

**Speaker:** *Shawn Bushway*

**Presentation title:** Making Schools Safer and/or Escalating Disciplinary Response: A Study of Police Officers in North Carolina Schools

**Co-authors:** *Lucy Sorenson and Yinzhi Shen*

The “defund the police” movement has recently called for the removal of police – or school resource officers (SROs) – from schools. This call is driven by concerns that SROs may heighten student contact with criminal justice or lead to disproportionately harsh disciplinary consequences. The current study uses linked disciplinary, academic, juvenile justice, and adult conviction data from North Carolina to estimate the effects of middle school SROs on a variety of student outcomes. Our findings indicate that SROs decrease the incidence of serious violence, but also increase the use of out-of-school suspensions, transfers, expulsions, and police referrals. This study provides new insights into the effects of police in schools, and implies new directions for policies, training, and accountability.