

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 12, 2024, an incident occurred within Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) that met the criteria for being 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 12, 2024, BCPS staff notified the Maryland Center for School Safety of the incident.

After-Action Meeting [COMAR 14.40.05.04B]

On September 16, 2024, an after-action meeting was held involving school representatives and a representative from MCSS.

After-Action Report [COMAR 14.40.05.04C]

On September 17, 2024, BCPS submitted an after-action report to MCSS.

Lessons Learned

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

1. Collaboration between law enforcement agencies is crucial for effectively addressing crimes committed by youth. Coordinating efforts across jurisdictions provides a more comprehensive approach to ensuring school safety.
2. BCPS understands the importance of investigating every tip and social media post to the fullest extent. With resources in place to work with social media platforms, law enforcement can quickly identify individuals sharing threats and eliminate the anonymity of students sharing threats.



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. Parents should help students be good stewards of digital citizenship. Teaching students to be respectful, truthful, and law-abiding may decrease the spread of false information. Schools should provide parents with resources on using digital media responsibly throughout the school year.
3. 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.
4. Schools should cultivate and sustain strong collaborative relationships with first responders, including police, fire, and emergency medical services (EMS), through regular communication and joint training exercises. This collaboration is vital for ensuring a swift and effective response to any emergency situation that may arise on school grounds.¹
5. In accordance with [new guidance](#) from MCSS, schools should conduct state-mandated² lockdown drills, where students and staff are taught school procedures for responding to incidents that require common terminology. Terminology could include standard response protocol terms from the I Love U Guys³ program: hold, secure, lockdown, evacuate, shelter. Conducting regular drills throughout the school year helps to create muscle memory, providing students and staff with the security knowledge needed to react quickly in an emergency.
6. The significant rise in anonymous online threats directed at schools in recent years necessitates a critical reassessment and enhancement of school EOPs. To effectively address this growing challenge, EOPs must include a dedicated annex specifically outlining policies and procedures for handling such incidents.

¹ K-12 Anonymized Threat Response Guidance

<https://www.cisa.gov/resources-tools/resources/k-12-anonymized-threat-response-guidance>

² <https://dsd.maryland.gov/regulations/Pages/13A.02.02.04.aspx>

³ <https://iloveguys.org/The-Standard-Response-Protocol.html>

