

<b>Bill:</b>	House Bill 694	<b>Date:</b>	February 21, 2025
<b>Title:</b>	Public Schools - Individuals With Disabilities - Main Entrance Accessibility and Emergency Planning	<b>Committee:</b>	Ways and Means
<b>Position:</b>	Letter of Information	<b>Contact:</b>	Kimberly Buckheit <a href="mailto:kimberly.buckheit1@maryland.gov">kimberly.buckheit1@maryland.gov</a> 443-902-0622

On behalf of the Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS), thank you for the opportunity to submit this Letter of Information for **House Bill 694**. MCSS remains committed to assisting local school systems in implementing a [layered approach](#) to school safety.

### Responsible Agency

MCSS is required by law (Md. Code Ed. Art. §7-1510(e)) to collect, review, and provide feedback on local school emergency plans. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) publishes [guidelines](#) for these plans and receives annual certification from each local superintendent confirming their plans meet these requirements. MCSS believes this existing process and timing, with coordination between MSDE and MCSS, is effective and should continue.

### Statutory and Regulatory References

Education Article § 7-1510(d)-(e) mandates that local school systems:

1. Ensure their emergency plans include accommodations for students with disabilities during emergency events.
2. Align their emergency plans with the State Department of Education Emergency Planning Guidelines.
3. Submit school emergency plans to the Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS) for review and comment.

Additionally, the School Safety Subcabinet regulation COMAR 14.40.06.02 requires local school systems to review and update emergency plans annually and submit them to MCSS every other year for review and comment.

State Board of Education regulations, COMAR 13A.02.02.04 and 13A.02.02.05, further require that emergency plans comply with the Emergency Planning Guidelines and that the Local Superintendent submit an annual letter certifying compliance with those regulations.

Thank you again for taking the time to review this information as you consider House Bill 694.

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