

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: April 24, 2025

MARYLAND CENTER for SCHOOL SAFETY

- 2 -

April 24, 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 February 18, 2025 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 February 20, 2025, the ACPS staff notified the Maryland Center for School Safety of the incident.

After-Action Meeting [COMAR 14.40.05.04B]

On March 4, 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 March 6, 2025, 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 presence of dedicated safety personnel, such as school resource officers and security employees, supports a swift and effective response to threats and emergencies. Additionally, fostering a school culture that prioritizes open communication between staff and students empowers individuals to share vital information, leading to faster and more thorough investigations.
2. The collaboration between educational and law enforcement staff highlights the importance of working together to ensure the safety and well-being of the school community. This partnership fosters open communication and mutual respect, allowing for a swift and coordinated response to potential threats and ensuring a safer learning environment for everyone. Effective emergency preparedness is built on a foundation of sufficient resources, open communication, and strong interagency collaboration.



School Safety Recommendations

1. Dedicated safety resources, including School Resource Officers (SROs), trained security personnel, and mental health professionals, should be an integral part of both public and private schools. These individuals should be adequately staffed, trained, and integrated into the school community so that they can provide immediate contact and expertise when responding to threats and emergencies.
2. Schools should actively foster an environment where students feel safe and encouraged to communicate concerns and report potential issues to staff. This includes implementing clear reporting mechanisms, educating students on their role in school safety, and building trust between students, teachers, and administrators. Additionally, schools should provide a confidential and anonymous reporting system, such as Safe Schools Maryland¹, to ensure students who may not yet have a connection with a trusted adult still have a safe avenue to report concerns without fear of reprisal.
3. To ensure a cohesive and effective response to emergencies, schools should develop and maintain clear protocols for collaboration and communication among school staff, law enforcement, and first responders. This includes establishing consistent communication channels to ensure that critical information can be shared quickly and accurately during an emergency. Additionally, schools should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each agency involved in an emergency response, outlining who is responsible for which tasks and how they will work together to achieve a common goal.
4. Schools should conduct regular joint training exercises that simulate various emergency scenarios, allowing staff, law enforcement, and first responders to practice their response procedures and communication protocols in a realistic environment. These exercises should be designed to identify and address any weaknesses or gaps in the emergency response plan. By taking these steps, schools can create a coordinated and effective emergency response system that maximizes safety and minimizes harm to students, staff, and the broader community.

¹ [Safe Schools Maryland](#) is an anonymous and free reporting system available to students, teachers, school staff members, parents, and the general public to report any school or student safety concerns, including mental health concerns.