

## Article - Education

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§7-1502.

- (a) There is a Maryland Center for School Safety.
- (b) The Center is an independent unit within State government.
- (c) The Center shall be based at Bowie State University.
- (d) The head of the Center is the executive director, who shall be appointed by the Governing Board.
- (e) The Center may employ the additional staff necessary to carry out the Center's functions as provided in the State budget.
- (f) The Center may establish a satellite office at an institution of higher education located in each of the following regions:
  - (1) The Eastern Shore;
  - (2) Western Maryland; and
  - (3) The Baltimore Region.
- (g) The Center shall perform the following functions and duties:
  - (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;
  - (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;
  - (3) Establish a Safe School Information and Best Practices Clearinghouse of up-to-date, research-based, and data-driven information on effective strategies for creating and maintaining safe schools;

- (4) Identify safe school professional staff development best practices;
- (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;
- (6) Provide technical assistance and consultation to local school systems, State and local government, and community organizations on best practices for safe schools and violence prevention;
- (7) Develop a Web site containing a searchable database of definitive research, books, videos, white papers, speakers, Web sites, and other school safety resources;
- (8) Develop criteria that may be applied consistently and uniformly in local school systems for coding unsafe incidents and serious or violent offenses;
- (9) Research and recommend the use of common assessment tools to be used to identify specific problems and needs of schools and neighborhoods to facilitate intervention before assessed findings become problematic;
- (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;
- (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 nonduplication of effort in emergency response procedures;
- (12) Provide safety information on traveling to and from school to parents and students twice a year that includes data related to bus and pedestrian safety, strategies for ensuring personal safety, efforts of the local school system or school to improve safety, and information on the available options for reporting incidents or concerns;

(13) Utilize and update an existing clearinghouse of law enforcement resources that are available to support school safety to ensure that it includes information regarding the purpose and process for accessing available funding;

(14) Assist local school systems to improve and monitor traffic control measures in the immediate vicinity of schools to reduce the potential for pedestrian and vehicle accidents;

(15) Assist the Department to evaluate and update current data systems to ensure they are best suited for providing useful information on school safety issues;

(16) 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;

(17) Assist the Department and local school systems:

(i) To prepare an annual report that combines multiple school safety data systems into one format for public review; and

(ii) To incorporate new data points into existing data collection systems;

(18) Assist in the development of safety and security criteria for the design and operation of school facilities;

(19) Provide technical assistance to local school systems in the review of safety and security audits and the implementation of improvements in school facilities; and

(20) Foster coordination among all entities responsible for ensuring the safety and security of school facilities in the State.

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