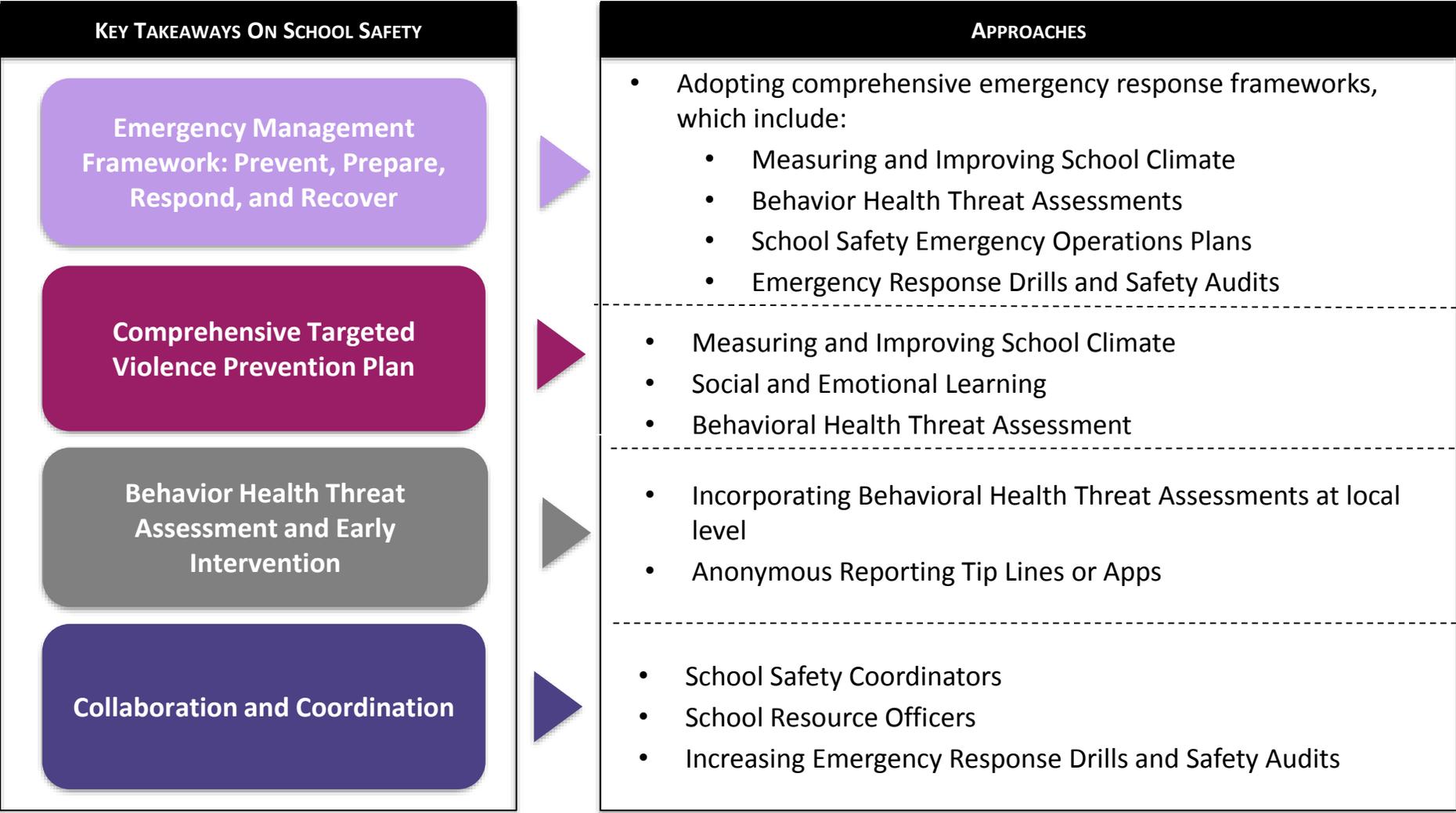




# State Trends in School Safety

# Recent Key Takeaways on School Safety and Homeland Security



School Safety and Security Task Force Report, Massachusetts, 2014  
 K-12 School Security Task Force Report, New Jersey, 2017  
 School and Firearm Safety Action Plan, Texas, 2018  
 An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence, USSS, 2018



# Key Themes

**I. School Safety Governance and Approaches**

**II. Prevention Efforts**

**III. Planning and Personnel**

**IV. Preparedness and Response**

# **School Safety Governance and Multidisciplinary Approaches**

# State Trends: Multidisciplinary Approach for Statewide Bodies

- **Governors play a critical role in setting a statewide agenda, convening agencies, and encouraging collaboration.**
- **Partnerships across the state with a comprehensive approach including: physical security, preparedness planning and response strategies, positive social and emotional development, school-based interventions, family-school-community partnerships, and more.**
- **Statewide plans have also been based in the framework of an emergency management cycle, applying education, health, and public safety partnerships throughout the continuum.**

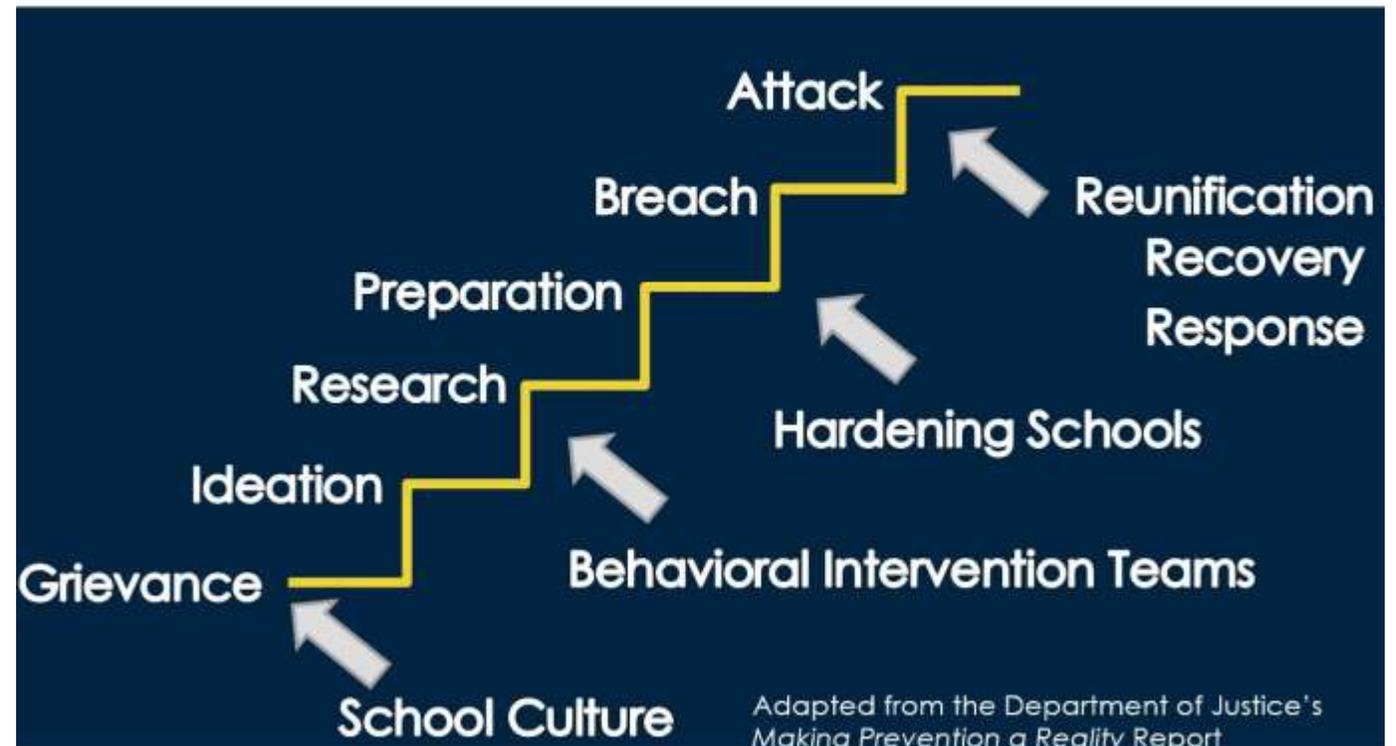
# Multidisciplinary Programmatic Example: New Hampshire

## Disrupting the Pathway of Violence



### New Hampshire Prevention, Intervention, Response & Recovery Efforts

- The state is undertaking a comprehensive approach to prevention efforts and creating off-ramps at every stage where a young person may be at risk.



# Prevention Efforts

# State Trends: Prevention – Behavior Health Threat Assessment

*Behavioral Health Threat Assessment:* A structured process to evaluate and address identified

- Assess the credibility and severity of a threat of violence
- Structured process used by a multidisciplinary team with complementary expertise – often in counseling, school administration, instruction, and law enforcement
- Primary strategy recommended by federal law enforcement to prevent violent attacks on schools

## *State Specific Example : Virginia*

- Field tested at 35 schools; Virginia was the first state to require behavioral health threat assessment teams in every K-12 school via legislation
- Virginia model for behavioral health threat assessment resulted in reports of lower suspension rates and less bullying
- In 2016-2017 two-thirds of Virginia schools conducted assessments:
  - 9,238 assessments conducted
  - 50% threats related to self harm
  - 10% classified at highest level of assessment
  - State reports that in 96% of cases, the threat was averted

# State Trends: Prevention – Tip Lines or Apps

*Tip Lines or Apps:* Report school safety threats, suicide threats, bully, drug use, or other violence

- Reporting through text message, toll free hotlines, voicemail, email, and smartphone apps allowing for anonymous reporting.
- Reported information directed to law enforcement, state homeland security apparatuses (such as fusion centers), or school administrators - depending on whether a criminal nexus
- Philosophy: students are the best sources of information before an event occurs.

*State Specific Examples :* Colorado and Michigan

- Michigan, “OK2SAY” student safety program that allows students to confidentially report tips of potential harm or criminal activities directed at students, employees, or campuses.
  - Since launching in 2014 it has received over 14,000 tips
  - Michigan State Police hired special civilian positions just to handle tips
- Colorado, “Safe2Tell” received over 12,000 tips in the past year
  - Colorado tip line data shows 28 prevented attacks in a six year period
  - Most tips come through mobile-based apps
  - Anonymity mandated in statute
  - Largest impact has been in suicide prevention

# Planning and Personnel

# State Trends: Planning & Personnel – School Safety Plans

*School Safety Plans:* Detailed document governing school responses to a variety of emergencies

- Procedures to follow before, during, and after an emergency including: lockdown protocols, communication with emergency personnel, and notification of and reunification with parents
- Staff training to implement plan

## Common School Safety Plan Practices in States

Collaboration with local police, fire, rescue, or other community partners

Require public schools to submit school safety plans to state school safety center, department of education, law enforcement, or homeland security professionals for review

Plans available to first responders and school officials online

Encourage memorandums of understanding between first responders and charter/private/parochial schools

- Certain states are required to have a school safety plan.
- Comprehensive plan (natural disasters, acts of violence, medical emergencies etc.)
- Must be provided to local law enforcement
- Reviewed annually by school board

# State Trends: Planning & Personnel – School Resource Officers

*School Resource Officers (SROs): Sworn or certified law enforcement assigned to a school*

- Engage in community policing to create a safe environment
- Authorized to carry a firearm on campus
- SROs have a variety of roles, including: first responder, informal counselor, and liaison between the school and public safety agencies

Common Considerations for SROs	
Training	Topics such as: trauma-informed approaches, implicit bias, positive youth development
Certification	Specialized training standards and certification from the state
SRO Selection Protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Picking officers best fit for the role</li><li>• Potential input from administrators</li></ul>
SRO Performance Metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cannot be based on # of arrests</li></ul>

*\*SROs are authorized in at least **36 states**; their use however is typically decided at the local level*

# Preparedness and Response

# State Trends: Preparedness and Response – School Hardening

*Physical Security:* States are minimally involved with the process of physical security in schools

- School divisions, not states, typically determine the design of a building on a school campus and the physical security measure, if any, that would be used
- State limited to: providing guidance informed by federal practices, encouraging or directing school security assessments, or providing funding contingent on adherence to requirements.

If states provide funding it is primarily through two avenues: **One-time capital grants** or through **loans/permitting localities to raise levies for the project**, some examples include:

One-Time Capital  
Funding Ranging  
Between:  
10 and 99 Million  
dollars

Various Loan Sizes  
and Localities  
Raising Funding

# State Trends: Preparedness and Response – Safety Audits

*Safety Audits:* Utilized to identify different ways to improve school safety

- Physical safety of school buildings and grounds
- Safety plans, policies, and procedures can all be revisited when a safety audit is being conducted
- Many states rely on “self-audits” conducted by school staff

Type of Safety Audit
General School Safety Audit
Audit of Facility Site (physical safety of school building & grounds)

# State Trends: Preparedness and Response – Drills & Exercises

*Drills and Exercises:* used to prepare students and staff for a myriad of emergencies

- Most common drills conducted in schools across the country focus on: fire, inclement weather, and lockdowns.
- Number of school reporting that they now conduct active shooter drills has risen
- Drills and exercises are governed by a clear plan, but various states take different approaches