

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: June 2, 2025

MARYLAND CENTER for SCHOOL SAFETY

- 2 -

June 2, 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 January 16, 2025, an incident occurred within Baltimore City 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 January 17, 2025, BCPS staff notified the Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS) of the incident.

After-Action Meeting [COMAR 14.40.05.04B]

On January 28, 2025, 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 April 22, 2025, BCPS submitted an after-action report to MCSS.

Lessons Learned

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

1. The incident, occurring at dismissal time, underscored the need for having staff assigned to specific areas who are well-trained to support a coordinated response, which are key elements to mitigating the impacts of violence. The presence of school police, administration, and staff at their designated dismissal areas allowed for rapid intervention, medical triage, and situation stabilization. The response was further supported by designating other staff, not responsible for rendering first aid, with clearing bystanders and assisting other students onto buses, which helped contain the situation.
2. School staff and School Police recognize that providing initial first aid is a critical responsibility, as they are often the first responders in emergencies. Their capacity to act swiftly and appropriately can be the pivotal factor in managing injuries, including controlling bleeding. This immediate intervention is paramount because emergency medical services (EMS) may not be immediately available.



MARYLAND CENTER for SCHOOL SAFETY

- 4 -

School Safety Recommendations

1. A school's emergency plan needs to be robust, particularly for high-traffic times like dismissal. It should clearly define staff roles during emergency response, include strategies for traffic and crowd control, establish access control measures, and outline contingency plans during disruptions to school operations. Plans that address entry and dismissal, when supervision is lower, student movement is high, and building access is open, are crucial for safeguarding the school community. Having well-defined protocols ensures staff can respond quickly, minimize confusion, and maintain student safety during any emergency.
2. Injuries can happen at any time. In preparing for these emergencies, schools should identify and train select staff in emergency first aid techniques including bleeding control (i.e., "Stop the Bleed") and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Additionally, schools should maintain a sufficient stock of readily accessible emergency equipment, such as automated external defibrillators (AEDs) and severe bleeding control kits. Regular review and updates of both supplies and staff certifications are crucial, and site-specific emergency plans should clearly identify personnel capable of administering critical, immediate medical aid.
3. Schools should provide students with conflict-resolution skills to de-escalate conflicts, communicate effectively, and find peaceful solutions. Practicing restorative approaches to conflict resolution can promote and maintain a positive school climate. Methods like circles and dialogues help students reflect on harm and relationships, fostering empathy and repairing trust within the school community.
4. Schools should educate students about teen dating violence through age-appropriate curriculum.² A key goal should be to equip students with the knowledge and tools to form healthy relationships, recognize abusive behaviors, and understand how to seek help when needed. This education is particularly crucial because many teens feel nervous or fearful about reporting such issues, making it vital for schools to create a supportive environment where students feel empowered to come forward and get the help they deserve. Providing and promoting an anonymous reporting system, such as Safe Schools Maryland,³ could be helpful for those students who don't feel they have a trusted adult to speak with.

¹ The Stop the Bleed course teaches individuals how to provide vital initial actions to stop uncontrolled bleeding in emergency situations, <https://www.stopthebleed.org/>.

² Almost 1.5 million high school students nationwide experience physical abuse from a dating partner each year, <https://mbfpreventioneducation.org/teen-dating-violence-awareness-prevention-2/>

³ With Safe Schools Maryland, all interested members of our communities are able to report school and student safety concerns anonymously and securely, <https://schoolsafety.maryland.gov/Pages/Tipline.aspx>.

