



The Maryland Safe to Learn Act of 2018

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AUGUST 15, 2018

The Maryland Safe to Learn Act

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([Senate Bill 1265](#)) (Sponsor: Sen. Kathy Klausmeier)

- Makes comprehensive changes designed to improve the safety of the State's public schools.
- Establishes a School Safety Subcabinet, which also serves as the governing board for the expanded Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS).
- Enhances the presence of school resource officers (SROs) and/or local law enforcement in or near public schools and requires SROs and school security personnel to complete specialized training.
- Is accompanied by significant operating and capital funding to provide grants to local school systems to assist in implementing the bill's provisions.
- The bill took effect June 1, 2018.

Safe to Learn Act Overview

Key provisions of the Act include:

- Establishing the School Safety Subcabinet and Advisory Board;
- Increasing funding and staffing for the Maryland Center for School Safety;
- Establishing a curriculum and certification process for School Resource Officers (SROs);
- Requiring reports on the numbers of schools with SROs;
- Establishing standards for adequate local law enforcement coverage for all schools;
- Requiring local assessment teams to identify and respond to risks to school safety;
- Requiring school systems to have school safety coordinators & mental health services coordinators; and
- Requiring school facility safety evaluations.

School Safety Subcabinet

- Dr. Karen Salmon - State Superintendent of Schools (Chair)
- Col. William Pallozzi - Secretary of State Police
- Brian Frosh - Attorney General
- Robert Neall - Secretary of Health
- Carol Beatty - Secretary of Disabilities
- Robert Gorrell - Executive Director of the IAC

Subcabinet Responsibilities

- Administer grants
- To help develop plans for delivering behavioral health and wraparound services
- Training on de-escalation and identifying and reporting behaviors of concern
- Conducting training of assessment teams
- Conducting school safety evaluations
- Establishing formal and anonymous reporting of safety concerns
- Reimbursing local law enforcement for SRO training provided by the Center
- Enrolling school security employees in training provided by the Center
- Outreach to improve school safety and heighten awareness of existing mental health services and other services
- Improve safety of traveling to and from school

Subcabinet Responsibilities

- Best practices, technical assistance, comprehensive school safety plan
- Promote interagency efforts supporting safe schools for all students, staff, parents and community members
- Collaborate on data collection and analysis
- Identify safe school professional staff development best practices
- Collaborate with MSDE on the model policy for an assessment team
- Initiate collaborative partnerships to leverage resources and deliver school safety services uniformly
- Report – Behavioral Health – Plans for delivering behavioral health and wraparound services – Availability of mental health services and practitioners to address needs of children

Subcabinet Advisory Board

<p>Member of the Senate *Appoint after the primary</p>	<p>Del. Eric Ebersole Member of the House of Delegates</p>	<p>*Representative Maryland Association of Student Councils</p>	<p>Sharon A. Hoover, Ph.D. Center for School Mental Health</p>
<p>Dr. George Arlotto Anne Arundel County Public Schools Local Superintendent</p>	<p>Karin Bailey (Board Chair, St. Mary's County BOE) MABE</p>	<p>Megan Berger, Esq. Disability Rights Maryland</p>	<p>James T. Bell Parent of a Public School Student</p>
<p>Dr. Kellie Anderson Anne Arundel County Public Schools School Psychologis</p>	<p>Mr. Nicholas Shockney Carroll County Public Schools Special Education Administrator</p>	<p>Capt. Patrick D. Herring, USN Parent of a Child with Disabilities</p>	<p>Thomas E. Alban Representative of a Non-Public School</p>
<p>Pamela Gaddy Baltimore County Public Schools Classroom Teacher</p>	<p>Dr. Chanta' M. Booker New Era Academy School Principal</p>	<p>*Representative School Bus Drivers</p>	<p>Rachel Faulkner Maryland Assembly on School Based Health Care</p>
<p>Secretary Lourdes Padilla Representative of Dept. of Human Services</p>	<p>Andrew Tress Representative of Dept. of Juvenile Service</p>	<p>David Engel Director, MCAC</p>	<p>Laurel Moody, MS MIEMSS</p>
<p>Jon Carrier AACPS School Resource Officer</p>	<p>Sheriff Scott Adams Cecil County Sheriff</p>	<p>Chief Tim Altomare Anne Arundel County</p>	

Maryland Center for School Safety

The Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS) was established as an independent unit of State government in 2013 (House Bill 453, Ch. 372, 2013 Laws of Maryland). The Center was created as an independent unit of state government within the Maryland State Police.

The Safe to Learn Act restructures the governance of the Center, expands the Center's oversight and reporting responsibilities, and makes it an independent unit of state government within the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

Center for School Safety - Functions

- Collaborate with local school systems and other state and local entities to provide a comprehensive coordinated approach to school safety;
- Disseminate information, provide technical assistance and training, and collect and analyze data;
- Establish a safe school information and best practices clearinghouse;
- Develop criteria that may be applied consistently and uniformly in local school systems for coding unsafe incidents and serious or violent offenses;
- Research and recommend the use of common assessment tools;
- Assist local school systems to conduct a thorough assessment of their school safety data, school building layouts, and use of human resources;
- Maintain relationships with emergency responders and conduct collaborative trainings;
- Provide safety information on traveling to and from school to parents and students; and
- Assist local school systems to monitor local school system and individual school behavior data to ensure fairness in the application of consequences for student misbehavior.

The Center's New Responsibilities

- Certify school safety coordinators;
- Consult with local school systems on safety evaluations;
- Analyze data on SROs and develop guidelines and training;
- Review and comment on school emergency plans;
- Conduct After-Action Review Reports to Governor & General Assembly;
- Administer Hate Crimes Grants; and
- Assist Local School Systems – training for students and parents on relationship violence, signs of unhealthy relationships and preventing relationship violence.

Funding

\$40.6 million was included in the FY 19 budget for school safety, including:

- \$3 million for expansion of the Center for School Safety
- \$37.6 million in funding to local school systems, including:
 - \$10.6 million in operating funds
 - \$2.5 million for safety evaluations
 - \$1 million in operating funds for schools at risk of hate crimes
 - \$20 million to public schools for capital improvements
 - \$3.5 million to nonpublic schools for capital improvements

Implementation Timelines

School Resource Officers (SROs)

- **Sept. 1, 2018**
SRO curriculum to be adopted by the Subcabinet and approved by the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission
- **Dec. 15, 2018**
Center to collect data on SROs and develop guidelines for LEAs on appropriate number of SROs and adequate law enforcement coverage
- **July 1, 2019**
LEAs to develop plan to implement SRO guidelines and submit plan for Center review and comment
- **Sept. 1, 2019**
SROs and other school security personnel to be trained under the new curriculum

Assessment Teams

- **Sept. 1, 2018**
Model Policy for Assessment Teams Adopted by Subcabinet
- **Sept. 1, 2019**
School Systems to adopt local policy consistent with model policy

Active Shooter Preparedness

- **2018-2019 School Year**
Homeland Security Active Shooter Preparedness Program incorporated in existing emergency drills

Safety Evaluations

- **June 15, 2019**
School facility safety evaluations must be completed for all schools
- **Dec. 1, 2019**
MSDE must update Emergency Planning Guidelines
- **July 1, 2020**
LEAs must update local emergency plans

Mental Health Services

- **Sept. 1, 2018**
LEAs must designate a Mental Health Services Coordinator (who must develop plans for delivering services)
- **Dec. 1, 2018**
Safety Subcabinet to evaluate local plans and complete a mental health services gap analysis

School Safety Coordinators

Each local school system must designate a school safety coordinator, who must be certified by the Center and serve as the liaison between the local school system, local law enforcement, and the Center.

In conducting school safety evaluations, the safety coordinator must consult with the Center, coordinate with the Interagency Commission on School Construction, and submit a summary of the completed evaluations to the Center.

School Resource Officers

School Resource Officers (SROs)

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School Resource Officers

A school resource officer is defined as:

- (1) a law enforcement officer assigned to a school in accordance with a memorandum of understanding between a local law enforcement agency and a local school system; or
- (2) a Baltimore City School Police Officer, as defined in current law.

A school security employee is an individual who is not an SRO but who is employed by a local school system to provide safety and security-related services at a public school.

SRO Curriculum

SRO Curriculum

The specialized SRO curriculum must include training in:

1. De-escalation;
2. Disability awareness;
3. Maintaining a positive school climate;
4. Constructive interactions with students; and
5. Implicit bias and disability and diversity awareness with specific attention to racial and ethnic disparities.

SRO Curriculum

- Day 1: Overview & History of SRO Programs in Schools
- Day 2: Informal Counselor
- Day 3: Law Related Teacher/Mentor
- Day 4: Enforcement & Investigations in Schools
- Day 5: Emergency Planning & Preparedness

Assessment Teams

Assessment Teams

- **Sept. 1, 2018**

Model Policy for Assessment Teams adopted by Subcabinet

- **Sept. 1, 2019**

School Systems to adopt local policy consistent with model policy

Assessment Team Policies

Local school systems must create assessment teams to enhance school safety.

- By September 1, 2018, the subcabinet must develop a Model Policy for the establishment of one or more assessment teams in each local school system.
- The Model Policy must include specified provisions related to (1) the identification of, and intervention with, students or other individuals who may pose a threat to school safety; (2) the composition and appropriate number of assessment teams within local school systems; and (3) training for the assessment teams.
- By September 1, 2019, each local school system must adopt a local policy for the establishment of assessment teams that is consistent with the State's Model Policy.

Assessment Team – Model Policy

The State Model Policy must include:

- Guidance for establishing an appropriate number of assessment teams within a local school system.
- Mechanisms for the assessment of student behavior and interventions if student behavior poses a threat to the safety of an individual attending or working in a public school.
- Mechanisms for the assessment of the behavior of an individual who is not a student at a public school but who may pose a threat.
- Measures for training faculty, administrators, and staff to identify, properly respond to, and report threats or behaviors of concern that may pose a threat to the safety of an individual attending or working in a public school.

Assessment Team Policy Elements

Local assessment team policies must also include:

- A process for regular assessment and intervention, including diversion and de-escalation, if an individual exhibits behavior that may pose a threat to school safety;
- Standards for timely response and procedures for coordination among members of the team, including referral of relevant information to appropriate authorities; and
- Standards and procedures for the referral of an individual for evaluation, services, or treatment.

Assessment Team Policy Elements

Behaviors of Concern:

“Behaviors of concern” means behaviors or threats that indicate a student may pose a risk of self–harm or harm to others.

“Behaviors of concern” include:

- (I) expressions of hopelessness;
- (II) known drug use;
- (III) suicidal gestures or statements; and
- (IV) depression; and
- (V) known gang activity.

Active Shooter Preparedness

Active Shooter Preparedness Program

The Safe to Learn Act provides that MSDE, in consultation with the Subcabinet, may adopt regulations to incorporate into the annual schedule of drills components of the Active Shooter Preparedness Program developed by the Department of Homeland Security or the guidelines adopted by the Active Assailant Workgroup established under Governor Hogan's Executive Order 01.01.2018.08.

Annual Schedule of Drills

New types of drills:

The Act provides that new drills incorporated into the annual schedule of drills may include developmentally and age–appropriate procedures for students or school personnel in:

- (1) securing classrooms;
- (2) barricading classrooms and school entries;
- (3) taking refuge in the classroom; and
- (4) when appropriate, escape from the classroom or school.

Annual Schedule of Drills

Drills already required:

- In addition to fire drills, regulations adopted in 2013 mandate six emergency drills to be conducted annually, including: evacuation; shelter in place; reverse evacuation; lock down; drop, cover and hold; and severe weather.
- The State Fire Prevention Code requires school facilities with automatic sprinkler systems to hold five fire drills per year, with at least two occurring in the first four months of the school year. Schools that are not fully protected by automatic sprinkler systems must hold eight fire drills annually, with at least three scheduled in the first four months of the school year.

Safety Evaluations

- **June 15, 2019**

School facility safety evaluations must be completed for all schools

- **Dec. 1, 2019**

MSDE must update Emergency Planning Guidelines

- **July 1, 2020**

LEAs must update local emergency plans

Safety Evaluations & Plans

Safety Evaluations

On or before June 15, 2019, and regularly thereafter, each local school system shall conduct a safety evaluation of each public school under the local school system's jurisdiction to:

- (1) Identify and, if necessary, develop solutions for physical safety concerns, including issues with building security; and
- (2) Identify and evaluate any patterns of safety concerns on school property or at school-sponsored events.

Incident Reports & After-Action Reviews

- The Act requires local school systems to “promptly inform the Center of any critical, life–threatening incidents that occur on school grounds.”
- After informing the Center, a local school system is required to host an after–action review and evaluation of lessons learned from the event.
- The school system must invite the Center, local law enforcement agencies, and emergency responders to participate in the after–action review and evaluation, and file a report with the Center.

Use of Force Reports

The Center must collect data on incidents of use of force between:

- (i) any school resource officer and a student while a school resource officer is carrying out the officer's duties; and
- (ii) any school security employee and a student while the school security employee is carrying out the employee's duties.

On or before Dec. 1, 2020, and each Dec. 1 thereafter, the Center shall submit a report on the data collected.

Mental Health Services

- **Sept. 1, 2018**

LEAs must designate a Mental Health Services Coordinator (who must develop plans for delivering services)

- **Dec. 1, 2018**

Safety Subcabinet to evaluate local plans for delivering behavioral health and wraparound services and complete a mental health services gap analysis

Mental Health

By September 1, 2018, each local school system must appoint a mental health services coordinator to:

- coordinate existing mental health services and referral procedures within the local school system;
- work in collaboration with the local health department, the local department of social services, and other local entities that provide mental health services, to ensure that a student who is referred for mental health services obtains the necessary services;
- maximize external funding for mental health and wraparound services; and
- develop plans for delivering behavioral health and wraparound services to students who exhibit specified behaviors of concern.

Mental Health

Wraparound Services

The Safe to Learn Act of 2018 defines “wraparound services” as services provided to students, and their families as appropriate, including:

- (1) mentoring;
- (2) tutoring;
- (3) child care services;
- (4) housing referrals;
- (5) transportation;
- (6) crisis intervention;
- (7) substance abuse prevention and treatment;
- (8) legal aid;
- (9) academic counseling; and
- (10) career counseling.

Mental Health Services – Gap Analysis

By Dec. 1, 2018, the Subcabinet must issue a report:

1. Evaluating local school system plans for delivering behavioral health and wraparound services;
2. Reviewing, by jurisdiction, the number of outpatient treatment, acute care services, residential–based treatment, support services, and other community–based services utilized by children over the past 3 years;
3. Identifying the gaps in available community–based mental and behavioral health services for school–age children, by jurisdiction;
4. Reviewing, by jurisdiction, the number of mental health and behavioral health service providers licensed by the State who provide services to children;

Mental Health Services – Gap Analysis

5. Reviewing, by jurisdiction, the number and types of school-based services, programs, and professionals involved in the provision of behavioral and mental health services;
6. Assessing what steps are being taken by State or local government agencies to identify areas of service delivery in schools and in the community that are not meeting the current demand or where sufficient services do not exist;
7. Identifying any gaps in treatment capacity and school- and community-based mental health services that are limiting the ability of students to access needed care; and
8. Making recommendations on how to address any gaps in treatment and capacity identified.

Public Information Act

Public Information Act – Protections

The following documents and materials are not subject to the Public Information Act. A custodian of records is prohibited from allowing public inspection of:

- School safety evaluations;
- School emergency plans;
- School emergency response policies;
- Guidelines for SROs and supplemental law enforcement coverage – both the Center’s and the local school system’s plans; and
- School safety implementation plans.

MABE's 2018 Session Summary & Resources

- [MABE's 2018 Legislative Session Summary](#)

An overview of education-related budget and legislative highlights from the Session. Intended to prepare local boards of education and local school systems for the implementation of the new laws, regulations, policies and procedures.

- [90 Day Report: A Review of the 2018 Legislative Session](#)

The General Assembly's Department of Legislative Services (DLS) comprehensive summary of all policy and budget matters considered during session.



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