



# **2022 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS:2022)**

**OMB# 1850-0761 v.21**

## **Supporting Statement Part A**

National Center for Education Statistics  
Institute of Education Sciences  
U.S. Department of Education

January 2021

## Contents

<b>Section A. Justification</b> .....	<b>1</b>
A.1. Circumstances Making Collection of Information Necessary.....	1
A.2. Purposes, Uses, and Availability of Information.....	3
A.3. Appropriate Use of Information Technology.....	4
A.4. Efforts to Identify Duplication.....	4
A.5. Methods Used to Minimize Burden on Small Entities.....	6
A.6. Frequency of Data Collection.....	7
A.7. Special Circumstances of the Data Collection.....	7
A.8. Consultants Outside the Agency.....	7
A.9. Provision of Payments or Gifts to Respondents.....	8
A.10. Assurance of Confidentiality.....	9
A.11. Sensitive Questions.....	10
A.12. Estimates of Burden for Information Collection.....	10
A.13. Estimates of Cost Burden to Respondents.....	13
A.14. Estimates of Annual Government Cost.....	13
A.15. Reasons for Changes in Response Burden.....	13
A.16. Time Schedule.....	13
A.17. Approval to Not Display Expiration Date of OMB Approval.....	16
A.18. Exceptions to the Certification.....	16

## **Section A. Justification**

This request is to conduct the 2022 administration of the School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS).

SSOCS is a nationally representative survey of elementary and secondary school principals that serves as the primary source of school-level data on crime and safety in public schools, and was conducted in 2000, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2016, 2018, and 2020 (OMB# 1850-0761). Four years separated the first two collections of SSOCS to allow for sufficient time to study the results of the first survey and to allow for necessary redesign work; the next three collections were conducted at 2-year intervals. Due to a reorganization of the sponsoring agency (the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools) and funding issues, the 2012 administration of SSOCS, although approved by OMB, was not fielded. With new funding available through the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), SSOCS was conducted again in the spring of the 2015–16 school year. With continued dedicated funding, SSOCS has resumed collection on a biennial basis, with collections during the spring of the 2017–18 and the 2019–20 school years, and the next planned collection during the spring of the 2021–22 school year.

SSOCS is a survey of public schools covering the topic of school crime and violence and is designed to produce nationally representative data on public schools. Historically, it has been conducted by mail, with telephone and e-mail follow-up; however, as an experiment, an Internet version was fielded during the SSOCS:2018 administration. For SSOCS:2020, the Internet version was initially offered to all respondents, with the paper version sent via mail as a follow-up, and the same methodology will be used for SSOCS:2022. The respondent is the school principal or a member of the school staff designated by the principal as the person “the most knowledgeable about school crime and policies to provide a safe environment.”

The 2022 survey is being funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Safe and Supportive Schools (previously known as the Office of Safe and Healthy Students) and conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), within the U.S. Department of Education. As with prior SSOCS collections, NCES has entered into an interagency agreement with the Census Bureau to administer the 2022 collection.

This request is to conduct the 2022 administration of the School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS). As part of this submission, NCES is publishing a notice in the Federal Register allowing first a 60- and then a 30-day public comment period. As part of SSOCS:2022 development, cognitive testing on new COVID-19 pandemic items will be conducted during the winter and spring of 2021, scheduled to be completed in late-spring 2021. The wording and design of these items may be modified in response to the findings of this testing and, as such, will be updated in a change request, tentatively scheduled for October 2021. That change request will also include small changes to the communication materials; see Appendix A for more details of the changes expected.

### **A.1. Circumstances Making Collection of Information Necessary**

SSOCS is the only recurring federal survey that collects detailed information on the incidence, frequency, seriousness, and nature of violence affecting students and school personnel, as well as other indicators of school safety from the schools’ perspective. As such, it fills an important gap in data collected by NCES and other agencies. It collects information on:

- the frequency and types of crimes at schools, including rape; sexual assault; physical attacks with or without weapons; threats of attack with or without weapons; robbery with or without weapons; theft; possession of weapons; distribution, possession, or use of illegal drugs or alcohol; and vandalism;
- the frequency and types of disciplinary actions for selected offenses, such as removals with no continuing services; transfers to specialized schools; and suspensions;
- perceptions of other disciplinary problems, such as student racial or ethnic tensions; bullying; harassment; verbal abuse; disorder in the classroom; and gang activities;

- school policies and programs concerning crime and safety;
- student, parent, teacher, and law enforcement involvement in efforts intended to prevent or reduce school violence;
- mental health services available to students at school and limitations on schools' efforts to provide these services; and
- school characteristics associated with school crime.

The predecessor to SSOCS was a one-time survey done through NCES's Fast Response Survey System (FRSS) in 1996–97. Around the time when the FRSS data were being released in 1997–98, a number of tragic shootings occurred at schools across the country. These events took place in Pearl, MS; West Paducah, KY; Jonesboro, AR; and Columbine, CO. When it came to light that neither the Departments of Justice nor Education had a recurring survey by which to measure the frequency of crime and violence at schools, the Department of Education made a commitment to begin such a survey on a regular basis. Thus, planning for SSOCS began.

From the beginning, the purpose of SSOCS was to provide data about school crime and safety in the nation's public elementary and secondary schools. As allocated by its budget, SSOCS continues to meet this purpose by collecting data on elementary and secondary regular public schools. This includes magnet and charter schools and excludes public alternative, vocational, virtual, and special education schools, as well as private schools.

The original SSOCS questionnaire, used in the 2000 data collection, was developed in consultation with a technical review panel (TRP) consisting of some of the nation's top experts on school crime and school programs relating to crime and safety. Revisions to the 2004 questionnaire were based on an analysis of responses to the 2000 questionnaire, a review of current literature in the field, feedback from a TRP and invested government agencies, and the results of extensive pretesting conducted by Abt Associates. The questionnaires used in 2006 and 2008 were essentially the same as that used in 2004. The questionnaire used in 2010 was similar to that used in 2008, but it incorporated minor revisions based on feedback from several SSOCS data users and school crime and safety experts. The questionnaire planned for use in 2012 incorporated two additional items on bullying that underwent cognitive testing and were approved in the OMB clearance update for the 2012 collection (OMB# 1850-0761 v.6).

Revisions to the full SSOCS questionnaire used in 2016 were based on several sources of information, including an analysis of responses to the SSOCS:2010 questionnaire, a review of current literature in the field, feedback from a TRP and invested government agencies, the results of extensive cognitive testing, and NIJ's goals related to collecting information about school security personnel and mental health services. In order to establish or maintain trend from the 2016 and earlier collections, minimal revisions were made to the 2018 and 2020 questionnaires.

SSOCS:2022 will continue to provide a valuable tool to policymakers and researchers who need to know what the level of school crime is and how it is changing, what disciplinary actions schools are taking, what policies and programs related to school crime and violence schools have in place, and what related services are available to students. New questions were introduced to the SSOCS:2022 questionnaire to address the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in the closing of school buildings and had a significant impact on the operating status of schools in 2020 and 2021. Revisions to the 2022 questionnaire are detailed in Supporting Statement Part C of this submission.

### **Legislative Authorization**

NCES is authorized to conduct SSOCS by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, U.S.C. 20 §9543).

The reauthorization in 2002 of the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994 and the Department of Justice Appropriations Act passed in 2014 provide additional legislative authority to conduct this study. The Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994 was reauthorized to support drug

and violence prevention programs, including a data collection to be performed by NCES to collect data on the incidence and prevalence of illegal drug use and violence in elementary and secondary schools. SSOCS will address this provision by providing statistics on the frequency of school violence, the nature of the school environment, and the characteristics of school violence prevention programs.

The Department of Justice Appropriations Act passed in 2014 provided funds for NIJ to conduct research about school safety. In response, NIJ developed the Comprehensive School Safety Initiative (CSSI) to use a variety of research and data collection efforts to learn which programs, policies, and practices are effective in making schools safer. Since understanding schools' safety problems begins with collecting better data, part of the initiative's goal is to improve data collection at the national level. As a part of this effort, NIJ fully funded the SSOCS:2016 data collection and provided supplemental funding for the 2018 collection. SSOCS will continue to specifically address the priorities of the initiative by collecting more in-depth information on the roles and responsibilities of mental health professionals and law enforcement officers working in schools as part of the SSOCS:2022 collection.

## **A.2. Purposes, Uses, and Availability of Information**

SSOCS has been designed to meet the congressional mandate for NCES to provide statistics on the frequency of school violence, the nature of the school environment, and the characteristics of school violence prevention programs. Such national data are critical, given the tendency to focus on anecdotal evidence of crimes without knowing the true frequency of problems in schools. Accurate information is necessary for policymakers to make informed decisions about school policy, and to demonstrate to the public a proactive approach to school safety. Most items from prior SSOCS questionnaires will be included in the 2022 survey, thus allowing comparisons with previous years. A complete description of the differences between the 2020 and 2022 surveys is provided in the questionnaire changes and rationale section in Supporting Statement Part C.

NCES will use the SSOCS:2022 data to prepare summary descriptive reports of the findings and will make the data available both as a restricted-use database (for use by researchers and policymakers on school crime and safety) and as a public-use database available on the NCES website.

Data from the previous SSOCS surveys have been released in NCES's *Condition of Education* and *Digest of Education Statistics*, as well as in its *Indicators of School Crime and Safety*. Each iteration of SSOCS data has also been released in a First Look report, as listed below:

- *Crime, Violence, Discipline, and Safety in U.S. Public Schools, Findings From the School Survey on Crime and Safety: 2017–18* (as well as for 2015–16; 2009–10; 2007–08; 2005–06; and 2003–04); and
- *Violence in U.S. Public Schools: 2000 School Survey on Crime and Safety*.

The First Look report and restricted-use data file and user's manual for the SSOCS:2020 data collection will be released in the fall of 2021. All of these products will be available on the NCES website. Summary statistics will also be available on the NCES website in a table library containing cross-tabulations of SSOCS variables by various school characteristics.

Data products from the previous SSOCS surveys are also available on the NCES website. Public-use data files are available on the NCES website in various software formats (with accompanying survey documentation and codebooks), while restricted-use SSOCS data files are available to users who obtain a restricted use license agreement with NCES. Additionally, some older SSOCS public-use datasets are hosted on the website of the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR).

## **A.3. Appropriate Use of Information Technology**

In accordance with the contact strategy employed for the SSOCS:2020, SSOCS:2022 will be primarily conducted by the web-based survey instrument, with instructions distributed to respondents by both mail and e-mail on how to complete the questionnaire. Paper questionnaires will be introduced to non-respondents in follow-up mailings, in addition to follow-up efforts by both telephone and e-mail.

All SSOCS:2022 schools will receive assurances that all of their data will be stored on secure online servers controlled by the U.S. Census Bureau and will be given the option to instead respond by paper during follow-up mailings later in the data collection.

Principals' e-mail addresses, obtained through clerical research prior to the SSOCS:2022 data collection, will be utilized during data collection. All school principals will receive invitations to complete the SSOCS questionnaire via the web-based instrument and will be sent reminder e-mails, as appropriate, throughout the data collection period. All e-mail addresses will be "masked" so that recipients do not have access to the e-mail addresses of other recipients. An electronic database maintained by the U.S. Census Bureau will be used to track all sampled cases in order to determine where further follow-up during data collection is required.

Computer edits will be performed to verify the completeness of the questionnaire and the consistency of the data collected. For example, computer edits will verify whether a subset of responses adds to the total, whether skip patterns have been followed correctly, whether values fall outside of the range typically found for such schools, and whether some responses might be logically inconsistent.

#### **A.4. Efforts to Identify Duplication**

SSOCS was initially developed in consultation with the

- Office of Safe and Supportive Schools (OSSS), formerly known as the Office of Safe and Healthy Students and the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools;
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP);
- Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS);
- Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP);
- National Institute of Justice (NIJ);
- Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS); and
- national experts on the topic of school crime.

When SSOCS was first developed, extant surveys that touch on the topic of school crime and safety were examined to determine where duplication might exist. While there were other federal surveys that collected information from principals about school crime and safety (the 2000 National Study of Delinquency Prevention in Schools and the 1999–2000 School Health Policies and Programs), they did not collect the same type of information as SSOCS. SSOCS provides more extensive coverage of the types of crime and discipline that occur in schools, as well as the efforts that schools use to combat crime.

Other surveys that have collected similar information as SSOCS are not administered repeatedly. For example, the Safe School Study of 1976, and the 1991, 1996–97,<sup>1</sup> and 2014 FRSS surveys, collected data from principals on school crime. These surveys, however, are not recurring. SSOCS's regular and repeated administrations allow for the analysis of trends in the incidence of school crime and its correlates.

In 2016, NCES developed and administered a pilot of the ED School Climate Surveys (EDSCLS), which assessed various indicators of school climate from the perspectives of students, parents, teachers, and non-instructional staff. A small subset of the SSOCS items were included in the EDSCLS to provide a school-level picture of safety; however, these items were structured as Likert-type perception questions rather than as factual questions on school crime incidents and safety policies, as they are in SSOCS. The EDSCLS was intended to only collect nationally representative data one time during a 2016 benchmarking study. However, due to low response rates, the EDSCLS benchmark study was canceled.

The National Teacher Principal Survey (NTPS) includes a section on school climate and safety. Within this section, there are two questions that have subitems that directly overlap with subitems in SSOCS. While these items have been included in SSOCS since 2004 and their continued collection allows for trend analyses over time, including these data in the NTPS allows for a linkage to teacher responses, for example, on teacher-reported working conditions and climate. Therefore, there are different, yet important, reasons to continue this overlap in future data collections.

---

<sup>1</sup> The 1996–97 FRSS survey was a predecessor to SSOCS:2000.

Other federal surveys obtain information about school crime from individuals other than those who have the school-level perspective of principals. For example, the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey—administered in 1989, 1995, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, and 2019—collected data on perceptions of school crime and safety from students ages 12 to 18. Students also serve as the primary respondents in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey and the Monitoring the Future Survey.

The Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC), administered by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), collects some information on crime and discipline from local education agencies (LEAs) rather than school principals. For CRDC, each LEA completes an LEA-level survey plus one school-level survey for each of its schools. There is some overlap in topical areas between SSOCS and CRDC, specifically, the counts of incidents reported, disciplinary actions, and harassment/bullying data. However, CRDC collects these data at a disaggregated level (e.g., by student race/ethnicity), whereas SSOCS focuses on overall counts at the school level and is intended to provide a national benchmark on the status of violence and discipline in our nation's schools. Additionally, given that SSOCS and CRDC collect data from different types of respondents, it is uncertain whether the responses received on similar items will be comparable. To test for this, NCES and OCR have been working together to compare estimates of incident counts that are reported in both surveys. Analyses conducted by NCES's contractor, the American Institutes for Research (AIR), comparing data between SSOCS and CRDC for the 2015–16 and 2017–18 school years showed discrepancies in the information reported for schools that responded to the same items in both surveys. For further investigation into this issue, NCES worked with AIR to conduct a study to interview respondents to learn about both SSOCS and CRDC respondents' processes for collecting and submitting crime data as well as their understanding of the survey items (OMB #1850-0803 v.262). The goals of the study were to obtain information to improve the survey items, reduce the burden of future data collections, and ensure that the resulting data are more accurate for schools, districts, policymakers, and other data users. The study findings suggest incongruencies with how school-level respondents report information compared to their district-level counterparts. Recommendations for improved technical assistance and data quality measures are being considered for future administrations of the CRDC. Based on the results for this study, it was intended for the overlapping items to be removed from SSOCS for the 2022 collection. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures during the 2019–20 school year, the CRDC collection was delayed a year which has now put the CRDC and SSOCS collections off cycle from each other. Further, continued lack of dedicated NCES funding and staffing has resulted in the decision to discontinue the SSOCS after the 2022 collection. Therefore, it was decided to continue to collect the overlapping information on SSOCS for the SSOCS:2022 collection in order to retain the trend on crime incidents for one final administration.

To address the priorities of the NIJ in collecting more data on mental health services in schools, several new items in this area were added to SSOCS:2016. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has administered the School Health Policies and Practices Study (SHPPS), a national survey conducted periodically to assess school health policies and practices at the state, district, school, and classroom levels. The 2014 SHPPS included a questionnaire on mental health and social services that collected school-level information; however, the respondent could be any member of the school staff. SHHPS included items on the types and number of mental health professionals in schools and the services they offer. The questions included in the SSOCS questionnaire complement those in the SHPPS, but focus on student access to services and professionals as funded by the school or district. Gathering this information through SSOCS provides an indication of whether or not schools are equipped to deal with student mental health issues that may contribute to school crime and violence. In addition, it allows for the analysis of the incidence of crime in relation to the provision of student services.

#### **A.5. Methods Used to Minimize Burden on Small Entities**

The burden on small schools and districts is minimized during the SSOCS data collection through the sample design. The design specifies the selection of schools as a function of size, which is defined by the number of students. Small schools and districts are sampled at lower rates because they comprise a smaller proportion

of the student population per school.

The SSOCS:2022 initial invitation letter will be mailed to respondents in February 2022 and will include log-in information and instructions to complete the online questionnaire within 2 weeks. Schools that do not respond will be contacted by mailings and e-mails to encourage them to complete their questionnaire online. Schools that have not responded by April will be mailed a SSOCS:2022 paper questionnaire. Schools will also receive e-mail reminders throughout the data collection period. The data collection period will remain open through June 2022.

For a number of reasons, schools are encouraged to complete the survey in less than 30 days. One reason for this is that the data collection is designed to close at the end of the school year (and not overlap with the beginning of summer vacation). Thus, in order to achieve a high response rate, there needs to be enough time before the end of the school year to place follow-up calls and send follow-up mailings and e-mails to principals, as necessary. Most of the schools in the earlier SSOCS collections required some form of nonresponse follow-up, and this is expected for the 2022 surveys as well.

The timing of the survey administration is also designed to avoid overburdening principals at the very end of the school year, when they have other administrative responsibilities. The survey collects counts of certain events, such as the number of crimes or disciplinary actions, which occur during the school year. In order to collect information on as much of the school year as possible, the data collection period is kept short and finishes as close to the end of the school year as possible.

#### **A.6. Frequency of Data Collection**

This request is for clearance of SSOCS:2022 and no future administrations of SSOCS are planned at this time. If additional funding is secured to continue to administer SSOCS past 2022, separate requests will be submitted for future SSOCS collections.

#### **A.7. Special Circumstances of the Data Collection**

There are no other special circumstances.

#### **A.8. Consultants Outside the Agency**

Since its inception, the development of SSOCS has relied on the substantive and technical review and comments of people both inside and outside the U.S. Department of Education. Outside experts who were convened to offer comments on revisions for the SSOCS 2022 collections include

- Lynn Addington, Department of Justice, Law and Society, American University
- William Dikel, Consultant on School Mental Health
- Elizabeth Freeman, American Institutes for Research
- Denise Gottfredson, Department of Criminology and Justice, University of Maryland
- Bill Modzeleski, SIGMA Threat Management
- Amanda Nickerson, Educational and Counseling Psychology, University of Albany, SUNY
- Dr. Jolene D. Smyth, Department of Sociology and Director of the Bureau of Sociological Research, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- Jon Carrier, Maryland Association of School Resource Officers
- Benjamin Fisher, University of Louisville
- Christine Handy, National Association of Secondary School Principals
- Kimberly Kendziora, American Institutes for Research
- Mary Poulin Carlton, National Institute of Justice
- Jill Sharkey, University of California, Santa Barbara
- Michael Planty, RTI International

The SSOCS instruments have benefited from consultation with the following federal experts:

- Rachel Morgan, BJS
- Jenna Truman, BJS



- Nadine Frederique, NIJ
- Phelan Wyrick, NIJ
- Calvin Hodnett, NIJ (COPS)
- Matthew Scheider, NIJ (COPS)
- Dara Blachman-Demner (COPS)
- David Esquith, Former Director, Office of Safe and Healthy Students (OSHS)
- Sarah Sisaye, Health and Human Services (formerly at OSHS)
- Rita Foy Moss, Office of Safe and Supportive Schools (OSSS)
- Paul Kesner, Office of Safe and Supportive Schools (OSSS)
- Bryan Williams, Office of Safe and Supportive Schools (OSSS)
- Madeline Sullivan, Office of Safe and Supportive Schools (OSSS)
- Rosa Olmeda, Office of Civil Rights

### **A.9. Provision of Payments or Gifts to Respondents**

Some districts charge a fee (~\$50-200) to process research application requests, which will be paid as necessary.

SSOCS:2018 included an incentive experiment designed to examine the effectiveness of offering principals a monetary incentive to boost the overall response rate. The analyses of this experiment showed higher response rates and significantly faster response times for schools that were part of the incentive treatment group. SSOCS:2022 will build on the SSOCS:2018 incentive experiment and will include two incentive treatment groups. Schools in the “early incentive” treatment group will receive a \$10 cash incentive at the first contact by mail. Schools in the “delayed incentive” treatment group will not receive an incentive in the first two mail contacts but will receive a \$10 cash incentive during the third mail contact. Both treatment groups will be evaluated against the control group, which will not receive any incentive. The goal of this experiment is to further refine the SSOCS incentive strategy by comparing response rates, indicators of nonresponse bias, and data collection costs between the early and delayed incentive strategies, relative to a no-incentive control.

Note that this experiment was originally planned for SSOCS:2020, but changes were made to the collection strategy during data collection due to the emergent situation related to the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in the closure of many school buildings across the nation along with the closure of the Census Bureau National Processing Center. As such, the incentive experiment planned for the SSOCS:2020 will instead be conducted as part of SSOCS:2022.

### **A.10. Assurance of Confidentiality**

Data security and confidentiality protection procedures have been put in place for SSOCS:2022 to ensure that all contractors and agents working on SSOCS comply with all privacy requirements including, as applicable:

1. The Inter-agency agreement with NCES for this study and the statement of work of SSOCS contract;
2. *Privacy Act of 1974* (5 U.S.C. §552a);
3. *Privacy Act Regulations* (34 CFR Part 5b);
4. *Computer Security Act of 1987*;
5. *U.S.A. Patriot Act of 2001* (P.L. 107-56);
6. *Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002* (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9573);
7. *Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015* (6 U.S.C. §151);
8. *Foundations of Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018*, Title III, Part B, Confidential Information Protection;
9. The U.S. Department of Education General Handbook for Information Technology Security General Support Systems and Major Applications Inventory Procedures (March 2005);
10. The U.S. Department of Education Incident Handling Procedures (February 2009);

11. The U.S. Department of Education, ACS Directive OM: 5-101, Contractor Employee Personnel Security Screenings;
12. NCES Statistical Standards; and
13. All new legislation that impacts the data collected through the inter-agency agreement and contract for this study.

The U.S. Census Bureau will collect data under an interagency agreement with NCES, and maintain the individually identifiable questionnaires per the agreement, including:

1. Provisions for data collection in the field;
2. Provisions to protect the data-coding phase required before machine processing;
3. Provisions to safeguard completed survey documents;
4. Authorization procedures to access or obtain files containing identifying information; and
5. Provisions to remove printouts and other outputs that contain identification information from normal operation (such materials will be maintained in secured storage areas and will be securely destroyed as soon as practical).

U.S. Census Bureau and contractors working on SSOCS:2022 will comply with the Department of Education's IT security policy requirements as set forth in the Handbook for Information Assurance Security Policy and related procedures and guidance, as well as IT security requirements in the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) publications, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) standards and guidance. All data products and publications will also adhere to: the revised NCES Statistical Standards, as described at the website: <https://nces.ed.gov/statprog/2012/>.

By law (20 U.S.C. §9573), a violation of the confidentiality restrictions is a felony, punishable by imprisonment of up to 5 years and/or a fine of up to \$250,000. All government or contracted staff working on the SSOCS study and having access to the data, including SSOCS field staff, are required to sign an NCES Affidavit of Nondisclosure and have received public-trust security clearance. These requirements include the successful certification and accreditation of the system before it can be implemented. Appropriate memoranda of understanding and interconnection security agreements will be documented as part of the certification and accreditation process.

From the initial contact with the participants in this survey through all of the follow-up efforts, potential survey respondents will be informed that (a) the U.S. Census Bureau administers SSOCS on behalf of NCES; (b) NCES is authorized to conduct SSOCS by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543); (c) all of the information they provide may only be used for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151); and (d) that their participation is voluntary.

The following language will be included in respondent contact materials and on data collection instruments:

*The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the U.S. Department of Education, conducts SSOCS as authorized by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543).*

*All of the information you provide may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151).*

*According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this voluntary information collection is 1850-0761. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average [XX] minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate, suggestions for improving this collection, or comments or concerns about the contents or the status of your individual submission of this questionnaire, please e-mail: [ssocs@census.gov](mailto:ssocs@census.gov), or write directly to: School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), National Center for Education Statistics, PCP, 550 12th Street SW, #4036, Washington, DC 20202.*

## **A.11. Sensitive Questions**

As is clearly stated on recruitment materials and in the questionnaires, SSOCS:2022 is a voluntary survey. No one is required to respond to the SSOCS questionnaire or specific questions within it. The items in the SSOCS questionnaire are not considered to be sensitive, as they collect information about schools rather than about individuals (see Supporting Statement Part C for a description and justification of the items and appendix B for the questionnaire). Items about the frequency of crime and disciplinary problems at the school could be viewed as sensitive by some respondents because schools may not want to report data associated with unusually high frequencies of problems. However, the protection of individually identifiable information from disclosure is stated in the cover letter to participants. Also, the SSOCS questionnaire asks for information that is generally in the public domain (e.g., information on policies which schools communicate to their students and parents in a variety of ways).

## **A.12. Estimates of Burden for Information Collection**

The estimated burden to respondents for all of SSOCS:2022 activities is presented in Table. The time required to respond to the collection is estimated based on the responses in previous SSOCS administrations. Recruitment and pre-collection activities include (a) the time to review study requirements in the districts that require research approval before contacting their schools and (b) the time involved in a school deciding to participate.

SSOCS:2018 yielded an unweighted response rate of approximately 58 percent. When the responding schools were weighted to account for their original sampling probabilities, the response rate increased to approximately 62 percent. SSOCS:2020 yielded an unweighted response rate of approximately 51 percent. However, given the strain that the COVID-19 pandemic, which included the closure of many schools across the nation and the closure of the Census Bureau's National Processing Center (NPC), put on the SSOCS:2020 data collection, the SSOCS:2018 is likely more accurate predictor for SSOCS:2022 response.

As in the prior collections, the objectives of the SSOCS:2022 sample design are twofold: to obtain overall cross-sectional and subgroup estimates of important indicators of school crime and safety and to develop precise estimates of change in various characteristics relating to crime between the SSOCS administrations. To attain these objectives and taking into consideration the low response rates in the 2018 and 2020 collections, approximately 4,800 total schools will be drawn in the sample: 2,340 schools will be assigned to the "early incentive" treatment; the remaining 2,460 schools will either be assigned to the "late incentive" treatment or the control group. Respondents that are in districts which do not allow gifts or payments to employees will not receive contact materials with the incentive language. Given the inclusion of the incentive experiment aimed at increasing the overall response, we anticipate at least maintaining the SSOCS:2018 response rate, which will yield more completed surveys than needed to meet the study's objectives.

An item was included in the SSOCS:2020 questionnaire that asked respondents, "How long did it take you to complete this form, not counting interruptions?" Based on their answers, respondents took approximately 56 minutes, on average, to respond to the SSOCS survey in 2020. In preparation for SSOCS:2022, upon reviewing the SSOCS:2020 survey items and considering the addition of the new COVID-19 pandemic items, it is estimated that the average 2022 survey response time in SSOCS:2022 will be 60 minutes.

Districts selected for the SSOCS sample that require submission and approval of a research application before the schools under their jurisdiction can be asked to participate in a study will be contacted to seek research approval. Based on previous SSOCS administrations, we estimate that approximately 195 special contact districts will be included in the SSOCS:2022 sample. The process for contacting special districts for SSOCS:2022 will follow the same process as previous SSOCS administrations.

Principals of sampled schools will be notified of the survey through an initial mailout containing an invitation letter with log-in information for the online questionnaire. The burden per school for reading and potentially following up on the SSOCS initial letter and any follow-up letters and e-mails is estimated to

average about 6 minutes total.

**Table 1. Estimated hourly burden for SSOCS:2022**

Activity for each administration	Sample size	Expected response rate	Number of respondents *	Number of responses	Burden hours per respondent	Total burden hours
District IRB Staff Review	195	0.80	156	156	3	468
District IRB Panel Review	195*6	0.80	936	936	1	936
State Notification	51	1.0	51	51	0.05	3
District Notification	2,800	1.0	2,800	2,800	0.05	140
School Recruitment	4,800	1.0	4,800	4,800	0.1	480
SSOCS Questionnaire	4,800	0.6**	2,880	2,880	1	2,880
<b>Total for SSOCS:2022 administration</b>	-	-	<b>8,743</b>	<b>11,623</b>	-	<b>4,907</b>

\* Details may not sum to totals because counts are unduplicated.

\*\* This response rate is calculated based on the results of the SSOCS:2018 data collection. The incentive experiment is being conducted with the hope of increasing or at least maintaining the 2018 overall response rate.

Assuming that respondents (district education administrators for district approvals and mostly principals for the data collection) earn on average \$47.25<sup>2</sup> per hour, and given the 4,907 total estimated burden hours, the total estimated burden time cost to respondents for SSOCS:2022 is \$231,856.

### **A.13. Estimates of Cost Burden to Respondents**

There are no additional costs to respondents beyond those reported for the hour burden.

### **A.14. Estimates of Annual Government Cost**

The Census Bureau will conduct the SSOCS:2022 data collection preparation, data collection, and data file development work for approximately \$2,400,000 over 3 years. A task in NCES's ESSIN contract with AIR also supports this survey at about \$725,000 over 3 years. Thus, SSOCS:2022 will cost the government approximately \$3,125,000 over 3 years.

### **A.15. Reasons for Changes in Response Burden**

This is the first submission for the SSOCS:2022 data collection cycle. The previous packages for this program annualized burden for two administrations of the study, SSOCS:2018 and SSOCS:2020, which is why there seems to be a large increase in burden between different submissions of this package. Further, the increase in burden from SSOCS:2020 to SSOCS:2022 is due to the addition of COVID-19 pandemic items to the SSOCS questionnaire. The questions are expected to add approximately 4 minutes to the length of average questionnaire completion, therefore increasing the overall burden hours from 4,187 in SSOCS:2020 to 4,907 hours in SSOCS:2022.

### **A.16. Time Schedule**

NCES will release the first publication from a data collection as soon as possible after it is completed. The ultimate goal for all NCES collections, including SSOCS:2022, is to release a restricted-use data file, First Look report, and supplemental data documentation within approximately 12 months of the data collection end date. Table 2 displays the time schedule for the major project activities in SSOCS:2022.

<sup>2</sup> The source of this estimate is the May 2019 mean hourly rate of Education Administrators (data type: SOC:119030) on the BLS Occupational Employment Statistics website, <http://data.bls.gov/oes/>, accessed on January 27, 2021.

**Table 2. Schedule of major project activities: SSOCS:2022**

Task	Date
Contact special districts to begin approval process	July 2021–January 2022
Complete and deliver special district applications and packages	July 2021–January 2022
Draft special mailing materials for schools in special districts	July 2021–January 2022
Data collection begins	February 2022
Data collection ends	July 2022
Restricted-use data file finalized	March 2023
First Look report through NCES review	April 2023
First Look report released	July 2023
Restricted-use data file released	October 2023
Survey documentation released	October 2023
Public-use data file released	January 2024
Web tables through NCES review	April 2024
Web tables released	August 2024

## Analysis Tasks

### 1. First Look report

This First Look report will use data from SSOCS:2022 to examine a range of issues dealing with school crime and safety, such as the frequency of school crime and violence, disciplinary actions, and school practices related to the prevention and reduction of crime and safety. This publication will largely follow the format and analysis techniques used in publications released in prior years, such as

- <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2017122>
- <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2019061>

### 2. Data files and related data documentation

All data files (in several statistical formats) and data documentation (codebooks and user’s manuals) are publicly available on the NCES website at [http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ssocs/data\\_products.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ssocs/data_products.asp).

### 3. SSOCS web tables

Data from each SSOCS administration are tabulated and released in a table library, accessible through the NCES website at [http://nces.ed.gov/programs/crime/crime\\_tables.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/crime/crime_tables.asp).

Generally, analyses of the SSOCS data follow the research questions presented below. The data will be analyzed in accordance with the research questions. A goal of the data analysis is to provide answers to these questions using various analytical techniques, including *t* tests and cross-tabulations.

## Research Questions

The SSOCS instrument is divided into 10 main research objectives, each with a series of items addressing a specific research question, as presented below. See Supporting Statement Part C for a description and justification of the items.

- I. What is the frequency and nature of crime at public schools?
  - a. What is the number of incidents, by type of crime?
  - b. What are the characteristics of those incidents?
    - i. How many incidents were reported to police?
  - c. What is the number of hate-crime incidents?
    - i. What biases motivated these incidents?
  - d. How many arrests were made at school?
  - e. How many schools report violent deaths?

- f. How many schools report school shootings?
- g. How many schools report disruptions for violent threats?
- II. What is the frequency and nature of discipline problems and disorder at public schools?
  - a. What types of discipline problems and disorder occur at public schools?
  - b. How serious are the problems?
- III. What disciplinary actions do public schools use?
  - a. What types of disciplinary actions were available to principals?
  - b. How many disciplinary actions were taken, by type of action and offense?
- IV. What practices to prevent/reduce crime and violence do public schools use?
  - a. How do schools monitor student behavior?
  - b. How do schools control student behavior?
  - c. How do schools monitor and secure the physical grounds?
  - d. How do schools limit access to the school?
  - e. How do schools plan and practice procedures for emergencies?
- V. How do schools involve law enforcement?
  - a. Do schools have sworn law enforcement officers present on a regular basis?
    - i. How often are they available and at what times?
    - ii. What activities do they participate in?
    - iii. How many are present at the school?
    - iv. How are sworn law enforcement officers armed?
  - b. Is there written documentation outlining the roles and responsibilities of law enforcement in schools?
  - c. Do schools have security guards or personnel other than law enforcement?
- VI. How do schools provide access to student mental health services?
  - a. Are mental health services, such as diagnostic assessment and treatment, available to students?
    - i. Where are those services available?
  - b. What factors limit a school's efforts to provide mental health services to students?
- VII. What formal programs designed to prevent/reduce crime and violence do public schools use?
  - a. Which programs target students, teachers, parents, and other community members?
  - b. What are the characteristics of the programs?
  - c. Do schools have threat assessment teams?
    - i. How often do they formally meet?
  - d. What student groups promote acceptance of student diversity?
  - e. What training is provided to staff?
- VIII. What efforts used by public schools to prevent/reduce crime and violence involve various stakeholders (e.g., law enforcement, parents, juvenile justice agencies, mental health agencies, social services, and the business community)?
  - a. In what activities are stakeholders involved?
  - b. How much are stakeholders involved?
- IX. What problems do principals encounter in preventing/reducing crime and violence in public schools?
- X. What school characteristics might be related to the research questions above?
  - a. What are the demographic characteristics of schools?
  - b. What are the characteristics of the student population?
  - c. What is the average student/teacher ratio?
  - d. What are the general measures of school climate, such as truancy or student mobility?

#### **A.17. Approval to Not Display Expiration Date of OMB Approval**

NCES is not seeking approval to not display the expiration date of OMB approval.

#### **A.18. Exceptions to the Certification**

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.