



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS SYSTEM  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE INSTITUTE

**For more information, contact:**

Beth Green, Marketing and Communications Specialist  
Criminal Justice Institute, University of Arkansas System  
(501) 570-8045 • bagreen@cji.edu

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## **Arkansas Center for School Safety (ACSS) To Provide Educators and Law Enforcement with Specialized Training and Resources**

LITTLE ROCK—A new partnership between the University of Arkansas System Criminal Justice Institute (CJI) and the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) has established the **Arkansas Center for School Safety (ACSS)**, a program that will ensure educators, leaders and law enforcement professionals have access to training and resources that will assist them in meeting the safety needs of Arkansas’s children in public schools.

This announcement comes during a week (October 15-21) that has been declared as America’s Safe Schools Week. This week is observed annually to urge all who play a role in campus safety to work together to make our nation's schools safe, secure and peaceful places for learning, teaching and working.

The establishment of the Arkansas Center for School Safety (ACSS) plays an integral role in this initiative. CJI’s historically successful safe schools program will form the foundation of ACSS and continue to provide free training to Arkansas educators and law enforcement professionals in a variety of topics that increase knowledge and skills related to school safety issues. A sampling of topic areas include professional development for school resource officers, safety and crisis planning, active shooter response, drugs on campus, gang awareness and intervention, and bullying awareness and prevention.

The ACSS website ([www.arsafeschools.com](http://www.arsafeschools.com)) also features a comprehensive list of resources to guide educators and administrators as they implement policies and procedures on their school campus.

“We are honored to partner with the Arkansas Department of Education in establishing a one-stop-shop for meeting school safety needs in Arkansas communities,” said Dr. May, CJI Director. “I am grateful to Commissioner Key, the ADE Staff, and the Safe Schools Committee for their advocacy for school safety and their commitment to reducing violence and crime in Arkansas schools. Working together with all of our partners, we can create learning environments in our schools that will ensure the wellbeing of all of our children and help each child reach their academic potential.”

“Providing a safe learning environment is essential to maximizing student learning,” Arkansas Department of Education Commissioner Johnny Key said. “As we transform Arkansas to lead the nation in student-focused education, the creation of the Arkansas Center for School Safety builds on existing partnerships to provide safe learning environments our students deserve and need. I encourage educators to utilize the resources and training opportunities available through the center.”

“We are proud to have the Criminal Justice Institute as part of the state’s largest university system, which helps in many unique ways to ultimately enhance our overall mission of meeting the educational goals of Arkansans and helping our state advance,” said Donald R. Bobbitt, president of the UA System. “Identifying and engaging strategic partnerships for the betterment of our society is the key to maximizing resources and making the biggest difference, and this is a great way of working together to ensure the children in this state are afforded a safe learning environment in which to grow and excel.”

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