



ATF

School Firearms Related Violence and Incidents Overview 2005-2007



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School Firearms Related Violence and Incidents ATF Overview 2005 - 2007

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Introduction

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is one of several law enforcement agencies within the United States Department of Justice that is dedicated to preventing terrorism, reducing violent crimes, and protecting our Nation. The men and women of ATF perform the dual responsibilities of enforcing Federal criminal laws and regulating the arms and explosives industries. ATF is committed to working directly, and through partnerships, to investigate and reduce crime involving firearms and explosives, acts of arson, and illegal trafficking of alcohol and tobacco products.

Within ATF, the Office of Strategic Intelligence and Information (OSII), provides analytical support as it relates to the reduction of violent crime and protecting the public by, providing timely, accurate, and focused intelligence through the collection and analysis of information to enhance decision-making for all Bureau customers.

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Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide information as it relates to the phenomenon of school firearms violence. This report provides an overview of school firearms violence, and through the examination of ATF case information, attempts have been made to possibly identify the kinds of individuals who are most likely to commit and/or plan a school firearms violence incident.

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School Firearms Violence

On April 20, 1999, at Columbine High School, Littleton, Colorado, two students, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, embarked on a shooting spree, killing 12 students and a teacher, injuring 23 others, before committing suicide. The Columbine High School shooting was one of the deadliest school shootings in U.S. history, until the recent April 2007, Virginia Tech shooting, which claimed the lives of 31 students and injured numerous others.

As an aftermath of these massacres and various other school shootings, debate and/or discussion regarding gun control laws, firearms availability within the United States, firearm violence involving youths and others, seemed to ascend to the forefront. Numerous debates/discussions between parents, teachers, students, sociologists, school administrators, Congressional representatives, school violence experts, law enforcement personnel, and others, have taken place in an effort to determine possible causes and remedies that can be utilized to counter such violent events. Many of these debates and/or discussions, centered on the very nature of the schools themselves, the emergence of and possible negative impacts of subcultures and cliques within schools, the effects of bullying and teasing, feelings of alienation, as well as the role of violent movies and video games in society. Additionally, serious debate and/or discussion is consistently being conducted, as it relates to firearms, juveniles, and the overall availability of these weapons. It is at this juncture that, ATF, along with various State, local, and other Federal law enforcement entities must examine the correlations between school violence, the availability of weapons, and the phenomenon of school firearms violence.

Upon examining ATF case information and open source news articles, published from January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2007, ATF Field personnel have actively participated in the investigation of 31 school-related shootings and/or violence incidents. These school shootings and/or violence incidents have run the gamut from individual one-on-one shootings; to domestic disputes, firearms recovered on school property, and individuals contemplating committing mass shootings; to actual perpetration of mass murder. Furthermore, upon the examination of ATF case information and open source news articles, school shootings, planned school shootings, and firearms recoveries have occurred in all ATF field divisions nationwide. In this assessment, several school shootings incidents will be examined to determine if there are commonalities between the individuals and/or incidents, whether certain types of firearms are favored in the commission of these events/incidents, and, if possible triggers/signs can be identified. This information was obtained via examination of ATF investigative information, open source news articles, and from other sources (information available upon request, to the extent permissible by law and subject to restrictions on further dissemination). This assessment will make no distinction between public schools, private schools, colleges, and/or universities. Furthermore, for simplicity of this assessment, school shooting incidents will be sub-categorized into three main types, mass murders, domestic disputes, and/or random acts of violence.

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School Shooting Categorizations:

- **Mass murder** – the act of murdering a large number of people, typically at the same time, usually at the same location. The U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics views mass murder as the act of murdering four or more individuals at one location, during a single event.¹
- **Domestic dispute and/or violence involving shootings and/or murder** - a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. These acts of violence include but are not limited to intimate partners, parents, and/or children.
- **Random acts of violence** – for simplicity, a random act of violence will be considered as a dispute between two or more individuals who have had or have no direct contact. However, due to some common event and/or location, these individuals come in contact with each other; an incident ensues that in turn, becomes violent. Random acts of violence can include, but are limited to, moments of perceived “disrespect,” payback for a possible past event and/or incident, i.e. bumping into, etc.

In addition, it should be noted that only school violence incidents involving firearms were examined. Inferences have been made from analyses of earlier mentioned information.

***2008 - School Shooting
Northern Illinois University (NIU) Campus***

February 14, 2008 - Steven Kazmierczak, a former graduate student at NIU, shot and killed several students on the NIU campus. Reportedly, Kazmierczak entered a room on campus, wearing all black clothing and carrying a guitar case containing several weapons. Kazmierczak opened fire injuring and / or killing numerous individuals, before committing suicide. The case is actively being investigated by ATF.



Figure 1 - Steven Kazmierczak²

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Key Judgments

- ***(CUI)*** ATF case information reveals that ATF has investigated various types of school firearms violence. These investigations included actual school firearms violence incidents, planned school firearms violence incidents, threats of violence at a school, and firearms reported as being recovered on school/campus property.
 - School firearms violence investigations – shooting = 54.8 percent
 - School firearms violence investigations – planned shootings = 6.5 percent
 - School firearms violence investigations – threats of harm = 9.7 percent
 - School firearms violence investigations – attempted firearm purchase = 3.2 percent
 - School firearms violence investigations – firearm on school property for protection = 3.2 percent
 - School firearms violence investigations – firearm(s) recovered on school property = 22.6 percent

- ***(CUI)*** While the majority of school shooters and/or planners were white males, it should also be noted that there also have been instances of school firearms violence and/or planned incidents that were carried out and/or planned by individuals of other ethnic and/or racial backgrounds.

In addition, upon examination of ATF case information and open source data, information was found where females of all ethnic and/or racial backgrounds actively participated in several incidents of threats of harm, planned on carrying out a school firearms violence incident, brought a firearm to school for protection, and were found in possession of a firearm on school property. When female students were identified, many of these school firearms violence incidents were the typically the result of domestic disputes or random acts of violence.

- ***(CUI)*** A majority of the actual ATF school firearms violence investigations where a shooting and/or death occurred, have been determined to fall within the following subcategories:
 - Mass murder(s)

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- Domestic dispute / disputes
 - Random acts of violence
- **(CUI)** Several of the perpetrators of school firearms violence have demonstrated similar anti-social beliefs. In addition, many of these individuals are believed to have experienced a traumatic event recently in their lives. It is not known whether or not this event was a direct contributing factor in their decision to either plan and/or carry out the school violence incident.
- **(CUI)** No particular firearm was identified as being favored by perpetrators of school firearms violence. Firearms of various types, makes, models, and calibers were found to have been utilized.

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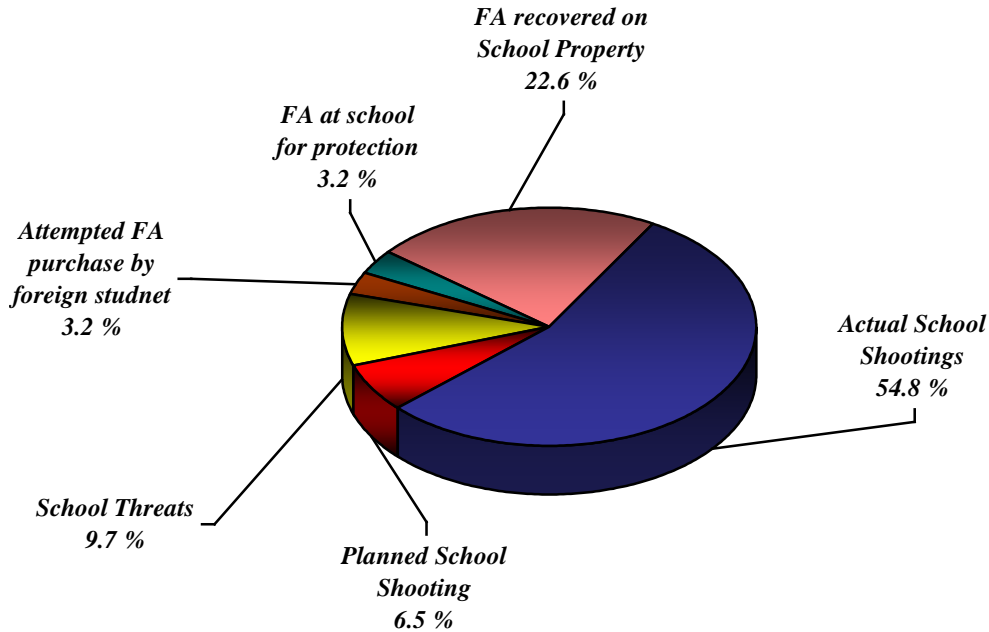
School Shooting Information

- ATF school firearms violence investigations categories:
 - **(CUI)** ATF case information details that ATF has investigated various types of school firearms violence. These investigations included, but were not limited to, actual school shooting events, planned school shooting events, threats of violence at schools, and reported firearms recoveries.
 - **(CUI)** Actual school shooting incidents – 17 investigations (54.8 percent school firearms violence investigations)
 - **(CUI)** Planned school shooting incidents – 2 investigations (6.5 percent school firearms violence investigations)
 - **(CUI)** Threats of violence/harm – 3 investigations (9.7 percent school firearms violence investigations)
 - **(CUI)** Attempted purchase of firearms – 1 investigation (3.2 percent school firearms violence investigations)
 - **(CUI)** Firearms on school property for protection – 1 investigation (3.2 percent school firearms violence investigations)
 - **(CUI)** Firearms recovered on school property – 7 investigations (22.6 percent school firearms violence investigations)

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ATF SCHOOL FIREARMS VIOLENCE INVESTIGATIONS BY TYPE



(CUI) ATF case information reveals the following information relating to school firearms violence incidents:

- *Actual school shootings have been investigated in the following ATF field divisions:*
 - **Baltimore Field Division** – Delaware State University Double Shooting. Two Delaware State University students were shot, one student eventually succumbed to her wounds.
 - **Boston Field Division** – Essex School Shooting. Two school employees were murdered after attempting to locate ex-girlfriend. Shooter also shot and killed ex-girlfriend's mother. Shooter attempted suicide.
 - **Charlotte Field Division** – Individual killed father at home, drives to local high school and fires several rounds at students. Castillo surrendered and was found with several explosive devices and firearms, including a sawed-off shotgun.

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- **Charlotte Field Division** – Garinger High School Shooting. Several gunshots were fired at Garinger High School after a varsity football game.
- **Columbus Field Division** – Shooting at Success Technical High School. Individual shot two teachers, two students, and later committed suicide.
- **Dallas Field Division** – Canton, Texas, School Shooting. An individual shot high school football coach/athletic director.
- **Kansas City Field Division** – Joplin Memorial School Shooting. Thirteen-year-old juvenile brought a MAK 90 semi-automatic rifle to school. Juvenile fired shots into the ceiling, the firearm jammed, and the juvenile was disarmed.
- **Nashville Field Division** – Shooting at Campbell County Comprehensive High School. A fourteen-year-old juvenile fatally shot school administrator; seriously wounded two others.
- **Nashville Field Division** – Oxford vs. Anniston football game. An individual was shot in the stomach by another individual during a football game. The shooter was quickly disarmed by law enforcement officers. Several individuals, including two females, were arrested.
- **Philadelphia Field Division** – Carrick High School Shooting. Three juveniles in a car were shot on school property. One victim died. Possibly an SKS/AK – 47 style firearm was used. Several individuals were later arrested.
- **Philadelphia Field Division** – Olney High School. Two students were shot and injured by unknown assailants.
- **Philadelphia Field Division** – Amish School Shooting. Several juvenile students were shot and killed by suspect. He ordered all male students to leave and held the female students hostage. Several female students of various ages were murdered by suspect, who then committed suicide.
- **Phoenix Field Division** – Platte Canyon School shooting. Individual took several students hostage. He eventually released four during negotiations. Individual was shot by law enforcement officers. One female student was shot to death.
- **Seattle Field Division** – Shooting at High School. Individual shot another student over dispute involving a girl. (See figure 2)

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Figure 2 - Vincent Leodoro when confronted by law enforcement officers, Leodoro places firearm to his head. Leodoro eventually surrendered.

Vincent Leodoro – shot a fellow student several times. The shooting appeared to have been the result of an argument involving a female student.³

- **St. Paul Field Division** – Red Lake High School Shooting. A sixteen-year-old student shot and killed a teacher, a school security guard, and five other students. The shooter eventually committed suicide. Information later found that the shooter also killed his grandfather and the grandfather’s companion before murdering individuals at school.
- **St. Paul Field Division.** An individual was being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for discharging a firearm on school grounds. The investigation was completed by the FBI.
- **Washington Field Division** – Virginia Tech Shooting. Student murdered 30 students and injured 25 others. Student eventually committed suicide.
- ***Planned shootings have been actively investigated in the following ATF field divisions:***
 - **Atlanta Field Division** – Clayton County Gang Initiative. Street gang members planned to shoot up several area schools in retaliation for the death of one of their members.
 - **Columbus Field Division** – Two brothers, along with other individuals, devised a plan to shoot up a local high school.
- ***Threats of school firearms violence have been actively investigated in the following ATF field divisions:***

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- **Nashville Field Division** – Allegations of illegal firearms possessions. Several non-students had made threats to attack, i.e. “shoot – up” the school. Several individuals were later arrested.
- **Phoenix Field Division** – Threat to shoot up school. A suspended student, threatened to bring a firearm to school and to “shoot” several students. He was eventually arrested and charged by the State of Colorado for disorderly conduct.
- **Charlotte Field Division** – An individual threatened to shoot a Coastal Carolina College student. The suspect was later found to be in possession of a firearm and narcotics.
- ***Attempted purchase of a firearm by foreign student (student exhibited possible anti-social behavior), actively investigated in the following ATF field division:***
 - **Houston Field Division** – An individual identified as a foreign student attempted to purchase a firearm from local Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL). Purchase was denied. During interviews with several individuals, student was described by others as a loner who had a hard time interacting with others.
- ***Individual on school property, firearms for protection, actively investigated in the following ATF field division:***
 - **St. Paul Field Division** – An individual came to school to pick up relative and was seen with a firearm while on campus. He was later arrested and found to be a convicted felon in possession of firearm.
- ***Firearm recovered on school property, actively investigated by the following ATF Field Divisions:***
 - **Atlanta Field Division** – Henry County Dutchtown High School. Student was observed with a firearm in class. A note was passed to the teacher. The student was removed from class. Before being removed, the student placed the firearm into another student’s backpack.
 - **Atlanta Field Division** – Clayton County Gang Task Force. Individual was arrested after bringing several firearms and ammunition to a local high school. One of the recovered firearms was a sawed-off shotgun.

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- **Boston Field Division** – A student was observed with a firearm at school. Student claimed that he brought the firearm to school to scare others.
- **Boston Field Division** – Manchester West. A fourteen-year-old juvenile student purchased a firearm from another student. The firearm had been transferred by a 47-year-old convicted felon.
- **Charlotte Field Division** – An individual was observed leaving school property, and was stopped by a local law enforcement officer. A firearm was found in the car and the individual was arrested.
- **Kansas City Field Division** – A twenty-year-old student was found on campus with a firearm. The student was identified as an active member of local street gang.
- **Phoenix Field Division** – A firearm was recovered on school property in the possession of a ten-year-old juvenile.

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Ethnic and Gender Identity of the shooter and/or planner -

- ATF case data and open source information were examined in an attempt to identify a possible description for a typical school shooter and/or planner. Upon examination of available information, an exact profile of a typical school shooter and/or planner could not be determined. From an examination of 27 ATF school shooting incidents, planned incidents, and/or investigations where the shooter and/or planned shooter was identified, 52 percent involved white males. The remaining ATF school firearms violence investigations revealed that school shooters and/or planners were identified as Asian, Black, Hispanic, and Native American males. Furthermore, it should be noted that even though a majority of school shooters were identified as male, this should not be construed to indicate that only males participate in this type of activity. ATF case information and open source data did provide information concerning school firearms violence, and in several instances, females were identified as the actual shooters, the possessors of the firearms, and/or the planners of such events.



Figure 3 - Collage of photographs obtained via Jeff Weise's Internet Website (Red Lake, Minnesota school shooter)⁴

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Actual school firearm violence – shootings by event / incident category

(CUI) An examination of ATF case information revealed that a majority of the actual school firearms violence investigations where a shooting and/or death occurred fall within the following subcategories:

- **Mass Murders**
 - **Columbus Field Division** – Asa Coon shot several teachers, two students, and then committed suicide. (See figure 4)

Asa Coon – identified as the shooter walking through hallway at Success Technical High School. Coon was dressed in all black and was armed with several firearms.



Figure 4 – Photograph obtained via AP News Service⁵

- **Philadelphia Field Division** – Charles Roberts shot several juvenile female students at an Amish School. Roberts committed suicide. (See figure 5)

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Figure 5 - Charles Carl Roberts, IV⁶

Charles Carl Roberts IV – identified shooter at the Nickel Mines Schoolhouse, Bart Township, Pennsylvania. Roberts murdered several female students before taking his own life.

- **St. Paul Field Division** – Jeffery Weise killed several students, teachers, his grandfather, and his grandfather’s companion. Weise committed suicide. (See figure 6)

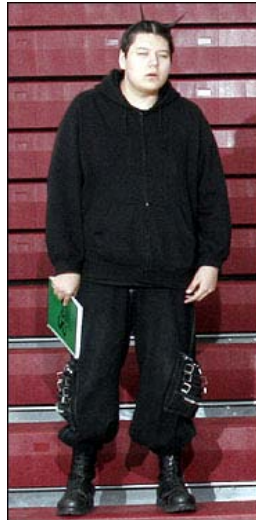


Figure 6 - Jeff Weise, dressed in all black with his hair done into devil horns, shot and killed nine individuals. Weise’s family wondered if anti-depressants had anything to do with his actions? ⁷

- **Washington Field Division** – Seung-Hui Cho murdered 30 students and injured 25 others at Virginia Tech University. Cho committed suicide.

Virginia Tech Shooter – Seung – Hui Cho

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Figure 7

Left photo – *Seung – Hui Cho* with firearm pointed to his head⁸ (See figure 7)



Figure 8

Right photo – *Seung – Hui Cho* armed with several firearms⁹ (See figure 8)

- ***Domestic Dispute/Disputes***

- **Baltimore Field Division** – two students shot at Delaware State University.
- **Boston Field Division** – an individual shot and killed two school workers and his ex-girlfriend's mother.
- **Charlotte Field Division** – Castillo murdered his father and fired several rounds at local high school.
- **Nashville Field Division** – a shooting occurred at a local football game.
- **Philadelphia Field Division** – three juveniles were shot in a car; one died.
- **Seattle Field Division** – one student shot another because of a dispute over a girl.

- ***Random Acts of Violence***

- **Charlotte Field Division** – an individual fired several shots after a football game.
- **Dallas Field Division** – an individual shot a high school football coach/athletic director.

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- **Kansas City Field Division** – a thirteen-year-old student brought a MAK 90 semi-automatic rifle to school.
- **Nashville Field Division** – a juvenile fatally shot a school administrator and seriously wounded two other individuals.
- **Philadelphia Field Division** – two students were shot and injured by unknown assailants.
- **Phoenix Field Division** – an individual took several students hostage, released four; one student was killed. The assailant was shot by law enforcement officers. Individual committed suicide. (See figure 9)



Figure 9 - Duane R. Morrison¹⁰

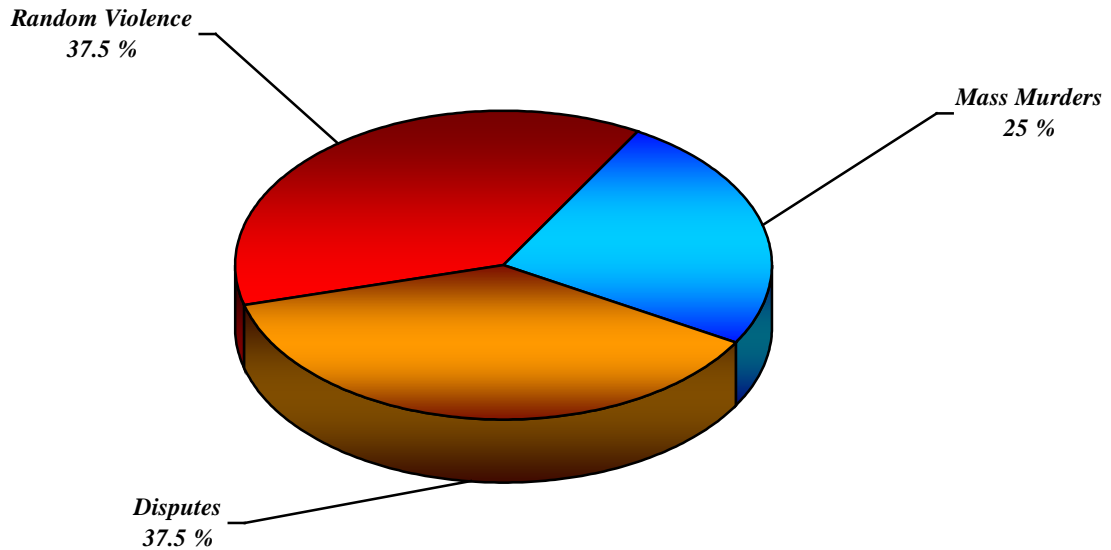
Duane R. Morrison – identified perpetrator/hostage taker at Platt County High School, Bailey, Colorado. Morrison was eventually shot by law enforcement officers. After being shot by law enforcement officers, Morrison committed suicide.

(*CUI*) ATF case information revealed that mass murders accounted for 25 percent of the actual shootings that occurred and were investigated by ATF; domestic dispute/disputes accounted for 37.5 percent, while random acts of violence accounted for 37.5 percent.

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***ATF SCHOOL FIREARMS VIOLENCE
SHOOTING BY EVENT/INCIDENT
JANUARY 1, 2005 – DECEMBER 31, 2007***



ATF school firearms violence perpetrators/planners similarities:

(CUI) Upon examination of ATF case information, open source news articles, and information gathered from witnesses and others, perpetrators and/or planners of school firearms violence may have possessed similar beliefs, attitudes, and displayed anti-social behavior. However, it should be noted that this analysis is based solely on ATF firearms related investigative case information. When compared to a May 2002 United States Secret Service (USSS) and United States Department of Education (USDE) report entitled “The Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of School Attacks in the United States,” several possible similarities were found.

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Furthermore, it should be noted that the information contained within the USSS/USDE report contained overall school violence information. No distinction was made as it pertains to the type of weapon i.e. firearm, knife, or other instrument of violence utilized by the perpetrator. Therefore, only a limited comparison of the USSS/USDE May 2002 report and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, "School Firearms Related Violence and Incidents" could be performed.

ATF case information/open sources information:

- Several of the individuals associated with school firearms violence had been teased or bullied by other students.
 - All of the individuals associated with school firearms violence appeared to either have had easy access to firearms or the ability to obtain firearms. In some incidents, firearms were obtained within the home or were purchased legally by the perpetrator. While in other incidents, the perpetrator of the violent incident was not the legal owner of the weapon used and thus, may have obtained the firearm via illegal methods.
 - Several of the individuals associated with school firearms violence seemed to have had an inability to assimilate with others. These same individuals may have spent inordinate amounts of time alone, and possibly were categorized by others as loners.
 - Several of the individuals associated with school firearms violence may have had a fascination with firearms. They may have regularly utilized firearms for hunting, target practice, etc.
 - Several of the individuals associated with school firearms violence had experienced a recent personal tragedy. A review of ATF case information revealed that some of these tragedies may have consisted of the death or suicide of a parent, financial distress, possible sexual abuse, etc.
 - Several of the individuals associated with school firearms violence had not been associated with prior incidents of violence.
 - A review of several school firearms violence cases involving juveniles revealed that many of these individuals had a fascination with certain historical dates or individuals associated with previous incidents or perpetrators of violence i.e. Columbine High School shooting, Adolph Hitler, Charles Manson, Nazi philosophy, etc.
 - Several of the individuals associated with school firearms violence appear to have adopted Gothic fashion and beliefs. (According to Merriam Webster, goth fashion is
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related to rock music marked by dark and morbid lyrics; a person who wears mostly black clothing, uses dark dramatic makeup, and often has dyed black hair.)¹¹

*USSS/USDE information:*¹²

- No exact profile of an individual contemplating/planning a school violence incident could be identified. Attackers/planners from all races, family situations, social characteristics, and academic achievement levels were identified.
- Rarely were incidents of school violence sudden or impulsive acts. Attackers did not just snap but progressed from forming an idea, to planning an actual attack, to gathering weapons.
- A percentage of attackers had interest in violence. However, this violence took many forms and may have been acquired from books, movies, video games, etc.
- In most incidents of school violence, attackers informed others directly or indirectly of their possible intentions.
- The individual was not necessarily considered to be a loner. According to USSS/USDE information, many of the students who initiated an act of school violence were considered mainstream students, active in sports, school clubs, and other activities.
- Most attackers were known to have had difficulty coping with significant losses or professional failures. Several were known to have had considered or attempted suicide.
- When a firearm was utilized in a school violence incident, most attackers had easy access to them and had used firearms prior to the incident.

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Comparison of ATF School Firearms Violence information and USSS/USDE information.

WHAT DOES “SNAPPED” MEAN?

	<u>ATF Information</u>	<u>USSS / USDE</u>	<u>Similarities</u>	<u>Dissimilarities</u>
<i>No exact profile of shooter/planner</i>	No Exact profile of shooter/planner	No Exact profile of shooter/planner	X	
<i>Individual snapped</i>		Individual snapped		X
<i>No one knew of possible intentions</i>	Several individuals may have known of intentions	Several individuals may have known of intentions	X	
<i>No explicit threats from planner</i>		No explicit threats from planner		X
<i>Individual was considered loner</i>	Individual was considered loner			X
<i>Individual was crazy/depressed</i>	Individual was crazy/depressed	Individual was crazy/depressed	X	
<i>Individual had easy access to firearms</i>	Individual had easy access to firearms	Individual had easy access to firearms	X	
<i>Individual was teased/bullied</i>	Individual was teased/bullied			X
<i>Individual expressed an interest in violence</i>	Individual expressed an interest in violence	Individual expressed an interest in violence	X	
<i>Individual had a prior history of violence</i>	Individual had a prior history of violence	Individual had a prior history of violence	X	

- No exact profile of shooter/planner – ATF and USSS / USDE similar information
- Individual snapped – ATF information, shooter/planners mental state may have played a part in the incident; USSS / USDE information, no relevancy
- No one know of possible intentions – ATF and USSS / USDE information – shooter/planner may have informed others
- No explicit threats from planner – no ATF information available; USSS/USDE information, shooter/planner may have made indirect threats
- Individual considered a loner – ATF information, several shooters/planner expressed anti-social behavior; USSS / USDE threats not a factor in final decision
- Individual crazy/depressed – ATF and USSS/USDE, mental state or personal losses may have played a part in the shooter’s/planner’s decision
- Easy access to firearms – ATF and USSS / USDE similar information

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- Individual teased/bullied – ATF information, teasing/bullying may have played a part; USSS/USDE, teasing/bullying not a factor in decision
- Individual expressed an interest in violence – ATF and USSS / USDE information similar
- Individual had prior history of violence – ATF and USSS / USDE information similar

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Signs of violence exhibited by children¹³-

According to Derek Randel, author of “Stopping School Violence, The Complete Guide for Parents and Educators on Handling Bullying,” there are usually signs that a child will exhibit before he/she resorts to violence. According to Randel, and the U.S. Department of Education, below is a listing of possible early warning and imminent signs of violence usually exhibited by juveniles:

Early warning signs of violence that children exhibit:

Social withdrawal

Excessive feelings of isolation or being alone

Excessive feelings of rejection, depression

Being a victim of violence

Feelings of being picked on and persecuted

Low school interest and poor academic performance, expression of violence in writings and drawings

Uncontrolled anger

Patterns of impulsive and chronic hitting, intimidating, and bullying behaviors.

History of discipline problems

History of violent and aggressive behavior

Intolerance for differences and prejudicial behavior

Drug or alcohol use

Affiliation with gangs

Inappropriate access to, possession of, and use of firearms

Serious threats of violence

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Intense anger

Low self-esteem

History of abuse or neglect

Suicidal thoughts or actions

Preoccupation with violent or morbid fantasies

Cruelty to animals

Family problems

Imminent warning signs of violence exhibited in children

Serious physical fighting with peers or family members

Severe destruction of property

Severe rage for seemingly minor reasons

Detailed threats of lethal violence

Possession and/or use of firearms and other weapons

Other self-injurious behaviors or threats of suicide

According to other school violence professionals, sociologists, and academia, ten primary risk factors have been identified that relate to school shooters and/or planners of such events. These factors include, but are not limited to, the following;¹⁴

- Male
- Age 14 – 20
- Troubled home life
- Mental health problems

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- Psychotropic drugs
- Bullied by others
- Poor academic performance
- Social fringe/rejected by peers/others
- Suspension/graduation timeframe
- Frequent anger/rage

(However, it should be noted that not every school shooter and/or planner exhibits any and/or all of the above. When compared to other students, and when the shooter and/or planner and witnesses to the event were questioned many of the above factors were identified.)

School violence firearms similarities –

(CUI) An examination of ATF case information revealed that no one particular firearm was identified as being favored by perpetrators and/or planners of school firearms violence. Perpetrators and/or planners of school firearms violence utilized various types, makes, models, and calibers of firearms. These firearms included but were not limited to, sawed-off shotguns, MAK 90, AK – 47 / SKS assault type weapons, AR – 15 assault type weapons, various rifles and handguns. Handguns consisted of both revolvers and semi-automatic pistols.¹⁵

Other than simple availability of firearms to the offender, ATF cannot determine that there is any specific reason why any particular firearms were used.

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Firearms recovered and traced on school property by calendar year -

Firearms traces are designed to assist law enforcement authorities in conducting investigations by tracking the sale and possession of specific firearms. Law enforcement agencies may request traces for any reason, and those reasons are not necessarily reported to the Federal Government. Not all firearms used in crime are traced and not all firearms traced are used in crime.

The following statistical information is based on firearms recovered and traced that indicated a school involvement on the trace submission request. There is not a requirement that the school involvement indicator be entered for the trace to be submitted. Therefore, school involved trace counts may not be all inclusive.

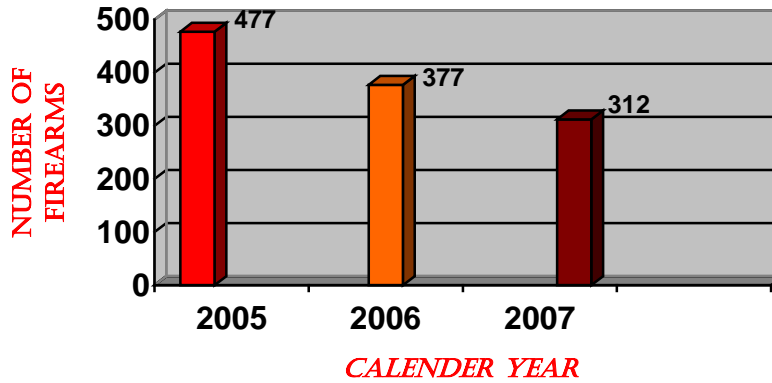
- **(CUI)** During CY 2005, over 233,000 firearms recovered in the U.S. were submitted for tracing and 477 or approximately .20 percent of these firearms traces indicated a recovery on school property.
- **(CUI)** During CY 2005, firearms trace data showed the State of California had the most firearms traces indicating recovery on school property. According to information received, 51 firearms or 11 percent of the firearms recovered on school property were recovered in the State of California.
- **(CUI)** During CY 2006, over 241,000 firearms recovered in the U.S. were submitted for tracing and 377 or approximately .15 percent of these firearms traces indicated a recovery on school property.
- **(CUI)** During CY 2006, firearms trace data showed the State of North Carolina had the most firearms traces indicating a recovery on school property. According to information received, 43 firearms or approximately 11.4 percent of the firearms recovered on school property were recovered in the State of North Carolina.
- **(CUI)** During CY 2007, over 230,000 firearms recovered in the U.S. were submitted for tracing and 312 or approximately .14 percent of these firearms were recovered on school property.
- **(CUI)** During CY 2007, firearms trace data showed the State of North Carolina had the most firearms traces indicating a recovery on school property. According to information received, 47 firearms or approximately 15.1 percent of the firearms recovered on school property were recovered in the State of North Carolina.

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- (CUI) From January 1, 2005 – December 31, 2007, 1,166 total firearms traces indicated a recovery on school property or approximately .17 percent of the total numbers of firearms recovered and submitted for tracing were recovered on school property.

*NUMBER OF TRACED FIREARMS
INDICATING A RECOVERY
ON SCHOOL PROPERTY
BY CALENDER YEAR*



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**(CUI) Firearms Recovered and Traced - U. S. and/or U. S. Possessions School Property
Calendar Year 2005¹⁶**

(Firearm recovery data as submitted by Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. When firearm recovery information was submitted to the ATF National Tracing Center for assistance, in numerous instances, the submitting agency made no distinction between public schools, private schools, or colleges/universities.)

<i>State and/or U. S. Possessions</i>	<i>Number of Firearm(s) Recovered</i>
Alabama	19
Alaska	1
American Samoa	2
Arizona	18
Arkansas	1
California	51
Colorado	7
Connecticut	2
Florida	25
Georgia	38
Illinois	16
Indiana	10
Kansas	15
Kentucky	5
Louisiana	22
Maryland	7
Massachusetts	1
Michigan	5
Minnesota	10
Mississippi	15
Missouri	15
Montana	1
New Hampshire	1
New Jersey	1
New Mexico	1
New York	2
North Carolina	41
Ohio	23
Oklahoma	5
Oregon	4
Pennsylvania	6

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School Firearms Related Violence and Incidents Overview 2005-2007

Rhode Island	1
South Carolina	15
Tennessee	15
Texas	32
Utah	6
Vermont	3
Virginia	17
Washington	9
West Virginia	5
Wisconsin	4
	Total = <u>477</u>

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**(CUI) Firearms Recovered and Traced - U. S. and/or U. S. Possessions School Property
Calendar Year 2006¹⁷**

(Firearm recovery data as submitted by Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. When firearm recovery information was submitted to the ATF National Tracing Center for assistance, in numerous instances, the submitting agency made no distinction between public schools, private schools, or colleges/universities.)

<i>State and/or U. S. Possessions</i>	<i>Number of Firearm(s) Recovered</i>
Alabama	24
Alaska	11
Arizona	8
Arkansas	3
California	18
Colorado	6
Connecticut	3
Delaware	1
Florida	35
Georgia	22
Illinois	9
Indiana	3
Iowa	3
Kansas	14
Kentucky	1
Louisiana	11
Maine	2
Maryland	12
Massachusetts	3
Michigan	10
Minnesota	5
Mississippi	13
Missouri	4
Nebraska	2
Nevada	1
New Jersey	3
New Mexico	2
North Carolina	43
Ohio	11

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School Firearms Related Violence and Incidents Overview 2005-2007

Oklahoma	8
Oregon	3
Pennsylvania	17
Rhode Island	1
South Carolina	4
Tennessee	6
Texas	20
Utah	1
Virginia	15
Washington	10
Wisconsin	9
	Total = <u>377</u>

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***(CUI) Firearms Recovered and Traced - U. S. and/or U. S. Possessions School Property
Calendar Year 2007¹⁸***

(Firearm recovery data as submitted by Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. When firearm recovery information was submitted to the ATF National Tracing Center for assistance, in numerous instances, the submitting agency made no distinction between public schools, private schools, or colleges/universities.)

<i>State and/or U. S. Possessions</i>	<i>Number of Firearm(s) Recovered</i>
Alabama	21
Arizona	15
Arkansas	3
California	10
Colorado	5
Connecticut	1
Florida	37
Georgia	19
Hawaii	1
Idaho	1
Illinois	3
Indiana	3
Iowa	3
Kansas	17
Kentucky	2
Louisiana	16
Maryland	4
Massachusetts	1
Michigan	2
Minnesota	3
Mississippi	21
Missouri	1
Montana	1
New Jersey	3
New Mexico	2
North Carolina	47
Ohio	15
Oklahoma	5

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School Firearms Related Violence and Incidents Overview 2005-2007

Oregon	1
Pennsylvania	21
Puerto Rico	2
South Dakota	1
Tennessee	6
Texas	7
Vermont	1
Virginia	6
Washington	2
West Virginia	1
Wisconsin	1
Wyoming	1
	Total = <u>312</u>

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***(CUI) Top Ten Firearms Recovered and Traced on School Property
Calendar Year 2005¹⁹***

(Firearm recovery data as submitted by Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. When firearm recovery information was submitted to the ATF National Tracing Center for assistance, in numerous instances, the submitting agency made no distinction between public schools, private schools, or colleges/universities.)

- During Calendar 2005, the top ten firearms most often recovered on school property and submitted for tracing accounted for 18.4 percent of the total number of weapons recovered on school property.
- These weapons were determined to be of various makes, manufacturers, models, and calibers.
 - Pistols accounted for 84.1 percent of the top firearms recovered and traced on school property.
 - Revolvers accounted for 9.1 percent of the top firearms recovered and traced on school property.
 - Rifles accounted for 6.8 percent of the top firearms recovered and traced on school property.

It is once again noted that other than availability of firearms to the individual offender, ATF cannot state any specific reasons why any particular make and model of firearms were used. This also applies to the charts for FY 2006 and FY 2007 that follow.

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***(CUI) Top Ten Firearms Recovered and Traced on School Property
Calendar Year 2006²⁰***

(Firearm recovery data as submitted by Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. When firearm recovery information was submitted to the ATF National Tracing Center for assistance, in numerous instances, the submitting agency made no distinction between public schools, private schools, or colleges/universities.)

- During Calendar 2006, the top ten firearms most often recovered on school property and submitted for tracing accounted for 20.2 percent of the total number of weapons recovered on school property.
- These weapons were determined to be of various makes, manufacturers, models, and calibers.
 - Pistols accounted for 73.7 percent of the top firearms recovered and traced on school property.
 - Shotguns accounted for 13.1 percent of the top firearms recovered and traced on school property.
 - Rifles accounted for 6.6 percent of the top firearms recovered and traced on school property.
 - Revolvers accounted for 6.6 percent of the top firearms recovered and traced on school property.

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*(CUI) Top Ten Firearms Recovered and Traced on School Property
Calendar Year 2007²¹*

(Firearm recovery data as submitted by Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. When firearm recovery information was submitted to the ATF National Tracing Center for assistance, in numerous instances, the submitting agency made no distinction between public schools, private schools, or colleges/universities.)

- During Calendar 2007, the top ten firearms most often recovered on school property and submitted for tracing accounted for 19.2 percent of the total number of weapons recovered on school property.
- These weapons were determined to be of various makes, manufacturers, models, and calibers.
 - Pistols accounted for 63.3 percent of the top firearms recovered and traced on school property.
 - Rifles accounted for 8.3 percent of the top firearms recovered and traced on school property.
 - Shotguns accounted for 13.3 percent of the top firearms recovered and traced on school property.
 - Revolvers accounted for 15.0 percent of the top firearms recovered and traced on school property.

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Intelligence Gaps -

- In addition to purchasing firearms legally or accessing them at their own homes, what are some of the additional avenues being utilized by school shooters and/or planners to gain access to weapons?
- Is all information on firearms recovered on school property being properly forwarded to ATF for tracing?
- When firearms have been recovered on school property, are ATF field personnel being notified immediately?
- Are ATF field personnel actively reaching out to school officials, administrators, and school resource officers as it relates to firearms and firearms recovered on school property?
- Are there additional identifiers/profiles that may aid law enforcement officers and school administrators in identifying possible school shooters and/or planners?
- No formal centralized or national mechanism exists for the collection of school shooting incident information.

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Recommendations -

- Field personnel should aggressively investigate all instances where a firearm(s) is found on school property.
- Develop specific coding in addition to “School Related Violence” in N-Force, to better capture school shooting incidents.
- Develop an outreach program between ATF, the local school system, the local police department, and the community at large which educates all parties concerned on ATF’s investigative and firearms tracing role in school shooting incidents or firearm recoveries on school property. Additionally, actively participate in community/police forums dealing with school violence, prevention, education and awareness.

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Endnotes -

- ¹ US Department of Justice. Office of Justice Programs. Bureau of Justice Statistics. www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/welcome.html
- ² School Shooting Events. www.holology.com. November 14, 2007.
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- ¹² "The Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of School Attacks in the United States." United States and United States Department of Education. May 2002.
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- ¹⁴ "Possible Identified School Shooter Risk Factors." www.holology.com. November 14, 2007.
- ¹⁵ Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives information. October 11, 2007.
- ¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives information. February 25, 2008.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Ibid.

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