

Maryland Public School

Critical Life-Threatening

Incident

After-Action Summary

Report

This report, compiled in response to a life-threatening incident on public school grounds, details lessons learned and recommendations gathered from a local review to enhance 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: 2025-2026

Submitted: January 14, 2026

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January 14, 2026

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 Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk
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



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

On October 22, 2025 there was an incident within Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) 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 October 27, 2025 the MCPS staff notified the Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS) of the incident.

After-Action Meeting [COMAR 14.40.05.04B]

On November 25, 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 November 25, 2025 MCPS submitted an after-action report to MCSS.

Lessons Learned

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

1. A significant challenge was information management. The incident was initially mischaracterized on social media, which caused confusion and drew negative attention to the school. Despite the school providing accurate information, misinformation spread quickly, requiring continuous efforts to provide clarification.
2. The following day, the full school crisis team was on site to support staff, students, and the affected grade level. As the situation gained visibility on social media, support was extended to the broader school community. School and central office staff remained in communication with those impacted, continuing to provide wraparound supports.
3. It is essential to establish clear protocols for all external organizations utilizing school facilities, particularly concerning the removal of their equipment after use. This ensures that the facilities, including playing fields, are maintained in a safe and



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ready-to-use condition for school purposes. Furthermore, a schedule for field inspections is necessary to frequently identify and mitigate any potential hazards.

School Safety Recommendations

1. Proactive communication strategies are essential to counter misinformation and support community understanding following serious incidents. Following an incident, schools should immediately implement a strategy of swift, transparent, and consistent communication through official channels to establish an accurate narrative and build trust. A critical component of this strategy is actively monitoring social media for inaccurate information and rumors. When false or misleading narratives are identified, the school must directly address them with clear, factual counter-statements shared across all official communication platforms, utilizing methods like "myth vs. fact" sheets or direct public posts, to ensure that the community receives accurate information and to prevent inaccurate social media from undermining the official response.



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