

**MARYLAND CENTER for SCHOOL SAFETY**  
**School Safety Advisory Board Meeting**

**October 6, 2025**

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### Welcome of the Advisory Board

JOSEPH CORMIER: My name is Joseph Cormier and I'll be chairing the October meeting of the Maryland Center for School Safety Subcabinet Advisory Board. It's great to be back with everyone for the start of the school year and I'm looking forward to working with all of you again this year. As we call this meeting to order, can we please confirm that the meeting is being recorded for public posting at the meeting's conclusion?

AARON CHIUSANO: Yes, the meeting is being recorded and live-streaming.

JOSEPH CORMIER: Fantastic. Thank you so much. Next, we will do a roll call. And bear with me here as I tab through. Michael Brown, who is not here, that's why I'm here today. Eric Ebersole.

ERIC EBERSOLE: Here.

JOSEPH CORMIER: Karin Bailey.

KARIN BAILEY: Here.

JOSEPH CORMIER: Dr. Kellie Anderson.

DR. KELLIE ANDERSON: Here.

JOSEPH CORMIER: Pamela Gaddy Pamela Gaddy? Miss Jacquetta Jacobs?

JACQUETTA JACOBS: Present.

JOSEPH CORMIER: Fantastic. Thank you. Natalie Miller? Natalie Miller, Department of Human Services? All right. Jennifer Wimbrow-Jenkins? Sheriff Matthew Crisafulli?

SHERIFF MATTHEW CRISAFULLI: Sheriff Crisafulli. I'm present, sir.

JOSPEPH CORMIER: Sheriff Crisafulli. There we are, thank you sir. Chief Paul Kifer.

CHIEF PAUL KIFER: Present.

JOSEPH CORMIER: Leigh Weihs? Laurel Moody?

LAUREL MOODY: Morning.

JOSEPH CORMIER: Good morning. Thank you. David Engel? Our student member, Zaria Naqvi? Dr. Brittany Patterson.

DR. BRITTANY PATTERSON: Good morning. How are you?

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JOSEPH CORMIER: Good morning. Thank you. Megan Berger.

MEGAN BERGER: Morning.

JOSEPH CORMIER: Good morning. Thank you. Daniel Buck?

DANIEL BUCK: Here.

JOSEPH CORMIER: Good morning. Thank you.

DANIEL BUCK: Morning.

JOSEPH CORMIER: Gina James.

GINA JAMES: Good morning, here.

JOSEPH CORMIER: Good morning. Thank you. Sergeant Kevin Britt? Maria Navarro? Carol Johnson? And that leaves me, Joe Cormier, your parent of a child with disabilities. To our council, is there a quorum present?

JESIKA MCNEIL: We do have a few more people that are just joining.

JEANEEN JOHNSON: I was going to say we're not quite there yet. All right. Miss Bryan or Miss Buckheit, if you can help me as people are coming in, to identify them.

KIMBERLY BUCKHEIT: Yes, we're looking at that.

KATE BRYAN: Looks like Dr. Navarro has joined. I saw Zaria earlier.

JESIKA MCNEIL: Zaria. Natalie Miller.

KATE BRYAN: So, we should be there. Correct Jeaneen?

JEANEEN JOHNSON: Good morning. Yes. With the addition of those two people, we are now at a quorum. Thank you.

JOSEPH CORMIER: All right. Thank you, Miss Jeaneen Johnson. The last meeting of the Advisory Board was in May and the May meeting was recorded. And that recording is available on the MCSS website. As such, there are no meeting minutes to approve. Are there any additions to today's agenda? Hearing none, I will take a motion to approve the agenda.

SHERIFF MATTHEW CRISAFULLI: I'll make a motion.

JOSEPH CORMIER: Can you identify?

SHERIFF MATTHEW CRISAFULLI: I'm sorry. Sheriff Crisafulli.

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ERIC EBERSOLE: Eric Ebersole, second.

JOSEPH CORMIER: We have a motion and a second. All in favor say aye.

All: Aye.

JOSEPH CORMIER: Anybody opposed? All right. Motion passes and the agenda is approved for today.

### **Lockdown Drills**

JOSEPH CORMIER: We will start today's meeting with the MCSS Executive Director, Kate Bryan and Dr. Jerica Knox from the National Center for School Mental Health at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, sharing updates on the MCSS lockdown drill resources. Miss Bryan?

KATE BRYAN: Fantastic. Thank you. So, we presented on this a couple of times over the last year. The first time is when we, last October, when we published the original guidelines or best practices for active assailant emergency preparedness training and exercise. So, over the last year, there's been a lot of activity going on related to this. I have the distinct pleasure of being joined by Dr. Jerica Knox who has supported the data collection and analysis of lockdown drill surveys that have gone out over the last year or since January. But just to sort of reintroduce we have in 20 in October sorry—October 1st actually, we published an update to our best practice guidelines. High level. I'm going to talk about what was changed. There's no major changes. There were some citation changes, some language changes, and some new sort of resources added to the guidelines, but I'll get to that in a minute. The second, there's a link in the slides that were sent to you this morning on our website to the 2025 technical report that Dr. Knox and her team put together for us. Then there is a link to a highlight document that her team put together. So, Dr. Knox is going to go through the results of the survey—some really interesting findings. And then finally, if you're interested, on October 31st, Dr. Knox is going to join us and we're going to do a webinar that's open nationally, where we talk about the survey results. So, our findings related to the effectiveness and psychological impact of lockdown drills in Maryland. This will be a webinar that we do every year so we can talk about the findings from the prior year. So that every year when we collect the surveys and Dr. Knox and her team analyze the surveys—we're going to present those findings to this group as well as nationally. Next slide.

So, the active assailant and drill guidelines that were updated in October. So, really what we did is we streamlined the document without actually adding any new requirements. So, there's no new local requirements. So, any of our local school systems who are required to follow these guidelines, don't panic. There's nothing new. There's no new requirements for you to implement. We did make some changes to language. We did some reformatting. We added or modified some legal citations and there was, which I believe Dr. Knox may mention there was a new research study that came out through the National Academies. So, we use some of the information from that to sort of improve the guidelines as they're written. So, two new elements to the guidelines that are included on page 26, we added key considerations for

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students and staff who are new to the school. After we published the guidelines in 2024, we realized pretty quickly that we had left that group out. So, we added that piece back in for this year or added that piece in for this year. And then on page 30, as a resource for local education agencies and really any school that may be looking to utilize these guidelines, we included a companion appendix for communication examples. So, as school systems are required to send notifications about drills, this provides some sample language that they can use in sending out those drill notifications to parents and the rest of the school community. Next slide. Excellent. So, now I'm going to pass it off to Dr. Knox. We really appreciate you being here today. and I will turn it over to you.

JERICA KNOX: All right, thank you so much. Good morning, everyone. Thank you for having me. Again, Jerica Knox, assistant professor at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, and faculty member at the National Center for School Mental Health. So, I've been working with Miss Bryan and Buckheit on this study for the past year or so. And so, today I will give you some highlights that we found during year one. Next slide, please. So, I believe last year when I came to this group were in the midst of conducting a literature review and preparing surveys to send out to schools. We developed the surveys using what we learned from the literature review about active assailant lockdown drills and then we met with the Student Advocate for School Safety or SASS students. So shoutout to Zaria who I saw was here earlier and we received feedback on the surveys from them and from you all. So, thank you for donating your time to make sure that the...excuse me, the surveys were sound and asked the right questions. So, we finished refining the surveys early January of this year and then began advertising them that same month. And so, the results from this past school year are from the spring semester only, so January to June 2025. Next slide please. So, as a reminder, there we go. As a reminder, we created four surveys. a school context survey, which was only to be filled out by one person in the school, more than likely an admin, to provide context like the demographics of students in the school, how many received free and reduced lunch, and then also the context of drills like who was on the planning team, how long did the drill last, all the things. And then the other three surveys were for specific stakeholders. So, one for 6th through 12th grade students, one for parents/caregivers of K through 12th grade students, and then one for school staff as well. So, we had about 60 public schools represented out of the 1,400 in Maryland, which is relatively low, but it does provide us with some meaningful context for this year. We had just over 7,000 students represented in the student survey, about 1,000 school staff, and 700 parents/caregivers. You'll see on this slide the domains we asked in the surveys and some sample questions for each. And I'll also say that not all surveys included questions from all of these domains because we wanted to make sure that the surveys weren't super long. So, we rotated some of the domains to get a comprehensive picture of what's going on with lockdown drills in Maryland schools without overwhelming stakeholders who were taking the surveys. We ask questions about planning and preparations, so think training, accommodations, planning teams, communication or notification of the drill and the quality of it. Implementation experience as in how the lockdown drill actually went effectiveness mostly focused on how prepared the lockdown drill made stakeholders feel and then psychological impact. So, seeing if the drill caused them any distress. Next slide please. So, I'll give some highlights for each of those domains starting with planning and preparation. There's a lot of you know just different results here. So, I'll try to you know go a little easy and or just take some time when I'm running through them so that you'll have time for it to marinate. So according to Maryland guidelines and best practices across different national

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organizations, you want to make sure that your drill planning teams are multidisciplinary. So, when asking Maryland schools who is involved in their planning team, most included school admin, of course, but the numbers drop significantly from there as in only 48% of schools included teachers on their planning team. 23% of school mental health staff, 39% of school resource officers, and only 5% of community members. And these numbers are alarming. Right, because again, we want planning teams to reflect different voices and expertise to make sure that we're thinking about all aspects of the drill and what may or may not work for particular students or staff, or even the community as well. And so definitely an area for improvement. And I'll say that our current guidelines already stress the need for multidisciplinary planning teams. We also ask schools about accommodations. So, to the right here, do you provide any for lockdown drills for English language learners and students with disabilities as they should according to again Maryland guidelines and best practices. Only 20% of schools endorsed providing accommodations for English language learners and only 40% of schools for students with disabilities. Also concerning, because of federal mandates that these students should be afforded accommodations and tools to make sure that they can access a meaningful drill meaningful drill experience just like their peers. And so, without those accommodations, schools are risking having students who may not be able to practice the drill steps in a way that actually helps them to prepare. And as a spoiler alert, we actually saw this pattern in other findings that I'll talk about in a few.

So that's planning and preparation. And then we have communication. Most schools reported notifying parents and school staff over a week in advance whereas students were notified with a little less advanced notice within a couple days prior or the day of. So, these results are according to the school context survey. But then we also asked parents directly which is why it's so important right to get multiple perspectives when conducting studies. Only 64% of parents said their child's school notified them beforehand, only 66% of parents endorsed being notified after. Meaning that while schools may engage in some efforts to notify parents, those messages may not always reach families directly or clearly enough for them to recognize and recall that communication. And we also saw some differences in communication in the school staff survey and that includes teachers, school admin, operations staff, school mental health professionals, everyone. Nearly all of them reported receiving enough notice to prepare for their role during the drill. But classroom teachers were less likely to agree than non-classroom staff. And this may reflect the fact that teachers are the ones most likely to manage students during drills. And so, they may have more immediate responsibilities during compared to non-classroom staff. And thus, they may feel like they need more advanced preparation to feel ready. And so that's communication. And then getting into the implementation experience highlights. So, we asked students and school staff did students follow the steps of the lockdown drill. 90% of school staff said yes and 91% of students said yes. So, they are generally agreeing that students did what they needed to do during the drill. However, we also asked students if there were any mistakes or problems during the drill and one in five said yes there were. So, middle schoolers were more likely than high schoolers to report that there were mistakes, which could point to regular developmental differences, right? As in, younger students are still developing self-regulation skills and may need more guidance and just clearer expectations. As for what the mistakes were, we did have some open-ended responses. Students said that they were talking or they were on their phone. You can see an example quote from a student here. So, kids were talking and not following directions well. My teacher was having trouble keeping them under control. So, maybe some challenges with classroom teachers managing group behaviors, which takes us back to that other result with classroom

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teachers feeling like they need more time to prepare for their role during the drill. And so, that's implementation experiences. And now we have effectiveness. So, we asked all stakeholders in some sort of way how effective the lockdown drill was. 73% of students and 85% of school staff reported the drills improved their preparedness for a real emergency. And then even 78% of parents reported gaining confidence in their child's school safety procedures. So higher—number there could be higher. We saw a lot of open-ended responses from staff and students and they had questions like the one that you see on this slide from a student. So, when you are hiding in the classroom, do you let anyone in if they're knocking on the door or not? We had students asking, you know, what if I'm in the hallway? What if I'm in the bathroom? What do I do? Right? We saw questions from teachers as well, like, what if a student isn't being quiet? Do I remain silent to model or what should I do? Do I say something to them? And so, a lot of questions overall which could signal the need for more training and preparation which could then increase perceptions of effectiveness. And we also saw some significant differences here as well. So those who felt less prepared were middle school students compared to high school, English language learners compared to those whose native language is English and then students receiving special education services. And those last two, right, students receiving special education services and the English language learners again speak to earlier findings with minimal schools providing accommodations for these students. And so, it seems like there are some differences in how the drills are experienced which could then influence how effective they are for different students. And then again, another pattern. So, classroom teachers felt less prepared compared to non-classroom teachers. And then finally we have psychological impact. So, we asked students did they feel upset or scared during the drill. 18% said yes. So relatively low. We also asked the same question to school staff and parents to see if they noticed their students or their child feeling upset or scared because of the drill. And those that said yes were pretty low as well. So, the 12% of school staff and 4% of parents and caregivers saw the same thing and there were some differences here. So those who were most likely to feel upset or scared were girls, English language learners, black students, and then students receiving special education services. Some vulnerable populations there. And that tells us that drills may be amplifying existing stress or inequities and that we need to make sure that we are pairing lockdown drills with mental health supports before and after for students and that we're thinking about these students during planning and creating or intentionally thinking about creating drill procedures that are sensitive to the diverse needs of all students. All of which are already included in the Maryland guidelines. And then finally some or another difference here. So, we did ask school staff whether the drill made them feel worried about their own well-being long term. 20% said yes. And of those that said yes, they were more likely to be classroom teachers. Again, may signal the burden they have of guiding students in these scenarios. Okay. And so, and I see, sorry, I'm just looking at the chat there. Okay, next slide, please. And so those are the highlights from this year. We do have some clear areas for improvement to work on like truly leaning into the multidisciplinary planning teams. Increasing accommodations and attention to vulnerable populations and then leaning into more scenario-based and role specific training for students and staff to lessen those common questions they had. Now again, we did create these surveys in accordance with the literature review we conducted, including the best practices for active assailant drills guidelines from the National Association of School Psychologists and National Association of School Resource Officers. were also guided by a timely consensus study that Miss Bryan mentioned earlier by the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine which included their own

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comprehensive literature review and report that was actually disseminated maybe a month ago and they also had listening sessions featuring invited stakeholders. So special shout out to Zaria who I know provided her input on the drills during one of those listening sessions. , and based on NASP and NASRO's guidelines and based on the National Academy's report, I'm quite pleased to say that our Maryland guidelines already align well with national best practices and so our findings don't call for major overhauls like , Miss Bryan said earlier. So much of the areas that are needed are already included in the guidelines. So, this year was more so about making tweaks and just updates simple updates. So, moving forward we are refining the surveys or we've already refined them now and we are starting to collect data for this new school year. We're expecting to get a much larger sample size and participation from more schools which would allow us to run more advanced analyses. So that would allow us to answer questions like, are there specific school context things like drill timing or who's on the planning team? Do those things relate to perceptions of effectiveness and psychological impact? We're also preparing to deliver these same findings via a webinar at the end of the month that was mentioned earlier as well. And we'll continue to work with Zaria and the students of SASS to discuss just next steps for how we can take these findings and use them to inform other deliverables. And so those are the highlights for this year. happy to answer any questions, comments, ideas, all the things.

SHERIFF CRISAFULLI: Dr. Knox, this is Sheriff Crisafulli. First, I want to thank you for a very comprehensive overview. Great job on this. And I just want to hit back on some of what you talked about being concerning when you look at the planning. It's concerning that just a tad less than half of the classroom teachers were participating. I mean, let's face it, the teachers, they know their student population better than anyone. They can kind of help discuss, you know, this particular child may have some issues with this. And then it's very striking that only 39% of our school resource officers or school resource deputies were involved in this. I think that they can play a critical role in helping to us to fine-tune. I just wanted to kind of add that in there. And the low percentage of the mental health workers in our schools and then the community members, I think we can probably tighten up if we increase those percentages. But thank you for a very comprehensive overview, ma'am.

JERICA KNOX: Yeah, absolutely. Thank you. And as you said, right, these different...the teachers and school resource officers, right? They bring these different perspectives and experiences that will allow them to have better conversations when we're thinking about planning, right? As you said, the teachers may be able to think about, ah that's not actually going to work for my classroom because we have these particular students and school mental health professionals are going to think, well, is that actually trauma-informed? Right? Bringing in all of these good questions that can make for better drill experiences and more effective experiences. So, yeah, absolutely. We do have some work to do there.

SHERIFF CRISAFULLI: Thank you.

LAUREL MOODY: It's Laurel. Can you hear me? Okay.

JERICA KNOX: Absolutely.

LAUREL MOODY: I'm fighting a cold. I'm sorry. I just had two quick questions. One is...

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was there a consistent method of communication with parents across the ser you know across the schools in terms of notification like how are parents being notified?

JERICA KNOX: Yeah, great question. I'm so glad I have the technical report up that lists out all the things here. So, parents were most likely notified through their email communication system or phone communication system. But also, right the guidelines do say that they should receive a copy of the schedule at the beginning of the school year. We don't have information on what that actually looks like. So that is a question that we could ask in particular for that next school context survey.

LAUREL MOODY: Okay, great. And then second quick question in terms of how schools participated were they volunteered? Did they volunteer? I mean you said you had a low number in the sample, although you had some quality numbers. How do you plan to try to increase participation of schools in these surveys?

JERICA KNOX: Yeah, I may pass it to Miss Bryan for this one, but we do send out the flyer to the superintendent's newsletter. And we've just been having conversations about how we can better disseminate that information. So, our goal is to create other deliverables that we can send out, whether through the national centers list serves, or working with MSDE, etc., right, to be able to make sure that schools know that they should be filling these surveys out the lockdown drills. But I will pass it to Miss Bryan for more information there.

KATE BRYAN: Yes. And so, Laurel, so we released the survey in January of 2025. So, the majority of systems often do their lockdown drills in the first half of the school year. And these surveys are only required to be sent for lockdown drills, not any other type of drill in the school. So, we anticipate given the fact that the majority of lockdown drills are being conducted in the sort of fall time frame—the September to December time frame, that we will see a much larger response.

LAUREL MOODY: Right. Okay. Thank you.

ERIC EBERSOLE: I had my hand up, but I'm we're not going that way. So, I'm going to call in here. It's Eric Ebersole. I'm, we're very well trained in legislature, you know. You put up a slide about parents about advanced notice and I know Laurel asked some questions about that. You know, the law were pretty careful not to have them be announced on day of or days before because we felt there was a danger in emptying kids out of the building and that being public knowledge on a specific day. Did you get the impression that parents in answering that had expected to have that kind of very close notification that was going to happen? Because the laws written that they just have that the school system just have to tell what month they're going to have them in. And so, I know you understand that. You read the laws, but I want to know did we get any sense of parents like well I didn't know and they expected to have it in days right beforehand when they really can't have that expectation.

JERICA KNOX: Yeah, that's a great question and I so I can't confirm right. I have to go off of what they actually said in the open-ended questions, which were super helpful, but there were a good bit of parents who said, you know, I didn't know anything about this drill, and that would have been helpful for me to know because my child in particular has some concerns

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about active shooters, etc., right? And so, they had a lot of concerns with not knowing in the context of I needed to be able to prepare my child beforehand. They did not speak to when they would have wanted that notification exactly. So that is something that we could potentially ask in the future.

ERIC EBERSOLE: Thank you for that answer. I think the crush of things that come home in the early days of school is probably in there. Parents didn't recognize. I don't know how we ameliate that, but it's a good thing to rest.

KATE BRYAN: Are there any other questions for Dr. Knox?

JOSEPH CORMIER: Hi, good morning, Dr. Knox. Joe Cormier, parent of a special education student. I know you talked a lot about engaging teachers, but I also want to make sure that you guys aren't sleeping on support staff, our front office staff, our building service workers, our instructional assistants, they see these kids the same 180 days a year. And a lot of them are involved in the transitions from place to place. So, that's an important part. And then for a lot of our special education students, , they have the itinerant staff that come in and work with them, whether they're speech, OT's, PT, social workers, and they might cover two, three, five buildings in a district and trying to have five different setups in their head of what what's going to happen in this building.

JERICA KNOX: Absolutely.

JOSEPH CORMIER: Give them a different perspective than someone who's in the same room, in the same building with the same schedule every single day.

JERICA KNOX: Yeah, absolutely. Thank you so much for that note. because it allows me to clarify too, right? So, the school staff survey included all stakeholders within the school including, excuse me, including operations staff, support staff. And so, what we saw when I opened up the data set was a whole lot of classroom teachers and then less of the school admin support staff and operation staff. And so, when conducting the analyses, we had to collapse the non-classroom teachers because those sizes were so small. And so inevitably, right, the things that we could look at were classroom teachers compared to non-classroom teachers. But I do hear your point, right, that it is important to take a look at those other staff members because they are still interacting with students. They do still have some sort of responsibilities during the drill and that's actually what we are hoping for right with the larger sample size this year that we'll be able to parse them out a little bit more to see are there any differences between a front office staff member versus a teacher or someone in the cafeteria right and so that is part of next steps and it has been it was integrated into this last year. It's just that with that sample size right there's only so much that we could do but I absolutely hear you.

JOSEPH CORMIER: And I also want to say as a school staff member sometimes when these things come down it's oh this is just for teachers and I think it's in that communication to make sure from the superintendent on down that it's disseminated. We need everyone's involvement in this. It's not just a teacher thing. So that is a school-by-school dissemination problem for sure. So, thank you so much and in your identified of groups that might be more susceptible for the special education students. I would suggest reaching out. Each county is supposed to

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have a SECAC or a Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee. That might be a great resource for you guys to tap into to get more stuff and there's a state level SECAC as well.

JERICA KNOX: Nice. Thank you so much for that.

JOSEPH CORMIER: Absolutely. And thank you for this amazing presentation. Is there any other questions for Dr. Knox or Miss Bryan before we move on to the next agenda item?

KATE BRYAN: So, I see Dr. Navarro's hands up hand up and then Megan Berger's hand up. So, we'll start with Dr. Navarro, there you go.

JOSEPH CORMIER: I don't have hands.

DR. MARIA NAVARRO: Hi. Thank you. I agree. It was a great presentation. As I think about from reflecting on it, I'm glad we're going to do a couple of different presentations from the superintendent seat. I would say that as we and we're definitely, we just finished ours because we focused on September being the month and the communication. So, I agree you will have a lot more data this year especially in the fall, because my colleagues are in the middle of doing theirs. But what would be helpful, I think, for bringing more awareness, systemwide awareness, parent awareness, because a lot of us use the information that we communicate. We've learned how many things parents have to know. And as a current parent of two teenagers in public schools, I miss, you know, I'm a C plus parent, barely trying to make it into B minus and keeping up with emails and so forth. So, what I would suggest also, I think for us to think about is when we see couple of schools especially secondary schools because elementary schools—they tend to pay attention. And I'm curious as you look at the data of middle schoolers—we all know middle school is that interesting time of young people right? And so, and we have now cell phones in schools that are you know that kids splash them out. So, I would suggest that we look at highlighting a school where we see really strong practices and maybe perhaps think about creating a PSA of some types of how they go about it, showing other school systems models of what we mean in action. Because I think that would help a lot of schools say, "Oh, I see what you mean by this and that." And I think I just wanted to offer that idea as we move more into this work. Thank you.

JERICA KNOX: Yeah, that's an excellent idea. Thank you so much for that. Just what does it look like right for best practices to be operationalized? Thank you.

DR. MARIA NAVARRO: Well, and from the mouths of a local school in our state and parents locally to us, so people are like, "Oh, yeah. I could relate."

JERICA KNOX: Thank you.

KATE BRYAN: Excellent, Megan.

MERGAN BERGER: Hi. Yeah, just echoing everybody's thanks for this information and report. I am, I work with disability rights Maryland, so I'm interested in the data on the students with disabilities and lack of planning and accommodation. I'm just wondering and so the students' IEPs do require IEP planning for emergency conditions, you know, as you know,,

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And so I'm wondering whether that data is linked to a lack of identification and planning on the IEP or is it more a failure to implement the accommodations that are actually on the IEP? So, you might not know and it might be a combination of both but that's something that I would be interested in is. A... You know are the emergency planning for all different types of scenarios happening on the IEP and then and if they are what's the disconnect with implementation and if they're not then that ties into why you know it's hard to hard to plan and accommodate in this situation.

JERICA KNOX: So yeah, absolutely. I think that's where a lot of the or interviews could come into place, right? Thinking about follow-ups for particular questions to help us interpret them a little bit better because there are right there could be so many reasons for why we had such low numbers for those accommodations as you just mentioned, two of them. So, we'll think about how we can one refine the surveys each year to have follow-ups to the extent where right it's still a short relatively short survey while also leveraging perhaps interviews and other avenues for getting this information.

MEGAN BERGER: Thanks.

KATE BRYAN: Mr. Cormier. That looks like all the hands that are up.

JOSEPH CORMIER: All right. Well, thank you again, Miss Bryan and Dr. Knox for a great presentation and I look forward to the ongoing work that happens as we continue to refine that process and bring that information back out to our county. Agenda item number two is our PREPARE 2025 conference. Who is doing this? Jesika McNeil and Ja Coates are going to be presenting on the really great conference we had over the summer.

### PREPARE 2025

JESIKA MCNEIL: Good morning. Thank you, Mr. Cormier. Ja Coates and I are the co-chairs of the PREPARE 2025 Conference, and we're just going to provide you with a quick overview of this past year's Conference and give you the dates of the upcoming conference. So, for PREPARE 2025, we had over 620 people register for the conference and approximately 480 attendees this year. This year's conference, we wanted to reflect on the evolution of school safety personally and professionally over the past 25 years. Beginning with the 1999 Columbine High School tragedy. We had some really great presenters this year, such as Max Schachter who presented on turning pain into purpose. He discussed his 14-year-old son, who was murdered during the Parkland school shooting. We also had Tim and Tamia Woods who talked about cyber enticements and its dangers, who lost their only child James due to being a victim of sextortion. As well as Ian Lopez, who talks about who talked about lessons learned in lockdown and the importance of involving all the stakeholders and leaders in drills to build emergency preparedness and relationships. And we also had a local speaker Mr. Justin Saffar from Wooten High School who talked about the Wooten High School manifesto threat of fiction which discussed 129-page manifesto written by a Montgomery County student. This session examined the intervention methods and investigations from criminal case and the subsequent prosecution of that case as well. Like I said, this is just to touch on a few of the great speakers and presenters that we had. We had many great presentations throughout the year. This year, we're excited to offer Stop the Bleed training from the University of Maryland

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Adams Crowley Shock Trauma Unit Center, who came in and offered four sessions during the conference at different times throughout the day, which broke down—for the attendees all received individualized Stop the Bleed kits and certifications. 139 students and staff members were trained during these sessions, which was really exciting for us. Excuse me. Also, this year, we had another new offering, it was the SRO of the Year. I'm sorry I can't see the slides so I can't see what slide we're on.

AARON CHIUSANO: Actually, Jesika the slides came down.

JESIKA MCNEIL: Oh okay.

AARON CHIUSANO: Let me see, I'm not sure. Were you presenting or was someone else presenting?

JESIKA MCNEIL: Someone else is presenting.

AARON CHIUSANO: I think... okay let me see if I can find the slides. Sorry everyone.

JESIKA MCNEIL: In the meantime, I'll continue to chat. We offered another new offering for the PREPARE Conference, it was SRO of the Year. So, we had 24 nominees SROs nominated this year from 16 different organizations represented and 12 jurisdictions which included PG, Montgomery, Caroline, Talbot, Wicomico, Calvert, Frederick, Queen Anne's, Howard, Harford, Washington, and Allegany counties. The review committee was made up of two MCSS training and certification staff members as well as three members of this Advisory Board. So, we cannot thank you enough for your time and dedication to this project. All the nominees were recognized at our conference and a personal note was sent to each of them from our director. This year, we will be introducing another new aspect, which will be the School Security Employee of the Year as part of the 2026 Conference.

As usual, we also offered continue education opportunities throughout the year throughout the conference for different areas of expertise and partners throughout the conference. This included seven in-service hours from the Maryland Police and Coordination Training Commission (MPCTC) and up to 12 continuing professional development hours were offered by the National Association of School Psychologists. Excuse me. We offered up to 7.75 continuing education hours are offered to from National Board of Certified Counselors. And we also would like to, as we talked about last year, we are still working with the challenge of trying to offer continuing education hours through the National Board of Social Workers for school social workers. We have had a continuing challenge in with this and getting approvals and the correct association approvals. They have changed their process. We are exploring some possibilities of working along with Anne Arundel County in the future to see if we can co-sponsor with them to possibly get some continuing education hours offered in 2026. But we are not sure as it of yet, but we are exploring that opportunity. This year, we will also be exploring the opportunity of possibly offering continuing education opportunities for school nurses as well.

Okay. And then the next part of our conference, which is an annual part that we love so much and recognize our Maryland students, is our art showcase. The theme for this year was Community Heroes. As you'll see on the screen, these are our first, second, and third place winners for the elementary, middle, and high school grade groups. There were 17 entries

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received and displayed representing seven jurisdictions throughout the county. As always, we did anonymous voting from the conference attendees. We did this year and were excited to also work with DJS victim services unit, who did allow their students to participate in the conference and we hope to continue working with them and allowing those students that opportunity in the future. We are excited this year that we have been able to secure a few exhibitions for our students and to showcase their great work. So, we started off in August at the Maryland State Department of Education for the month and that went through September 13th, excuse me. We are in the month of October; the artwork will be displayed at the top of the World Observation Deck at the World Trade Center in Baltimore. In the month of November, it will be displayed at the Meeting House gallery. November 10th through 30th in Columbia. December it will be displayed at Maryland Hall for Creative Arts December 1st through 19th which is located in Annapolis. And of course, we are happy to once again be at the Maryland State House through Legislative session which is January 9th through April 17th. Unfortunately, this will be the last year we will be able to display at the Maryland State House due to some changes in how they'll be processing and what they will be allowing as far as displays and exhibitions at the State House after this year.

Next slide, please. And last, but not least, PREPARE 2026. We have begun the process and again, working on the PREPARE 2026 Conference. Please save the date, mark your calendars, and we hope to see you there. We're lucky enough to secure Turf Valley for another three-year contract. This year, PREPARE 2026 will be July 21st through 23rd. We will be sending out notifications, and we will be opening up our call for speakers in the very near future this month. So, if you have any speakers or suggestions that you would like to send our way, please do so. We would be happy to entertain those opportunities. My co-chair, Ja, is on the line as well. I'm sorry I'm losing my voice a little. Ja, the co-chair, is also on the line. I didn't know if there's anything you wanted to add.

JA COATES: No, I think you covered everything, but I do want to mention that next year, as you mentioned, the call for speakers is going out. So, next year's theme will be focusing on the layered approach. All the screens I think the slides are... there they go. Focusing on the layered approach. So again, if you, if anyone has any recommendations for speakers, please send them to our website so that way they can submit. That's all.

JESIKA MCENIL: Okay. Does anyone have any questions or comments in regard to PREPARE 2025 or PREPARE 2026 to come? Right. Thank you

JOSEPH CORMIER: All right. Well, thank you, Miss McNeil, and thank you, Ja. I've attended the last two of these conferences, and they are a fantastic resource, not just for law enforcement, but school-based staff, and I think adding those credentialing opportunities is a great way to bring people in. And sitting down through those different workshops and presentations were fantastic in and of themselves, but then the conversations that come out of it afterward and the networking in the hallways is really a fantastic thing for a lot of these smaller counties who don't have hundreds of employees to share that information to come and get access to that. So, thank you so much for everything you guys do and the art show was fantastic. We always love that part.

JA COATES: Thank you.

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### Advisory Board Priorities

JOSEPH CORMIER: Right. So, moving right along to agenda item three. We're going to be talking about the MCSS priorities for this year. We're going to expand on the work that we did back in May at our workshop. A summary of that workshop was sent out in advance of this meeting and Miss Bryan and Miss Buckheit were able to meet with couple of people to talk about those priority items and have some feedback. So, Miss Bryan, would you like to jump in?

KATE BRYAN: Sure, I'll take over. And Kim, feel free to jump in if I miss anything. So, next slide. So, these are really priorities over the next three years. We're sort of focusing on some areas that we can look at for this year and then figure out what strategic planning looks like for year two and year three. So, in the materials you were sent this morning as well as the information that Kim sent out that was the May discussion. So, our first priority for the agency is to proactively identify, assess, and mitigate potential threats of violence by integrating a comprehensive public health formed approach to behavioral threat assessment across all Maryland schools encompassing both student and adult threats. So that's our goal. some of the areas we're going to be looking at specific to our agency tie to behavioral threat assessment first off and that's increasing the knowledge of warning signs and how to report behaviors of concern. Expanding available strategies to effectively intervene and then connect experts in conducting digital searches with personnel. So specific to behavioral threat assessment my question to the group is given the expansion the recent expansion of our BTA approach to include both students and adult threats what new training guidance or legal clarification is needed to help school communities effectively recognize, report, and respond to potential adult threats within a school environment. So, looking for sort of your input and feedback in your areas of expertise. Dr. Navarro?

DR. MARIA NAVARRO: I just want to reiterate that this is going to be an important piece for school-based staff and through legal to understand how to make this happen in schools. There's a lot of sort of questions from implementation that I raised last time and I and I feel like those still remain. And I think the good the good individuals to contact in school systems for their perspectives are HR managers, staff attorneys, and like the folks that right now do behavioral threat assessments, like oversee student services for behavioral threat assessments. They may have some logistics of implementation questions that maybe proactively we can get on top of, that are going to come once we actually implement. And I think the triage of student services, HR, and staff attorney in the schools will queue up some of those questions that I've mentioned before. Thank you.

KATE BRYAN: Right. Excellent point. And we have been connecting with several of those groups. But yeah, we can certainly expand that. So, thank you for that. Any additional thoughts, questions?

So, one of the one of the things we're trying to do with each of these priorities is to think about them in the context of specialized populations. So how do these priorities impact special or specialized population groups number one and number two, how do we measure success? So, what data is currently being collected is already being looked at that we can use to determine whether or not we are successful in our priorities.

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So, I'll move I'll move to school-based security personnel. So, the first priority or the first item is really looking at funding for school-based security personnel. So, this includes not just school resource officers but those individuals who work for the school system who are school security employees. There was already a change in 2024, to expand the school resource officer grant to include funding for school security employees. The challenge is the funding level; the amount did not change. So, the amount remained flat. Still the \$10 million which divides up to about seven million \$7,000 a school per year. but it expanded the available use. So, the second is so resources that might be needed to support the effectiveness of personnel. We've been contacted by several of our smaller LEAs to request sort of assistance as they expand build out their security employee pool. And then finally the elevation of the importance of security personnel. So, any input, comments relative to school-based security personnel?

JOSEPH CORMIER: So, I know we push out Hi, Joe Cormier again. Sorry. I know we push out to the local school systems, but they don't have a funding source that they had they can make changes to. Like, they get their money from their local county government. So, I think reaching out to the county commissioners, because to them it's all dollars, but when we can put faces to these issues and explain to them why we're looking to do the things that we want to do, whether it comes out of a sheriff's department budget or a school systems budget, I would like to see an SRO in every building in every, you know, footprint and explaining why that's necessary instead of in another golf course. I think, you know, reaching out to them is going to be key to that.

KATE BRYAN: Excellent point. Thank you. I don't see any hands up. And then so finally, under school-based violence prevention is our school culture and climate. So, ensuring there are deliberate efforts by schools supporting subgroups of students. You know what are the effective strategies that could be used to elevate the student voice. And then finally resources that could be useful to teachers and as I think we heard earlier not just maybe teachers but all of the school staff within a building. So, Karin, I see your hand up.

KARIN BAILEY: Yeah, I have I couldn't find my hand up for on the last point. When you're talking and to Joe's point, are you talking about more SRO's or more school-based security people? Because I have both. I have SROs in my schools, but then I also have a security team that are my employees that we, you know, that monitor doors, walk through the hallways, things like that.

KATE BRYAN: So, we're talking about both.

KARIN BAILEY: Okay.

KATE BRYAN: Right. So, right now, the state has and I'm going to forget my numbers for 2025 off the top of my head, but I'll give it a shot. We have a little over 400 school resource officers as defined by law. Right? So, those are law enforcement officers who have been assigned to a school or several schools through a memorandum of understanding with their school system. And then there are the security employees that are employees of the school system that are assigned inside a school. So, when we're talking about security personnel, we're talking about both. So, I mean the one good thing about SRO's and security employees in

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the State of Maryland is that both of them are required to go through our SRO and school security employee training academy. So, both—whether they're school system personnel or whether they're law enforcement personnel, they're both required to go through that.

KARIN BAILEY: Okay. All right. I'm just thinking of the budgetary impacts on all of that. You know, not that school safety isn't important, but you know, there's always the balance that, you know, as a LEA that we have for all of the other priorities, you know, that are also required in addition to this. So, because in most of the SRO's, at least in our county, are funded through the sheriff's department, not through us. So, you know we have the responsibility for the security personnel. I was just trying to clarify. So, thank you. Yeah.

KATE BRYAN: And we agree it is a balance, right? There is limited funding and so what is the what is the appropriate balance within both the school system as well as the county. All right. Next slide. All right. The second is anonymous reporting systems and bystander reporting. So, our goal is to maximize the utilization and effectiveness of Safe Schools Maryland other reporting anonymous reporting systems as a primary tool for early detection and prevention of school safety threats. So, you all have heard this multiple times. You're all very familiar with Safe Schools Maryland. It's our statewide school safety reporting system or tipline. It's been in operation since 2018, about October this time frame, 2018. It's been incredibly successful throughout the state. There are systems throughout the state that utilize their own anonymous reporting or confidential reporting systems. But currently, all public school systems are participating with Safe Schools Maryland we have just about 200 and a little over 220 private schools that are participating. So, first, is for this is our best practice guidelines. So, identifying methods to promote bystander reporting among various stakeholders is the first piece. Defining our procedures for school officials to respond to a report. So having our team look at sort of what are the recommended procedures at the local level when they're responding to a report. So, allowing the school systems to retain and the ability to manage these tips directly but providing some additional guidance on how to do that successfully. Provide practices for school officials to ensure anonymity of the reporters. When we talk about local implementation, you know, our goal is to sort of dispel those myths related to reporting. Assist in ways we can to build trust between communities and schools as they act on reports. Ensuring that we have really deliberate methods to share information between various parties whether it's internal within the school or the school system, internal within the county. Often, we receive tips that are that cross jurisdictions. So, it's really important that we're deliberate on how we share that information within each system but also across the state and potentially across the nation. And then from a state-level side we're talking about codifying the existence of an anonymous reporting system in Maryland. What would that look like? What would requirements for such a system look like Safe Schools Maryland? And then how do we ensure that we're protecting the information that's submitted so that individuals who report continue to feel safe in reporting. So again, I'm going to leave this open to the group questions, comments, concerns, suggestions from your specific areas of expertise? When we think about the communication of an anonymous reporting system whether it's locally or at the state level and we think about that communication to the public right to students, parents, school community. So, what are some effective ways that we can communicate with those groups to correct any sort of misunderstanding, misconceptions about reporting? So how do we communicate the importance of bystander reporting? I think we've seen in several of the incidents that have occurred nationally how important it would have

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been to have bystander reporting before the events. So, how do we elevate and how do we better communicate the importance of bystander reporting within each of your areas of expertise?

LAUREL MOODY: Kate, it's Laurel can you hear me okay?

KATE BRYAN: I can.

LAUREL MOODY: All right. Thanks. This congestion is like a fog. I'm just thinking about the student handbooks that a lot of jurisdictions have that go out at the beginning of the year that certainly talk about levels of you know misconduct, you know, student conduct if there isn't an opportunity to advertise or promote this anonymous tool. I mean, it has been out for several years. But is it, you know, is now a good time to readvertise that and promote that? And since parents, as well as students are supposed to have access to that student handbook, whether it's done electronically or paper, depends on the jurisdiction, if that would be, one vehicle that you could advertise a little bit more about this system. Just a thought.

KATE BRYAN: Yeah, good suggestion. Dr. Navarro?

DR. MARIA NAVARRO: Sorry, I was on mute. I think that's a great suggestion. I would say is it possible for us to think about putting a social media quick thing about the importance of it? Anonymous reporting is hugely helpful in school security. And so I just want to emphasize that from the superintendent vantage point, we depend a lot and we get a lot of really good tips through our see something say something or our statewide and that's I think why you have every single school system involved to be frank. But I think a way to get to families, I'm in the how do you get busy families and families to actually watch anything for more than three seconds these days? And so, I do think we need to think about social media and that is something that if there is a possibility of creating something like that, then all of the LEAs can flush it out through all of their social media things. And just as an FYI, we are no longer an ex-district, but we are very much into Instagram and what's the other one that I try never to look at? Facebook. And so, I think that's going to be important and share some things with, you know my partner, the sheriff's office. If there's a way we can do that that's an easy vehicle to reach so many social media very quickly. So just a suggestion as why and I think we have to be, we also have to address like I have in some communities my Latino community right now they only have certain trusted adults for messaging for school engagement in multiple things. But that is also an important place where we want people to be able to report and how we think about that and how they give us tips are going to be important. So, I just, I want to reiterate that anonymous reporting is extremely helpful. And if we can do more of that that would be helpful and we can also get to student groups and so forth so that more students can see it.

KATE BRYAN: Fantastic. So, I'm hearing sort of like a social media toolkit that could be shared with the 24 or that we could post and then you could reshare the ladder. Okay, gotcha. Excellent. Britt?

DR. BRITTANY PATTERSON: Hi. Good morning. I had a number of similar thoughts to Dr. Navarro. I was also just curious about the data we currently have to help us understand how the reporting systems are currently being used and by whom. So, who are the populations

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where we're seeing the greatest challenge with using the systems or interfacing with it at all. Just so I can think more about kind of targeted interventions. I do love the idea of kind of that social media toolkit as also just a broader marketing toolkit. But any data around these systems would be really helpful for me just to understand a little bit more.

KATE BRYAN: Okay. Yeah, we have some generic not generic, we have sort of the highest level data right on our website where we post and that's just the numbers and sort of the categories or event types that they're that they're categorized in. But yeah, we can talk internally about what data we can potentially publish that might better inform that. So great. Thank you.

DR. BRITTANY PATTERSON: And I will just I'll just echo a point that Dr. Navarro shared toward the end there. with specific populations not feeling comfortable using anonymous reporting systems. I think there are many young people I hear. It's not really anonymous. You can figure out who I am. And so having those multiple kind of avenues for reporting. Maybe they're not the direct reporter, but they have a process for identifying their safe people or their safe systems for sharing their reports. I think is just a crucial piece of advice that Dr. Navarro shared.

KATE BRYAN: Excellent. Thank you. Zaria. Yeah. for starters, I apologize if I'm a little soft. I'm recovering from sickness right now, but I want to add on to what Dr. Navarro said. I think a lot of students in particular don't know that anonymous is truly anonymous and they don't see this reporting system as a safe option for them. And a lot of students are scared that if they report another student or one of their friends, they're just going to get them in trouble and they don't see the health factor. So I think definitely promoting that through social media is vital. And also, you know, I'm appointed through the Maryland Association of Student Councils. We have a large student following there. We have conferences with thousands of students. So, if that's something we want to promote at one of those conferences, MCSS panelists are always invited to attend those. We can have videos. We have our social media page that's available to us. So, I just wanted to put that out there. And I also wanted to add to the point, I know Anne Arundel County has their new app where they're using an embedded MCSS reporting system and that's kind of how they're promoting it there. So, if that's something we can encourage for other school systems in Maryland to do, I think that's very helpful and makes it a lot more accessible for students to actually use.

KATE BRYAN: Excellent suggestions as always, Zaria. We always appreciate your input and feedback from the students' perspective. So going to that question of not just making individuals comfortable in reporting but so one of the potential concerns of anonymous reporting systems is people using a system like that inappropriately or not in the right way. And so are there suggestions from the group on ways to sort of help individuals understand what is to be reported and really why the system is to be used only for serious school safety concerns. Any suggestions on that side?

DR. MARIA NAVARRO: I would say that at first we should expect there to be, you know, when we do and I'm looking at the Instagram account right now for Safe Schools and when we put something out there at least with students, we should expect a little bit at first to be the typical developmentally age appropriate response of getting a lot of traction at first. But I'll

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take that and have a couple of annoyed adults muddling through that for more knowledge-base, because they will. And I think the question is how do you put information in a way that they will actually watch it. Like I said, I have two teenagers at home and I watch how long their attention span is before they flick. Right? So, so it's got to be developed with students in mind. And I think we need to ask Zaria queued up. She's got a pool of young people that that they are connected with. And I think it's creating those posts that they're more likely to be watched and remembered by young people what to do when or where to go when. And I think that's the way we need to engineer a lot of the postings. I feel like the post if we want to do sort of that campaign that it needs to be engineered by our customer base and our customer base is first and foremost young people and second and school-based young people and then maybe the next layer is younger people that are probably in their 20s and that just and I am every day further and further away from them. So, I need to have them tell me what works for them. Just as we think about that, but I think we'll get some of that noise. I'll take that noise over more young people knowing what to do at that moment in time because they're all carrying these things and they can report immediately. And that just helps a lot in incidents in schools.

KATE BRYAN: Excellent. Thank you. Sheriff, I see that you have a raised hand virtually.

SHERIFF CRISAFULLI: First, I want to thank Zaria. You had a very good point. In Worcester County, we are really trying to push out to our entire community that anonymous means anonymous. And young lady, you did make a very good point because I think a lot of our youth are fearful that if they say something that it's going to come back to them. What I would implore you to remind your peers is that when they report anonymously, they should not even tell their closest friend. They should just keep that close to the chest, make the anonymous report and let the trusted adults do what they're supposed to do. And something that Dr. Navarro hit on as she works with her Sheriff's office. Our Sheriff's office here in Worcester County, we have what's called the Sheriff's app. You can go to the app store and download it for free. And there's a particular component on there that works in conjunction with the Maryland Center for School Safety for anonymous reporting. And it's worked out very well. You don't even have to put your name. There's no information that identifies you. you simply tell what school it is, what the potential threat is, and that goes to our office and we immediately notify Worcester County Public Schools. So, I would encourage all of the different counties to check with your if it's your local municipal police agencies that are your school resource officers or if it's your Sheriff's offices that are your school resource deputies to communicate to see if they're what they're pushing out on their social media because we can really hit a lot of people in our community through these apps and we have to have the community understand you need to trust that it is anonymous because ours is truly anonymous and I think most of the different organizations in today's society with technology it is anonymous and we need our youth we need our support staff in the schools we need our SRD's, SRO's to make these reports when they see something because of on the national level what we're seeing every day and it's horrifying. So, Dr. Navarro had some very good points that this is extremely critical for safe schools in Maryland. So, thank you Dr. Navarro and Zaria. Thank you very much young lady.

KATE BRYAN: Thank you, Sheriff. Yes ma'am. Any other input, comments, questions?

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JOSEPH CORMIER: Hi. Good morning, Joe Cormier. just on that last one, tapping into the state PTA and the different PTO and the county level. You know, they're getting the information to the parents a lot quicker. Usually when I get something from that as a parent, I'm willing to open that email and read it more thoroughly than I do the weekly s'more or weekly newsletter I get from my kids school every week. That kind of has the same thing. But I know when my PTA or my PTOs are putting out information, that's something I'm really digging into.

KATE BRYAN: Excellent. Great suggestion. Thank you. All right. Priority three—ties to coordinated emergency response and preparedness. So those of you that have been in the meetings for a while know that over the last couple of years we've been doing a lot more work in this space doing a state level school-based incident coordination plan. We started in May of 2024. We started hosting statewide tabletop exercises first for the public school systems, then last year, in 2024, we held one for our non-public special education facilities. This year, we continued to hold them for our public-school partners. And this summer, we hosted not only our non-public special education facilities, but also our non our private schools. So really successful statewide tabletop exercises. So, one of the things we're thinking about is exploring sort of the feasibility of conducting some sort of full-scale exercise for a local school system, whether that's coordinated through our office or we just support a local school system that might be interested in doing that. And then engaging those local agencies and state agencies and federal depending, on the type of objectives we're trying to test to conduct that exercise and then working with those entities to sort of identify agreed upon objectives or goals for the exercise. So that's one thing that's on our agenda. Again, those full-scale exercises are a lot of work. they take a good amount of time to plan and coordinate. So, it would not be something that's happening this year. But it's certainly something we can think about for future years. Emergency plans, being informed by assessments and reviews. So after-action reviews of incidents as well as drills. After-action reviews of special events. All of those things sort of feed into emergency plan updates and that continuous cycle of improvement. So, providing support to locals in helping them analyze that data so that they can make some decisions. supporting engagement between school systems and first responders. I know most of you know most of the school systems and first responders have very good relationships but doing what we can do to sort of support that engagement. The tabletops are certainly one way we do that. And then finally the last sort of area we're focusing on is we have over half of our school systems using the I Love You Guys Standard Response Protocols. So, we have identified through various exercises and real world events in the state, that the state as a whole would benefit if all school systems were using the same standard response protocols. And in case you're not sure or unfamiliar with those, those are the biggest challenge we have is when we talk about securing a school and locking down a school. So, we have school systems in the state who are using different terminology in a situation when there is a threat on the outside of the building that has a potential to get in and when there is a threat inside the building where we want to ensure that every individual inside the facility is safe. So, we have been working with school systems that are that are not currently following the standard response protocol that we recommend. We have, as I said, over half of the school systems are using it. So, our goal is to really get to that 100% mark where all 24 of our school systems are using that. That information about the protocols are in the drill guidelines that we published. They're still in there as part of the update. So, opening it up to the group and Pam, I do see you there. Opening it up to the group for input, comments, suggestions. So, I'll start with Pam Gaddy.

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PAMELA GADDY: Hi. I just, I may have missed it when we're talking about data collection for drills and evacuation. I'm curious, for instance, today I was late coming in because we had an evacuation. Doesn't the local law enforcement or fire department, don't they also give reports that or there or the reports that they give when they respond to a school or if they're monitoring an evacuation or so? Is that data shared or is that the data that we're tapping into?

KATE BRYAN: So, are you asking about a drill or a real world event?

PAMELA GADDY: Maybe the real world. Yeah. So, if a real if a real event were to occur, would a law enforcement or whatever agencies respond to it? Would that data be more...one is that data is what we're is that the data that we're tapping into? And then two, that data versus the school's data, which would one be more valid than the other?

KATE BRYAN: So, do any of our responders, Sheriff, do you have something you want to? I see I hear you have hand up.

SHERIFF CRISAFULLI: Yeah, Miss Gaddy, I think what's coming is coming from the school. I know in Worcester County when there is a drill per se, our school resource deputies will contact Worcester Central that dispatches all the fire and EMS to let them specifically know that it is a drill and our deputies do document that. So, that information should be available, but I'm not sure if it's what is exactly reported by the Maryland Center. I think Kim or Kate would be able to speak more on that. But we do make our central dispatch aware so that all law enforcement agencies are aware in case somebody calls in. If a kid texts their parent saying there's a there's an emergency at Pocomoke High School. At least it's documented that hey this is a drill. There's no emergency per se right now.

KATE BRYAN: And so, Pam, I think the other challenge we face is there are many situations that get reported through many get reported and not all of that data goes up to the state. So, I'll start there. So, school systems are required to report certain information to the department of Ed. They're required to report certain information to us. Some of that information includes really the hours spent doing drills, but also hours spent in response to real world incidents. But there's not so there is no state entity currently that collects data on the completion of drills or emergency responses to school systems. Does that data exist in other whether it's EMS or law enforcement? Potentially, but that is not data that goes up to either our office or the department of Ed.

PAMELA GADDY: I was still mute. I'm sorry. So whatever reporting tools that we're using or whatever we're getting, it's pretty much what is reported or how it's reported is at the discretion of that system or that individual school?

KATE BRYAN: Yeah. So, when you say reported when you're talking about when an incident occurs, right? So, you have a situation that's occurred and how does that information get to the State? Am I understanding the question? So there, like I said, there there's a couple of different ways that happens. The one clear way that information gets to our office is if the incident that occurred is by definition a critical life-threatening incident. So, if that incident occurs, we get immediately notified. And then there's a whole process that has to take place between our

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office and the and the local school system in regard to that after-action process. If the incident is not to the level of a critical life-threatening incident, that data is sort of collected at the end of the year. There is a formal report that we send them, but they still have to determine whether that incident falls within the categories that we're collecting, if that makes sense. So again, it's sort of that challenge we always face, right? How to how do we ensure that the 24 school systems are all reporting the same information the same way?

PAMELA GADDY: Thank you.

KATE BRYAN: Sure. Any other hands up? Kim?

LAUREL MOODY: Yeah, Kate, it's Laurel. do I understand there's not a plan for any full-scale tabletop drills this year?

KATE BRYAN: So, there is not... there are plans. We have one actually on Wednesday. We have a statewide tabletop exercise on Wednesday for the public schools. We have another one in February, February 11th. So that's for all 24 of the public school systems, but that's a discussion-based exercise. What the slides referring to is do we want to do a full-scale exercise, which means do we want to put boots on the ground? Do we want to have a scenario that occurs at a school where responders have to come to that facility? Sure. And that we see sort of the integration between the school system and the responders.

LAUREL MOODY: I just want to make sure that MIMS is being notified in advance of the date of these drills so that we can encourage the you know our EMS partners to be more fully active. We had asked for this back in the spring, because I know they have lots of meetings at the same time. So, can we ensure that that Cindy Wright Johnson at MIMS is aware of the dates of these planned exercises?

KATE BRYAN: Yes, we can absolutely do that at the next one. Any other questions or input? All right, next slide. And then final priority for us relates to digital safety. So, we're looking at ways to coordinate with some of our state partners and federal partners in regard to cybersecurity and digital safety. So, we have been doing some work with the Department of Information Technology and the Department of Emergency Management. So, there'll be some resources and tools that will be available to schools throughout the state in the next probably six months. We're hoping that we'll have those out. So, when we're talking digital safety, we're talking about the digital threat landscape. So, understanding and increasing knowledge around evolving threats, particularly ones that that impact school safety. Collaborating again with experts to define and strengthen cyber security infrastructure. So, this is one project we're doing with Department of Information Technology and the Department of Emergency Management. So, we're hoping to have that out or that they will have that out in the in the coming months. Responding to digital incidents. So, we've heard from a lot of our partners and stakeholders about the need for the engagement of experts in areas related to digital investigations so that we can develop resources for schools and school systems and law enforcement agencies. Collaboration with experts to define protective factors for students. We're looking at ways to determine how overt behaviors might be rooted in a performative origin and really what is that what does that look like? What do we what are the concerns we have for our students? And then focusing on that responsible online behavior. So, methods to

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promote and define the promotion of what responsible online behavior looks like, collaboration with students, you know, working with our SASS group on creating maybe a digital code of conduct. And then also engaging with students to really understand the performative element of online behavior. So, the question for this group is you know how can our school students and staff work together to tell the difference between behavior that is concerning online? And that is that's just for show or for those to indicate and really to identify what is a real risk of violence online. So, suggestions from the group?

KIMBERLY BUCKHEIT: Kate, I was just going to So we're using this term performative origin, right? So, for folks who may not so literally this is a rapidly evolving space but the element is that when a student has done something overt let's say hit another person or tagged a wall with graffiti some of these very overt observable behaviors. What we know in some instances is that isn't just what is seen on the surface. That there is this for some students now this underlying influence from bad actors online that are really encouraging them, recommending them to do these things record and then post online for a social status element. Right? This is sort of the new evolving, digital threat landscape. and it's very new to all of us. Right? So, our building administrators really like this is brand new, right? How do you look for this type of thing to know this isn't just a kid tagging in the wall? This is now a kid who's maybe learning elements. So that's what we mean by this performative versus this digital influence aspect here.

KATE BRYAN: Joseph?

JOSEPH CORMIER: Hi, good morning. Joe Cormier again. It seemed like six months ago our biggest concern was AI writing somebody's term paper. And it seems like overnight now AI can generate a video of anybody doing anything anytime anywhere. So, is there anything coming down from the State to help school-based staff identify these kinds of videos or something they can submit a video up to be like, is this legit or is this something we don't have to worry about immediately but still have to address?

KATE BRYAN: Yeah. So, there is a state level task force that is relatively new. It sits within the Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center. I don't think they're on, to be able to provide a brief. So, this new group that is artificial intelligence is their entire area of focus. So they are a potential resource for localities as well as local school systems. But more to come as we as that group sort of expands and gets their program up and running. Actually, Mr. Cormier, you were at the conference last summer. So the lunch on the second day there was a presentation by Dave Curry who was talking about that group. So, we're hoping to have them assist us in some sort of training and coordination with LEAs. We just haven't quite gotten that off the ground yet.

JOSEPH CORMIER: Thank you so much. I appreciate that.

KATE BRYAN: Any additional questions? Britt? Dr. Patterson?

DR. BRITTANY PATTERSON: Hi. What platforms are considered online? The one that's coming to mind for me u that I frequently ask questions about are students' engagements with VR system?. We're seeing more young people with VRs, but often that one's left out of

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discussion. So, I'm curious what online platforms are considered here.

KATE BRYAN: So, I mean ours is pretty expansive. So, we're not just talking about social media platforms, right? It's any platforms that allow for the connection of an individual to another individual who is not in the same room. That's how I would define it. I think Kim's given us a thumbs up for that. So, it's really not tied to a particular platform, right? It's tied to how individuals are connected. Any additional feedback, input, comments regarding the four priorities? Did we hit the mark given the conversation you all had in May? Are there other areas we should be looking at or prioritize over the four went through today that would be helpful?

JOSEPH CORMIER: Hi, good morning. I know at the May meeting we did touch on the more vulnerable populations of students whether they're special education needs, our English language learners, our transfer students from other countries. A lot of our military students are coming in and they might not have the same experiences we have. The LGBTQ students or students who are who have family like that. So just if we're doing anything in that vein of how to protect those more vulnerable students.

KATE BRYAN: Yes, absolutely. So, our all four of our priorities have both a special populations focus. So really requiring us to think through who are the potentially impacted special populations and what are we doing to support them through each of these as well as the data-driven decisions, right? So, what data can already exist? What data is already being collected? How can we utilize that data to inform how successful we're being in each of these priorities. So yes, excellent point and very important. Thank you.

KIMBERLY BUCKHEIT: So, Kate, I'll just jump before we sort of wrap this piece up. If you could just share the our goal, right? So, to take the conversation from today to work on developing well I can share work on actually building this out into really a sort of continuous improvement plan that we will share with everyone. And we would ask you again to kind of look back at some of these kind of the goal statements and action items to see where there are some touch points to the work you do within your representative agency, right? And or as a person, right? Connected with expertise that you have to then share back with us in a way that we ultimately create then a finalized plan for us for the one year. Some of these actually may be beyond one year as you look at them. And for us as an agency, of our size, to potentially look at this being a two or three year kind of goal area too.

KATE BRYAN: Thanks, Kim. And Mr. Cormier, I'm going to pass it back to you to close us out. Thank you so much.

### Closing Comments

JOSEPH CORMIER: Thank you so much. So, I want to thank Miss Buckheit and Miss Bryan for leading that discussion. And thank everyone for your input. The dialogue will definitely help inform how we're going to update these items and help the MCSS to develop the implementation plan. We're going to send this plan to the board members in the coming weeks for you guys to review and provide additional thoughts. And I encourage you to please reach out to Miss Bryan or Miss Buckheit directly with any additional feedback. And with that, I think we're coming up on to agenda item number four. So, there was no public comment for

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this meeting.

KATE BRYAN: No.

JOSEPH CORMIER: No. All right. So, our next meeting for the Advisory Board is December 1st at 10:00 a.m. It's going to be another virtual meeting which hopefully the weather will cooperate. So again, don't hesitate to contact Miss Bryan or Miss Buckheit with anything. I want to thank the staff. We come in here, you know, three or four times a year to come and talk about this stuff, but you guys are working seven days a week, 365 days a year. So, thank you for all the hard work that you guys are putting in in between. Support staff leads the way. and with that, I will take a motion to adjourn.

SHERIFF CRISAFULLI: Sheriff Chris will make a motion to adjourn.

JOSEPH CORMIER: We've got a motion from the sheriff. We have a second?

JACQUETTA JACOBS: Jacquetta Jacobs. I second.

JOSEPH CORMIER: And a second for Miss Jacquetta Jacobs.

JOSEPH CORMIER: And all in favor say I. Or raise your hand.

All; Aye.

JOSEPH CORMIER: All opposed. I know we all want to stay for another hour and a half. And with that we will conclude the meeting. Thank you so much for your participation today and we look forward to seeing you all again in December. Thank you. Thank you everyone.

KATE BRYAN: Thank you Mr. Cormier. We appreciate stopped today.

JOSEPH CORMIER: Happy to help. happy to jump in anytime.

KIMBERLY BUCKHEIT: You did a great job. I hope everything's all right with Mr. Brown. Yeah, I was just he had several of his APs were out today, so he was running very low and just knew that there was no way he was going to be able to step away. So, yeah. Yeah, we might keep... Joe, if you don't mind being our like second in command, right? We will do that again in the future if we need to.