

Bill:	House Bill 515	Date:	April 4, 2023
Title:	Public Schools - Active Shooter Safety Drills or Trainings- Requirements	Committee:	Education, Energy, and the Environment
Position:	Favorable	Contact:	Kim Buckheit kim.buckheit1@maryland.gov 443-902-0622

On behalf of the Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS), thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter of support for House Bill 515.

MCSS agrees that, *except* for active shooter drills and training happening outside of regular school hours with voluntary participants, active shooter drills and training should be conducted in a trauma sensitive manner without loud sounds that simulate gun fire, or actors role-playing as shooters or victims. Recently published research demonstrated that following training schools increased effective implementation of lockdown procedures with the use of drills that announced to participants “this is a drill”, and concluded the drill with a debrief¹.

MCSS agrees with the National Association of School Psychologists and National Association of School Resource Officers recommendation to “avoid[] highly sensorial drills that involve simulation activities to mimic a real experience as they can be traumatizing.”² MCSS welcomes the opportunity to identify developmentally and age-appropriate best practices.

MCSS supports engaging parents, students, and school personnel as partners in trauma sensitive school safety drills and training. Providing parents at the beginning of each school year with the annual schedule of the month in which a school shooter safety drill or training will occur can be included as a best practice. The notification requirements defined in House Bill 515 will minimize trauma for individuals occurring as a result of the drills and training, and allow drills and training to occur in a way that ensures students and school personnel practice procedures in a way that increases preparedness.

Thank you again for taking the time to consider the information shared above, and MCSS respectfully requests the committee give House Bill 515 a favorable report.

¹ Jacyln Schildkraut, Emily Greene-Colozzi, Amanda B. Nickerson & Allyson Florczykowski (2023) Can School Lockdowns Save Lives? An Assessment of Drills and Use in Real World Events, Journal of School Violence, 22:2, 167-182, DOI:[10.1080/15388220.2022.2162533](https://doi.org/10.1080/15388220.2022.2162533).

² NASP, NASRO, & Safe and Sound Schools. (2021). Best practice considerations for schools in active shooter and other armed assailant drills. Updated [Brief]. National Association of School Psychologists. www.nasponline.org/armed-assailant-drills