

Maryland Public School Critical Life-Threatening Incident After-Action Summary Report

This report has been compiled in response to a life-threatening incident that occurred on public school grounds. It includes lessons learned and recommendations identified following a local review of the incident and aims to identify ways to improve the safety of Maryland public schools.

MARYLAND CENTER for SCHOOL SAFETY

Education Article § 7-1502(g)(21)

Education Article §7-1510(g)

COMAR 14.40.05.04

School Year: 2024-2025

Submitted: January 13, 2025

MARYLAND CENTER for SCHOOL SAFETY

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January 13, 2025

The Honorable Wes Moore
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), Education Article §7-1510(g) (MSAR #11594), and COMAR § 14.40.05.04 (MSAR #15583).

Dear Governor Moore, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones:

Pursuant to Education Article § 7-1502(g)(21), Education Article §7-1510(g), and State Government Article §2-1257, and COMAR § 14.40.05.04, 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 Joseph Dino Pignataro at joseph.pignataro@maryland.gov or 410-281-2335.

Sincerely,



Kate Bryan
Executive Director



Maryland Public School Critical Life-Threatening Incident After-Action Summary

On September 11, 2024 there was an incident within Allegany County Public Schools (ACPS) 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 September 11, 2024 the ACPS staff notified the Maryland Center for School Safety of the incident.

After-Action Meeting [COMAR 14.40.05.04B]

On September 26, 2024 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 2, 2024 ACPS submitted an after-action report to MCSS.

Lessons Learned

Based upon the after-action review led by ACPS, the following lessons learned were identified by individuals participating in the after-action meeting:

1. The collaborative investigation between the local education agency and School Resource Officers (SROs) proved instrumental in achieving a successful outcome. By combining their expertise and resources, they conducted a comprehensive and impartial examination of the incident. Open communication and seamless information sharing between educators and law enforcement facilitated a timely and efficient investigation, ultimately contributing to a positive resolution and a safer learning environment for all.
2. The swift and decisive action of School Administrators in conducting a prompt investigation was instrumental in ensuring a safe and expeditious resolution to the situation. Their efficient response facilitated a timely assessment of the incident, allowing for appropriate measures to be implemented to safeguard the well-being



of students and staff. This proactive approach demonstrated the importance of a well-coordinated and efficient response system within the school administration.

3. A thorough and timely investigation is paramount to ensure a complete understanding of the incident and its subsequent proper disposition. The investigative process requires diligent effort to gather all relevant information, analyze evidence, and identify all contributing factors. A comprehensive investigation allows for appropriate corrective actions to be implemented, prevents future similar occurrences, and provides valuable lessons learned for continuous improvement in safety and operational procedures.

School Safety Recommendations

1. Given our increasingly interconnected world, fostering responsible digital citizenship is essential for all students. Schools must play a leading role in equipping young people with the knowledge and skills to navigate the digital landscape safely and ethically. To achieve this, comprehensive digital citizenship education should be a priority for students at all grade levels.
2. Schools should regularly discuss the dangers of making false threats and emphasize the legal repercussions of spreading false information. Students should be instructed to “report, don’t share” threats they see or receive.
3. The significant rise in anonymous online threats directed at schools in recent years necessitates a critical reassessment and enhancement of school emergency operations plans (EOPs). To effectively address this growing challenge, EOPs must include a dedicated annex specifically outlining policies and procedures for handling such incidents.