, but many plans address involvement of local law enforcement. In the states that we review below, statute requires that the safety plans identify when and how incidents must be reported to law enforcement but stop short of mandating police involvement for threats of school violence.

School Safety Tip Lines in the News

- Pennsylvania Attorney General partners with Sandy Hook Promise to adopt the [Safe2Say Something program](#).
- Maryland Governor unveils the [Safe Schools Maryland](#) tip line.

Alabama statute ([Ala. Code § 16-1-24.1](#)) requires that principals notify law enforcement if any person has violated local board policies concerning threats of physical harm. Principals may have some discretion in following this requirement; earlier this year, a [local news station reported](#) a story about a local school that launched an internal investigation into a student’s “hit list” before reporting it to law enforcement.

Michigan law ([Mich. Comp. Laws Ann. § 380.1308](#)) outlines what must be included in the statewide school safety information policy. Each school board, county prosecutor and law enforcement agency are required to confer on the implementation of the statewide school safety policy; however, the local law agencies to be involved must be determined locally. The policy must identify the types of incidents that occur at school that must be reported to law enforcement and establish procedures for such an incident.

In early 2018, **New Hampshire** Governor Sununu formed the [School Safety Preparedness Task Force](#). Chaired by the director of the state Department of Safety, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, the task force [released a report](#) with 59 recommendations. Under the “Communication” guidance, the task force recommended that school staff be granted explicit authority to contact 9-1-1.