

Arizona Department of Education School Safety Program (Program)

Department did not ensure some schools that received Program monies complied with Program requirements intended to enhance school safety personnel effectiveness and improve school safety, and 2025 legislation expanded allowable uses of Program monies

Audit purpose

To determine whether the Department ensured participating public school district and charter school sites (schools) complied with Program requirements intended to enhance school safety personnel effectiveness and improve school safety.¹

Key findings

- ▶ Department awarded \$128.3 million in Program monies to 1,153 schools in fiscal year 2025 to place 1,086 school resource officers, school counselors, and other school safety personnel on school campuses.
- ▶ Department took steps to help participating schools fill school safety positions including hiring a contractor to help place off-duty officers on campuses.
- ▶ Department established Program requirements for participating schools that are intended to enhance school safety personnel effectiveness and improve school safety, such as training staff and implementing an operational plan to identify and address safety risks.
- ▶ Department did not ensure that 15 of 16 schools we reviewed complied with all Program requirements, including not developing operational plans, which could limit these schools' ability to enhance school safety personnel effectiveness and improve school safety.
- ▶ Department did not conduct some important monitoring activities and instead relied mainly on schools providing written acknowledgments of Program compliance.
- ▶ Legislation enacted in 2025 revised statutory Program provisions, including authorizing schools to use Program monies to purchase safety technology, provide staff training, and make infrastructure improvements related to school safety.

Key recommendations to the Department

- ▶ Monitor schools receiving Program monies to ensure they comply with Program requirements, such as by conducting risk assessments and site visits, and work with schools to address any identified noncompliance.

¹ The Arizona Auditor General conducted this performance audit of the Department's Program pursuant to a November 21, 2022, resolution of the Joint Legislative Audit Committee and Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) §41-2958 and A.R.S. §15-154(L).