

MARYLAND CENTER for SCHOOL SAFETY

June 27, 2022

The Honorable Larry Hogan
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) and Education Article §7-1510(g)(3) (MSAR #11594)

Dear Governor Hogan, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones:

Pursuant to Education Article § 7-1502(g)(21), Education Article §7-1510(g)(3), and State Government Article §2-1257, 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 MCSS Deputy Director, J. Dino Pignataro at joseph.pignataro@maryland.gov or 410-281-2335.

Sincerely,



Kate Hession
Executive Director

Maryland Public School

Critical Life-Threatening Incident

After-Action Summary

On March 29, 2022 there was an incident involving a school within Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) 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 April 8, 2022, the BCPS School Security Coordinator (SSC) notified the Maryland Center for School Safety of the incident.

After-Action Meeting [COMAR 14.40.05.04B]

On April 27, 2022 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 May 16, 2022, MCSS received an after-action report from BCPS.

Lessons Learned

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

1. Provide regular refresher training on the proper protocol for diverting students in the event of an emergency, as well as the proper implementation of shelter in place status.
2. Require that student's check their personal athletic equipment with a coach or athletic director in the morning, before class, to avoid being carried around school throughout the day.
3. Ensure adequate staff support is available to monitor lunch periods.

School Safety Recommendations

1. School systems should ensure that school staff participate in annual training on their specific school and school system emergency plans and procedures. This training should be followed up with exercises that test and validate staff knowledge and understanding of those plans.
2. Schools must also review and update emergency plans annually, following any real-world event or exercise where plan updates were recommended, following any major facility change or upgrade, and following any key personnel changes. Updated emergency plans are required to be submitted to MCSS for review and comment.¹
3. Schools should continue to promote and encourage participation in their solution-focused programs (e.g., mediation, restorative approaches).
4. School systems should review their staff to student ratios during times with a large number of students present (e.g., lunch periods, bus transition, assemblies). There should be a sufficient number of staff to manage the number of students present and those staff should be offered additional training and resources on how to effectively manage and engage with students during these times.

¹ Maryland requires emergency plans to be submitted to MCSS for review. The U.S. Dept. of Ed. Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance (TA) Center notes that “EOPs should be continually updated and enhanced based on lessons learned from school emergencies, exercises conducted, and insight from the whole school community.” A checklist https://rems.ed.gov/docs/SchoolEOPChecklist_508C.pdf.