



# Improving School Climate and Safety in Flint, MI Schools

A Cluster Randomized Controlled Trial

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# Background



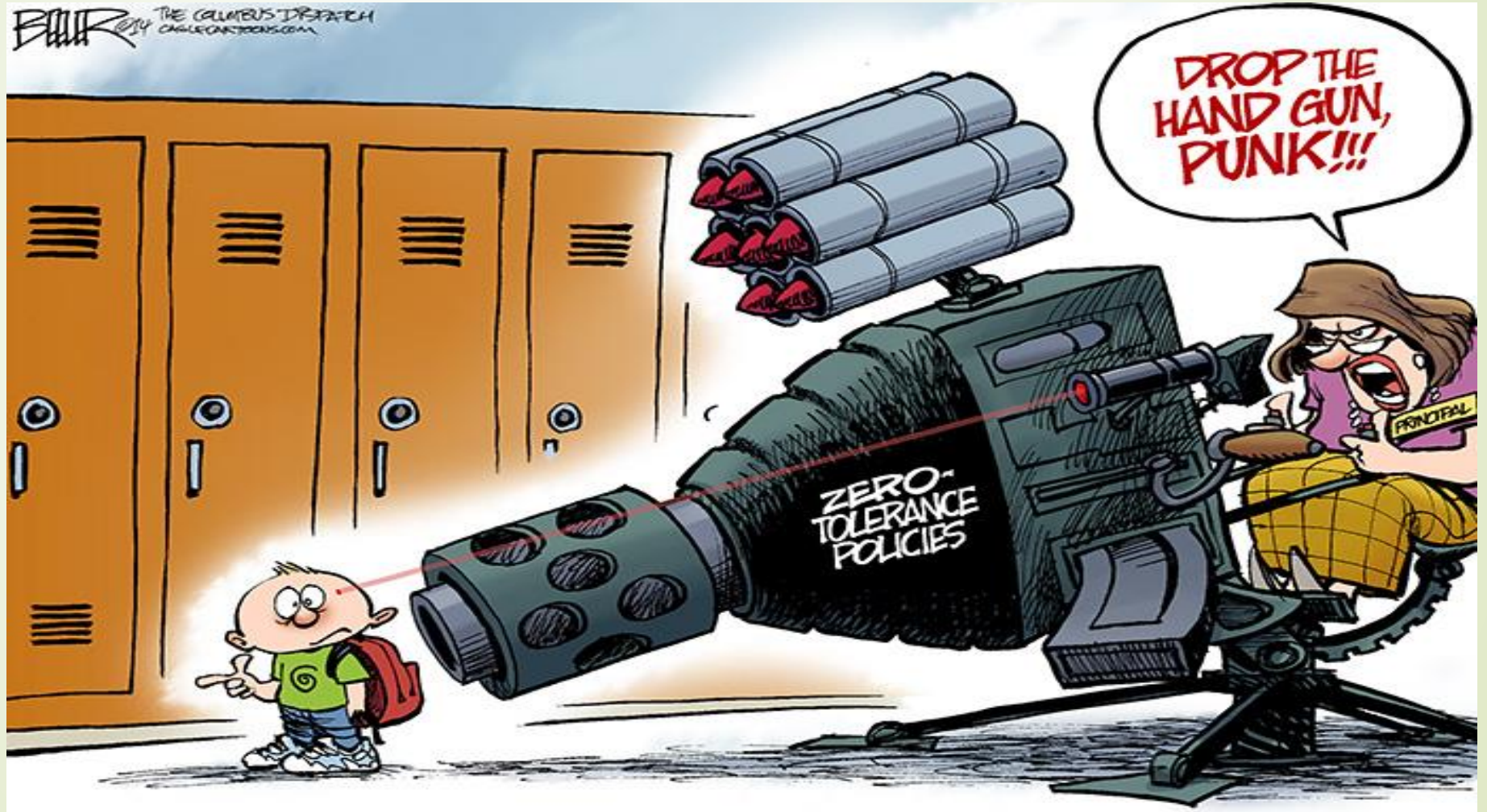
**NIJ** | *National Institute  
of Justice*



**COMPREHENSIVE  
SCHOOL  
SAFETY  
INITIATIVE**

- 
- Response to “disturbing, high-profile incidents of school violence”
  - Investment in
    - 1) Knowledge about root causes of school violence
    - 2) Developing strategies for increasing school safety
    - 3) Rigorously evaluating innovative school safety strategies

# Shift Away From Zero Tolerance Policies



# Collaboration



# Multi-tier Interventions





# Interventions

## 1) Restorative Practices

- Classroom circles, conferencing
- Strengthen relationships, build community, effectively respond to wrongdoing

## 2) Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

- Assessment of physical layout of school
- Change behavior by altering design

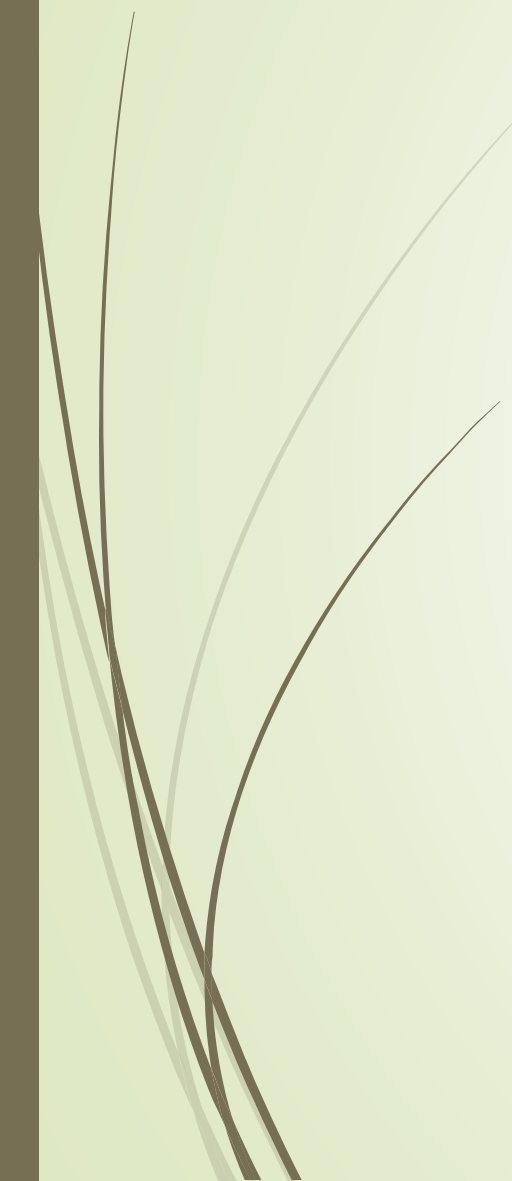
## 3) Mental Health First Aid

- Help staff identify, refer, and treat students who may be in crisis



## Research Question

Can this multi-tiered system of support improve school climate and safety in elementary schools?

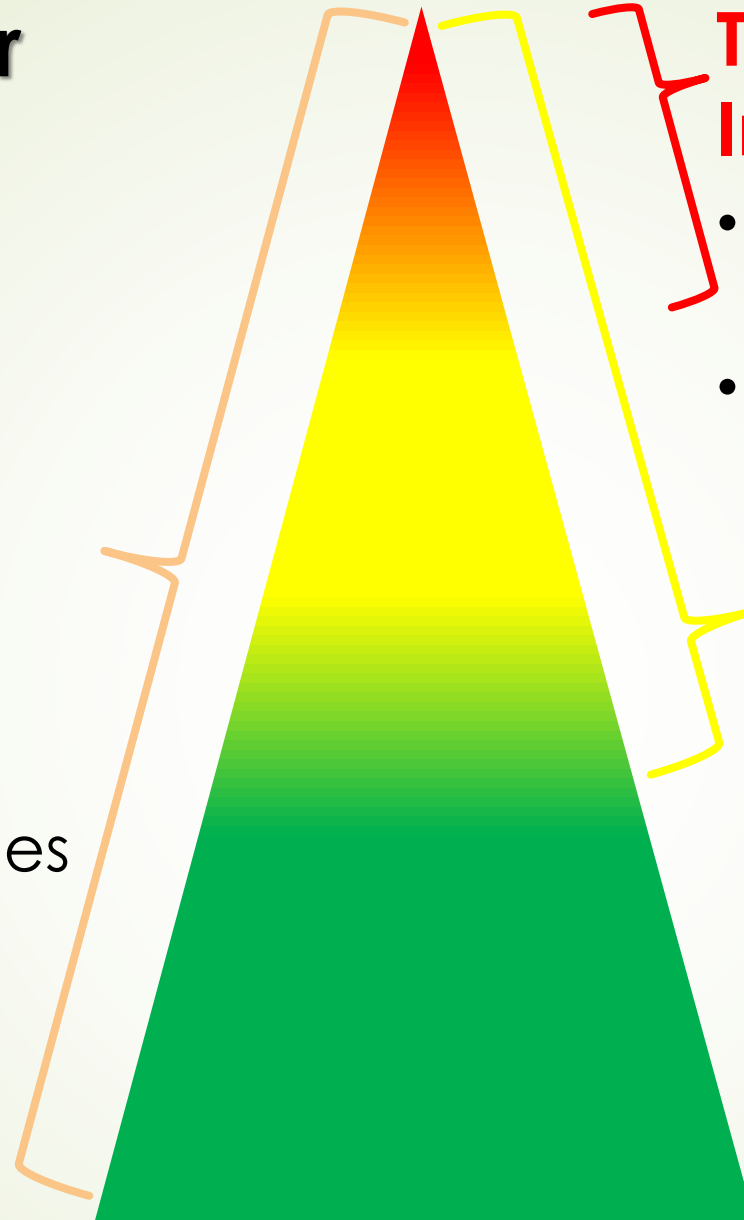




# Multi-Tier Support System

## Tier 1: Universal Supports & Prevention

- CPTED
- Restorative Circles



## Tier 3: Intensive Interventions

- Mental Health First Aid
- Restorative conferences

## Tier 2: Targeted Interventions

- Mental Health First Aid
- Restorative conferences

# Challenges





**STATE OF MICHIGAN 98TH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2016**

Introduced by Reps. Pscholka, Schor, Zemke, Lyons, Lucido,  
LaGrand and Irwin

**ENROLLED HOUSE  
BILL No. 5619**

The People of the State of Michigan enact:

Sec. 1310c. (1) A school board or its designee shall consider using restorative practices as an alternative or in addition to suspension or expulsion under this act.



# Sample

- 20 Elementary Schools (grades 4-6) in Genesee County
  - At least 50% free and reduced lunch
  - Randomly assigned to treatment and control conditions
- Treatment Schools
  - 3-Person Leadership Team
  - Training in RP, MHFA
  - CPTED Assessment



# Recent Developments

- All buildings randomly assigned
  - Teachers trained in restorative practices and mental health first aid
  - Instruments Designed
    - Student/Staff/Teacher Surveys
    - Focus Groups
  - Interventions Begin Fall of 17/18 School Year
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