

The Safe to Learn Act
The Subcabinet

Subcabinet activities are defined within the Maryland Safe to Learn Act of 2018 ([Chapter 30, Laws 2018](#)), which created a School Safety Subcabinet ([Md. Ann. Code Ed. Art. §7-1503](#)). The following is a status report of Subcabinet requirements.

Requirement	Date Completed	
<p><u>Administrative:</u></p> <p>Ensure coordinated approach across Maryland</p> <p>School Safety Advisory Board</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>A “Coordinated Emergency Response Plan” has been written in collaboration across state agencies to ensure the rapid, effective, and coordinated response to school emergencies. This plan is in the final stages of development with a March 2023 seminar rollout and a May 2023 training exercise.</p> <p>Prior to the start of the 2021-2022 school year, the School Safety Subcabinet asked the Advisory Board to identify gaps and opportunities in school safety and to develop recommendations on how best to address the identified gaps. MCSS Advisory Board recommendations</p>

<p><u>Regulatory:</u></p> <p>The Subcabinet serves as a regulatory authority and may adopt “any regulations necessary to carry out the Subcabinet’s duties.” Ed. Art. §7-1503(g)(12).</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Current Subcabinet regulations are included in COMAR Title 14, Subtitle 40, Chapters:</p> <p>01 - Meetings</p> <p>02 - Inspection of and Copying of Public Records</p> <p>03 - Correction or Amendment of Public Records</p> <p>04 - Certification and Training for School Security Employees and School Resource Officers*</p> <p>05 - Critical, Life-Threatening Incidents*</p> <p>*The following regulations have proposed amendments open for public comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 14.40.04 - Certification and Training for School Security Employees and School Resource Officers ● 14.40.05 - Critical, Life-Threatening Incidents <p>Maryland Register Volume 50 Issue 2 Publication 1/27/2023</p>
<p><u>State Behavioral Threat Assessment (BTA) Policy:</u> Adopt policies for local behavior threat assessment teams</p> <p>Behavior Threat Assessment Model Policy</p>	<p>September 1, 2018</p>	<p>As required by law, each public school system has established local BTA policies and established BTA teams.</p> <p>The workgroup reconvened in 2022 to expand upon the 2018 work culminating in the development of an Implementation Guide pending completion and distribution.</p>

<p>Behavioral Health Services Gap Analysis Report: Subcabinet report to the Governor and MD General Assembly regarding the availability of mental health services and practitioners for school-age children, the mental health needs of school-age children, and the mental health services coordinators' plans for delivering behavioral health and wraparound services to students exhibiting behaviors of concern.</p> <p>Behavioral Health Services Gap Analysis Report</p>	<p>December 1, 2018</p>	<p>The report was completed by MDH and recommendations on addressing gaps can be found beginning on page 35.</p>
<p>Annual Report: Subcabinet report due to the Governor and MD General Assembly listing MCSS activities and recommendations.</p> <p>2018 2019 2020 2021 2022</p>	<p>Annually on December 15 beginning in 2018</p>	<p>Each November, MCSS submits a draft annual report to the Subcabinet for final approval. The report includes Subcabinet recommendations to improve school and student safety.</p>
<p>Grants:</p> <p>The Subcabinet “[d]istribute[s] grants from the [Safe Schools Fund] in accordance with § 7–1512.” Ed. Art. 7-1503(g)(7).</p> <p>MCSS grants page</p>	<p>Annually opens on July 1 beginning in FY2019</p>	<p>The Safe to Learn Act clearly sets the requirements for use of the SRO funds and how those funds are to be allocated to school systems (Ed. Art. §7-1508(g)). Therefore, the Subcabinet delegated administration of the SRO grant to MCSS. Unspent funds revert to the Safe Schools Fund, which is a non-lapsing fund.</p> <p>The safe schools fund (Ed. Art. §7-1512) has been minimally funded (\$600K/year) since FY2019.</p>

<p><u>Use of Force Report:</u> Submit Use of Force report in MD public schools to the Governor and MD General Assembly.</p> <p>2020 2021 2022</p>	<p>Annually on December 1 beginning 2020</p>	<p>MCSS is currently updating data protocols and procedures to provide clarity of requirements to local agencies that will ensure valid data reporting across jurisdictions.</p>
<p><u>Safe Schools Maryland (SSMD):</u> SSMD is the Statewide school safety anonymous reporting system managed by MCSS. The tipline is in use by all public schools (1400+) and 584 private and non-public special education facilities.</p> <p>SSMD Webpage</p>	<p>October 3, 2018</p>	<p>In July of 2018, the Governor directed MCSS to work with the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (now Department of Emergency Management, MDEM), and the Department of Information Technology to implement a statewide school safety tipline. Safe Schools Maryland went live on October 3, 2018.</p> <p>MCSS administers the program and MDEM's 24/7 watch center staff serve as tiptakers, by way of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between agencies.</p>
<p><u>Grants:</u> In addition to the Safe Schools Fund grants MCSS administers for the Subcabinet, MCSS also administers security grants to public, private, and nonpublic special education schools and child care centers. These grants include the Hate Crimes Grant and two Interagency Commission (IAC) on Public School Construction grants.</p>	<p>Annually beginning in FY2019</p>	<p>Hate Crimes Grant: Public, private, nonpublic schools and child care centers at risk for hate crimes</p> <p>School Safety Grant Program (SSGP): public schools</p> <p>Nonpublic School Security Improvement Grant (NPSI): nonpublic schools participating in "Textbook and Technology Program" in the prior school year.</p>

<p><u>Critical Life Threatening (CLT) Incident Report:</u> A school event that meets the definition of a <i>critical, life-threatening incident</i> per COMAR 14.40.05.04 requires that MCSS must hold the LEA responsible for meeting requirements (defined below) and MCSS to submit to the Governor a report of recommendations.</p>	<p>Following the occurrence of a “critical, life-threatening incident”</p>	<p>The report produced by MCSS is developed based upon information gathered through the local After Action Review meeting and submitted report.</p> <p>Guidance and training to locals for conducting an effective After Action Review is currently under development at MCSS.</p>
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The Safe to Learn Act
Local Education Agencies

Annually a communication from the MCSS is sent to each local Superintendent outlining requirements under the Maryland Safe to Learn Act of 2018 ([Chapter 30, Laws 2018](#)). The communication identifies the MCSS staff person who serves as their local contact and resource, as well as listing those individuals identified by the LEA to serve in the legislatively required roles of School Safety Coordinator and Behavioral Health Services Coordinator.

The following are required of each Local Education Agency within the Maryland Safe to Learn Action of 2018.

Report and Details	Frequency	
<p><u>School Safety Evaluation Summaries:</u> The summary document should demonstrate successful completion of facility safety assessments. Assessments should include; facility and grounds, equipment testing, review of school emergency plans and response protocols, and review of annual emergency response training and exercises. Ed. Art. §7-1510(a)</p>	<p>It is recommended that schools conduct a safety evaluation of each facility at least once every two years, August 1</p>	<p>This data is included in the Subcabinet Annual Report.</p>

<p><u>Emergency Plan Performance Report:</u> Report must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggregate data about threats made against any school or school system facility, • Information about any school lockdowns, evacuations, or other emergency responses that occurred during the preceding school year, • Incidents in which a public school's emergency plan failed in part or in whole to function as anticipated in an an emergency or an emergency drill, and • School hours spent during an emergency or an emergency drill. <p>Ed. Art. §7-1510(f)</p>	<p>Required annually, August 1</p>	<p>This data is included in the Subcabinet Annual Report.</p>
<p><u>Emergency Plan Updates:</u> Emergency plans are required to be updated annually to correct identified areas of weakness. Ed. Art. §7-1510(d)</p>	<p>Copies of updated plans submitted by September 30 to MCSS for review and feedback</p>	

<p><u>After Action Review Reports:</u> A school event that meets the definition of a <i>critical, life-threatening incident</i> per COMAR 14.40.05.04 requires that the LEA must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Notify MCSS within 24 hours of the event occurring; 2) Conduct an After Action Review meeting with MCSS staff in attendance; and 3) Submit an After Action Report to MCSS within 45 days. <p>Ed. Art. §7-1510(a) COMAR 14.40.05</p>	<p>Following each critical life-threatening incident</p>	<p>Information provided to MCSS through this process is used to produce the MCSS required Critical Life Threatening Incident Report (see above).</p>
<p><u>Use of Force:</u> Requires a report of incident of use of force used on a student by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Security Employees • School Resource Officers <p>Ed. Art. §7-1508(h)</p>	<p>On or before August 1 for preceding school year</p>	<p>This data is submitted to the Governor and General Assembly as an independent report.</p>
<p><u>School Resource Officer (SRO) Adequate Coverage:</u> A report that includes the public schools in the LEA that have an assigned SRO and the adequate law enforcement coverage that will be provided to a public school without an assigned SRO.</p> <p>Md. Ed. Art. §7-1508(e)(2)</p>	<p>September 1 for the current school year</p>	<p>This data is submitted to the Governor and General Assembly as an independent report.</p>

The Safe to Learn Act
Maryland Center for School Safety

The following functions and duties of MCSS, defined in the Safe to Learn Action of 2018, occur on an ongoing basis through the following delivery methods:

MCSS Activities	Requirement Area
<p><u>Regional Safety Specialists:</u> Designated MCSS staff member assigned to provide resources and technical support in identified Maryland counties.</p>	<p>Ed. Art. §7-1502(g)(1) Collaborate with local school systems in the State, law enforcement agencies, State and local government, community organizations, parents, and other stakeholders to provide a comprehensive, coordinated approach to school safety;</p>
<p><u>Monthly Meetings:</u> Regularly scheduled monthly meetings of different stakeholder groups. Meetings are used to provide resources, identify and address emerging problems, and gather information to inform MCSS activities.</p>	<p>Ed. Art. §7-1502(g)(2) In partnership with stakeholders: (i) Disseminate information on best practices, programs, and resources; (ii) Provide technical assistance and training; (iii) Collaborate on collection, analysis, and integration of statewide data; and (iv) Promote interagency efforts that support safe schools for all students, school staff, parents, and community members;</p>
<p><u>School Safety Conference:</u> Annual two day conference featuring local and national professionals speaking on current school safety research, resources, and best practices.</p>	<p>Ed. Art. §7-1502(g)(10) Assist local school systems to conduct a thorough assessment of their school safety data, school building layouts, and use of human resources for monitoring purposes to determine the need for: (i) Surveillance and other security technology; and (ii) Innovations to maximize the use of human resources to monitor activity and influence positive relationship building.</p>
<p><u>Preparedness and Technical Assistance:</u> Technical assistance provided to public, private, and non-public special education schools to develop emergency plans, conduct facility assessments, and rehearse emergency response procedures.</p>	<p>Ed. Art. §7-1502(g)(19) Provide technical assistance to local school systems in the review of safety and security audits and the implementation of improvements in school facilities;</p>

Comprehensive, Coordinated Approach to School Safety: Collaboration across state agencies (MDEM, MSDE, MCSS, Law Enforcement) to define responsibilities and rehearse emergency response procedures.

Ed. Art. §7-1502((g)(5) Initiate collaborative partnerships and facilitate coordination among local school systems, law enforcement agencies, State and local government, and community organizations to leverage existing resources to deliver school safety services uniformly to local school systems;

Ed. Art. §7-1502(g)(11) Maintain and maximize relationships with emergency responders, law enforcement personnel, parents, and other emergency preparedness stakeholders to ensure seamless execution in an emergency event, including:

- (i) Consolidate resources among stakeholders to maximize support and secure necessary skills to ensure emergency plan implementation;
- (ii) Conduct collaborative training and preparation exercises; and
- (iii) Identify improvements and ensure non-duplication of effort in emergency response procedures;