

# **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: May 22, 2025**

# MARYLAND CENTER for SCHOOL SAFETY

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May 22, 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](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 March 4, 2025, 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 March 4, 2025, the BCPS staff notified the Maryland Center for School Safety of the incident.

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

On March 17, 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 7, 2025, 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. Contractors and vendors working daily at a school should be accounted for and integrated into emergency procedures. Schools should develop and communicate specific safety plans to all individuals working on campus.
2. Coaches and other staff members overseeing after-school activities must be informed of any emergency plan and response protocol updates to ensure they know what to do in an emergency.
3. Maintaining open communication channels among staff and between the school and emergency responders is essential for effective emergency response. Prompt and accurate information sharing enables police, fire, and medical personnel to act efficiently upon arrival.



## School Safety Recommendations

1. School emergency plans designate specific evacuation and assembly areas and outline the protocols used by the school in response to an emergency. Contractors and vendors working at a school and unfamiliar with emergency protocols and designated locations could unintentionally obstruct exits, operate heavy machinery in safety zones, or otherwise disrupt the emergency response operations. Communicating emergency response protocols to contractors and vendors, including designated areas, security protocols, and how to avoid compromising safety, is essential for ensuring the safety of students and staff during lockdowns or active threats.
2. After-school activities often take place away from the main office, requiring coaches and staff to be well-versed in emergency protocols due to potentially delayed assistance.<sup>1</sup> Mandatory drill participation is crucial for fulfilling their duty of care and ensuring student safety. Tabletop exercises<sup>2</sup> offer an efficient method for developing muscle memory and preparedness for emergency situations.
3. School administrators must have a clear understanding of their responsibilities during an after-school emergency. Each school emergency plan should include detailed response procedures for incidents occurring on school grounds outside of normal operating hours. This plan should include a listing of all actions necessary to manage such situations.
4. Clear and timely communication is vital during a school emergency to ensure safety, maintain awareness, and coordinate responses. Effective communication also helps school and emergency personnel track students and staff. Staff must be ready to give first responders critical details such as the emergency's location, who is affected, and the whereabouts and condition of students and staff. Furthermore, providing parents with prompt updates and clear student retrieval instructions will make reunification more efficient.

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<sup>1</sup> Ed. Art. §7-451. (a) (1) Each middle school and high school shall develop a venue-specific emergency action plan for all athletic facilities.

<sup>2</sup> Discussion-based exercises include seminars, workshops, tabletop exercises (TTXs), and games. These types of exercises familiarize players with or develop new plans, policies, procedures, and agreements...[and] focus on strategic, policy-oriented issues." FEMA, Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (2020),

<https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/Homeland-Security-Exercise-and-Evaluation-Program-Doctrin>

