

MARYLAND CENTER for SCHOOL SAFETY

Bill:	Senate Bill 685	Date:	April 1, 2026
Title:	Local School Systems - Sexual Abuse and Sexual Misconduct - Response Policy and After-Action Review	Committee:	Ways and Means
Position:	Favorable	Contact:	Kimberly 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 Senate Bill 685.

Capitalize on State Agency Partnerships

Safe schools are inclusive environments free from fear, harm, trauma, and unnecessary hardship. MCSS works closely with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to provide tools, supports, and resources to assist Maryland schools in achieving this basic student and parent right. Senate Bill 685 capitalizes on this working relationship as well as other agency partnerships to develop the model sexual abuse and misconduct response policy.

Develop and Maintain Statewide Resource Platform

MCSS and MSDE share responsibility for several school safety efforts including emergency planning and the [“Handle With Care” program](#)¹, capitalizing on each agency's expertise. The development and maintenance of a statewide resource platform that provides information and resources regarding sexual abuse and sexual misconduct in a school environment aligns with MCSS efforts. We welcome the opportunity to collaborate with experts and collect the most up to date information for Maryland students and parents.

Conduct After Action Reviews

[After Action Reviews](#) are a best practice used across organizations and systems to identify areas of strength and weakness. MCSS has developed and made available to anyone [a tool](#) and [guidance](#) for schools and systems to conduct an after action review following all types of events; planned events such as a graduation and unplanned incidents such as a medical response. The application of after action review practices following a school related case of sexual abuse and sexual misconduct will allow schools and systems to gain valuable insight that informs future practices and procedures. MCSS remains available to locals as they meet this requirement of Senate Bill 685.

Thank you for taking the time to consider the information shared above, and MCSS respectfully requests that the committee give Senate Bill 685 a favorable report.

¹A statewide trauma informed response to child maltreatment and children's exposure to violence.

