Proposed Maryland Center for School Safety

A new statewide School Safety Center in Maryland will build upon the current efforts of State agencies, local school systems, and schools to ensure that schools are safe for our children. This Center will provide training, technical assistance, resources, and evaluation services to schools, school systems, organizations, and agencies serving children, youth, and families. Moreover, this Center will act as a coordinating entity around efforts across the State that exist to promote school and community safety. This statewide school safety center will be housed at the Maryland State Police at the State's fusion center: the Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center (MCAC).

Additionally, the Center will serve as a central location for school safety information, and provide schools with research, training, and technical assistance to reduce youth violence and promote safety in the State. It will be charged to conduct safety training that includes: development of a positive school environment and proactive safety measures to address local concerns, school safety courses for law enforcement officials, assistance for districts in developing a multi-hazard emergency operations plan, security criteria for instructional facilities, and a model safety and security audit procedure for the State. The Center would also collect school safety data for the State and provide a report to the public and policymakers.

The Center’s major responsibilities will include the following:

- Provide state-of-the-art training around emergency planning, bullying prevention, classroom management, internet safety, crisis response, suicide prevention, and violence prevention. This training will be coordinated among State agencies and include other school safety experts as needed.

- Identify safe school professional development best practices. Initiate, foster, and assist in sustaining collaborative partnerships among schools, school systems, State agencies, local organizations and communities to leverage existing resources to deliver services more uniformly to local school systems.

- Develop and disseminate resources on safety, school safety, emergency planning/response, crisis prevention, bullying prevention, and violence prevention.

- Work collaboratively with the Maryland Association of School Resource Officers to ensure that all officers serving in schools have been formally trained and maintain accurate data on school resource officers and where they are serving.

- Serve as a clearinghouse of safe school information and best practices with up-to-date, research based information on creating and maintaining safe schools.

- Work with other agencies to establish a comprehensive, uniform, consistent process for collecting and communicating school safety data.

- Develop and implement audit tools, in collaboration with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), for the development of safety and security criteria for the design and operation of school facilities.

- Provide technical assistance to schools and school systems in auditing their efforts in maintaining safe and secure schools.

- Research and apply for additional funds from private and public agencies and foundations to fund its activities and for long-term sustainability and expansion.