

# CRITICAL INCIDENT AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



*The purpose of this document is to inform parents/guardians, students and community members of the crisis preparedness protocols established by Harford County Public Schools to protect students and employees.*



## CRISIS COMMUNICATION

During a crisis, important information will be communicated in a number of ways:

**Automated Notification System: Phone, Email and Text Messages**

Information will be sent directly to the primary contact on file with your students' school.

**It is important that the contact information on file with your students' school remains accurate and up-to-date. To customize your contact information, you may sign up for a Parent Portal account at [hcsparentconnect.bbcportal.com](http://hcsparentconnect.bbcportal.com)**

**HCPS Website and Social Media**

Key crisis information will be posted on the school system's website, [www.hcps.org](http://www.hcps.org) and social media accounts, as soon as possible and updated as needed.



## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

HCPS Safety and Security Office: 410-638-4242

Harford County Sheriff's Office: 410-838-6600

Aberdeen Police Department: 410-272-2121

Bel Air Police Department: 410-638-4500

Havre de Grace Police Department: 410-939-2121

Maryland Center for School Safety: 1-833-MD-B-SAFE

[www.safeschoolsmd.org](http://www.safeschoolsmd.org)



## CRITICAL INCIDENT PLANS

Each school is equipped with an individualized School Critical Incident Plan in case a crisis or emergency situation occurs. These plans are updated with principal and staff input consistent with the guidelines established in the emergency procedures for Harford County Public Schools. A system-wide critical incident plan is also consistently updated. Administrators and staff members participate in table top drills and complete regular crisis training. County-wide drills are conducted in conjunction with various county agencies.



## SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

Every middle and high school is assigned a School Resource Officer (SRO), an officer from the local police department or sheriff's office, who provides security and support to maintain a safe atmosphere for students to learn. The SRO also provides education to the school community on law enforcement topics, counseling and problem-solving. Many officers are involved in the G.R.E.A.T. (Gang Related Education and Training) program for elementary and middle schools. SROs receive 40 hours of training with the Maryland Center for School Safety on the academic environment. SROs also assist neighboring elementary schools in the event of an emergency.



## TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

### Incident Command Center

The command center is a central location used during a crisis for school administrators and representatives from other agencies involved to meet and work through the crisis.

### Active Assailant Response

In the event of an active assailant in the school, everyone has run/hide/fight as response options.

### Lock Down

In the event of an emergency, a school or multiple schools may be placed on lock down. During a lock down, all doors are locked and students are accounted for and remain in their classrooms under supervision. No visitors are permitted to enter the building while it is under lock down.

### Modified Lock Down

During a modified lock down, outside doors are locked and students are accounted for and remain in the building under supervision. Visitors may be permitted to the building at the discretion of the school administrators.

### Reunification Process

This reunification process is used to assist the school in reuniting students with their parents or guardians. In the event of a crisis, parents/guardians will be notified of the location to meet their children.

### Shelter-in-Place

Shelter-in-place is a procedure used when it is necessary to immediately secure students and staff indoors. Everyone may be moved to one part of the building for safety.



## ACRT: ACTIVE ASSAILANT CRITICAL RESPONSE TRAINING

In 2018, Superintendent Sean Bulson, Ed.D., announced the implementation of Active Assailant Critical Response Training (ACRT) for all HCPS employees. ACRT is based on the national “run, hide, fight” options-based training model. The training is conducted in collaboration with local law enforcement experts.



## STUDENT PREPARATION

Every school holds safety drills for students in accordance with Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) regulations.



## PARENT/GUARDIAN PREPARATION

In addition to the school system, parents/guardians and students should also be prepared for a crisis or emergency situation. Try following these tips to help you prepare, should such a situation occur:

- Prepare a back-up plan for your students to be picked up during a crisis or emergency. Be sure to have another family member or emergency contact registered with your student’s school.
- In the event of an emergency, for the safety of all students, please do not rush to the school. Reunification information will be communicated to you as soon as possible.