

# MARYLAND CENTER for SCHOOL SAFETY

January 13, 2023

The Honorable Larry Hogan  
Governor  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable William C. Ferguson IV  
President  
Senate of Maryland  
State House, H-107  
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones  
Speaker  
House of Delegates  
State House, H-101  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Critical Life Threatening Incident Report required by Education Article § 7-1502(g)(21) (MSAR #11851) and Education Article §7-1510(g)(3) (MSAR #11594)

Dear Governor Hogan, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones:

Pursuant to Education Article § 7-1502(g)(21), Education Article §7-1510(g)(3), and State Government Article §2-1257, the Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS) respectfully submits the following report, which contains identified lessons learned and school safety recommendations following a critical life-threatening incident on public school grounds.

If you have any questions about this report or would like additional information, please contact MCSS Deputy Director, J. Dino Pignataro at [joseph.pignataro@maryland.gov](mailto:joseph.pignataro@maryland.gov) or 410-281-2335.

Sincerely,



Kate Bryan  
Executive Director



# **Maryland Public School**

## **Critical Life-Threatening Incident**

### **After-Action Summary**

On November 18, 2022, there was an incident of a reported threat involving a school within Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) that met the criteria to be considered a Critical Life-Threatening Incident pursuant to Md. Ed. Art. § 7-1510 (g) and COMAR 14.40.05.

#### **Notification [COMAR 14.40.05.04A]**

On November 19, 2022, the FCPS School Security Coordinator (SSC) notified the Maryland Center for School Safety of the incident.

#### **After-Action Meeting [COMAR 14.40.05.04B]**

On December 14, 2022, an after-action meeting was held involving school representatives, law enforcement, and a representative from MCSS.

#### **After-Action Report [COMAR 14.40.05.04C]**

On December 14, 2022, FCPS submitted an after-action report to MCSS.

#### **Lessons Learned**

Based upon the after-action review led by the FCPS, the following lessons learned were identified by FCPS:

1. The school system's "See Something, Say Something" campaign proved effective in this situation as two students immediately reported the threat to the school counselor (trusted adult). The incident was resolved quickly without creating undue fear among parents, staff and students because the students chose to engage a trusted adult in the school environment that was able to take immediate action.
2. The Emergency Plan was activated, and the "Hold" status was implemented. Classroom teachers and other school staff followed the "Hold" procedure continuing to provide instruction to students in their current location. There was no disruption to the instructional school day because of the incident.
3. The quick action of School Administrators to notify the School Resource Officer (SRO), who assisted in determining the credibility of the threat,

allowed for the student who made the threat to be identified and brought to the office area where he admitted to making the threat. Within 15 minutes of the initial report being made, school officials were able to deem the threat not credible.

4. The SRO and the Frederick County Sheriff's Office conducted an article search of the entire school during the "Hold" status. The search yielded nothing of note which further substantiated that the threat was not credible. The SRO performed a search of the students residence--with the permission of parents--finding nothing of concern.
5. The school sent a communication following the search to parents about the incident. The message was effective in communicating details in a manner to not cause alarm, as no students were removed early from school because of the incident.

### **School Safety Recommendations**

1. This incident is an exemplar of rapid coordination of efforts across agencies and stakeholders to come to a safe and speedy resolution. It is also an example of the effectiveness of promoting the importance of students in school safety. FCPS's "See Something, Say Something" program has two tiers of reporting, a trusted adult and the local tip line. FCPS could consider adding a third tier through the use of the Safe Schools Maryland Statewide Anonymous Reporting System.
2. FCPS should continue to encourage schools to highlight, review, and drill the Emergency Plans and procedures across the system to maintain this level of success. System level leaders in FCPS should consider sharing this story of coordination and rapid resolution with other FCPS school leaders to advance similar practices and future success across all school campuses.