

HOUSE BILL 694

F1, O3, O4

5lr1924
CF SB 851

By: **Delegates Kaufman, Addison, Allen, Boyce, Feldmark, Guyton, Lopez, McComas, Palakovich Carr, Phillips, Ruth, Schindler, Shetty, Solomon, Taveras, Terrasa, Wims, and Wolek**

Introduced and read first time: January 24, 2025

Assigned to: Ways and Means

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: February 27, 2025

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Schools – Individuals With Disabilities – ~~Main Entrance~~ Accessibility and**
3 **Emergency Planning**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring each ~~county board of education to publish on its website and~~
5 ~~report to the General Assembly on the number of main entrances to public school~~
6 ~~buildings in the county that are not accessible for individuals with disabilities and~~
7 ~~not in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act; requiring each local~~
8 ~~school system to send a copy of the local school system’s emergency plan to the State~~
9 ~~Department of Education; requiring the Department to report certain information to~~
10 ~~the General Assembly on or before a certain date each year; local school system to~~
11 identify in its regular safety evaluation issues of accessibility for individuals with
12 disabilities; requiring local school systems to include in a certain annual report
13 instances in which a public school facility became inaccessible for a student with a
14 disability in a manner that could impede evacuation or an emergency response; and
15 generally relating to ~~school building main entrance~~ accessibility and emergency
16 planning for individuals with disabilities.

17 ~~BY adding to~~
18 ~~Article – Education~~
19 ~~Section 7-136~~
20 ~~Annotated Code of Maryland~~
21 ~~(2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)~~

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
 2 Article – Education
 3 Section ~~7-435~~ 7-1510(a) and (f)
 4 Annotated Code of Maryland
 5 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

6 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
 7 Article – Education
 8 Section 7-1510(b), (d), and (e)
 9 Annotated Code of Maryland
 10 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

11 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
 12 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

13 **Article – Education**

14 ~~7-136.~~

15 ~~ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2025, AND EACH SEPTEMBER 1 THEREAFTER,~~
 16 ~~EACH COUNTY BOARD SHALL PUBLISH ON ITS WEBSITE AND REPORT, IN~~
 17 ~~ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, TO THE~~
 18 ~~GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE NUMBER OF MAIN ENTRANCES TO PUBLIC SCHOOL~~
 19 ~~BUILDINGS IN THE COUNTY THAT ARE NOT ACCESSIBLE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH~~
 20 ~~DISABILITIES AND NOT IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE FEDERAL AMERICANS WITH~~
 21 ~~DISABILITIES ACT.~~

22 ~~7-435.~~

23 ~~(a) On or before December 1, 2017, the Department shall, in consultation with~~
 24 ~~disability advocacy groups, update the Emergency Planning Guidelines for Local School~~
 25 ~~Systems and Schools to accommodate, safeguard, and evacuate students, staff, and visitors~~
 26 ~~with disabilities on public school grounds in accordance with the federal Americans with~~
 27 ~~Disabilities Act.~~

28 ~~(b) (1) On or before July 1, 2018, each local school system shall update the local~~
 29 ~~school system's emergency plan to comply with the update of the Department's guidelines~~
 30 ~~and regulations under subsection (a) of this section.~~

31 ~~(2) (i) ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2025, AND EACH~~
 32 ~~SEPTEMBER 1 THEREAFTER, EACH LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM SHALL SEND A COPY OF~~
 33 ~~THE LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM'S EMERGENCY PLAN TO THE DEPARTMENT.~~

34 ~~(ii) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2025, AND EACH DECEMBER~~
 35 ~~1 THEREAFTER, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL:~~

~~1. ANALYZE THE EMERGENCY PLANS RECEIVED UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH; AND~~

~~2. REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, ON WHETHER EACH LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION.~~

~~(e) If a student with an IEP requires specific accommodations for evacuation in an emergency, the student's IEP shall include accommodations for the student during an emergency.~~

~~(d) If a student with a 504 plan requires specific accommodations for evacuation in an emergency, the student's 504 team shall discuss and address the student's needs as necessary.~~

7-1510.

(a) 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 ASSOCIATED ISSUES OF ACCESSIBILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; and

(2) Identify and evaluate any patterns of safety concerns on school property or at school-sponsored events.

(b) In performing the safety evaluations, each designated safety coordinator shall:

(1) Consult with the Center for guidance;

(2) Coordinate with the Interagency Commission on School Construction's facility assessment process, established under § 5-310 of this article in identifying issues with public school facilities that could impact school safety; and

(3) Submit a summary of the completed safety evaluations to the Center.

(d) On or before August 1, 2020, and regularly thereafter, each local school system shall update the school emergency plan for each public school in the school system's jurisdiction to:

(1) Include detailed plans for the manner in which each public school will address:

- 1 (i) Behavioral threats;
2 (ii) Emergency events; and
3 (iii) Accommodations for students with disabilities in emergency
4 events;

5 (2) Conform with the Emergency Planning Guidelines updated under
6 subsection (c) of this section; and

7 (3) Incorporate any changes required under subsection (f) of this section.

8 (e) Each local school system shall submit the plans updated under subsection (d)
9 of this section to the Center for review and comment.

10 (f) (1) On or before August 1, 2020, and each August 1 thereafter, each local
11 school system shall submit a report to the Center that includes, for the immediately
12 preceding school year:

13 (i) Aggregate data about threats made against any school or school
14 system facility;

15 (ii) Information about any school lockdowns, evacuations, or other
16 emergency responses that occurred;

17 **(III) INSTANCES IN WHICH A PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITY BECAME**
18 **INACCESSIBLE FOR A STUDENT WITH A DISABILITY IN A MANNER THAT COULD**
19 **IMPEDE EVACUATION OR AN EMERGENCY RESPONSE;**

20 ~~[(iii)]~~ **(IV) Incidents in which a public school's emergency plan failed**
21 **in part or in whole to function as anticipated in an emergency or an emergency drill; and**

22 ~~[(iv)]~~ **(V) School hours spent in an emergency or an emergency drill.**

23 (2) Each local school system shall, in consultation with the Center, update
24 each emergency plan to correct weaknesses identified under paragraph (1) of this
25 subsection.

26 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
27 1, 2025.