

**MEMORANDUM**

November 5, 2009

TO: Education Committee  
Public Safety Committee

FROM: Karen Orlansky,<sup>KO</sup> Director  
Office of Legislative Oversight

SUBJECT: **Briefing/Discussion: 2008-2009 MCPS Report of School Safety and Security**

On November 9<sup>th</sup>, Steve Bedford, Chief School Performance Officer, will brief the Public Safety and Education Committees on MCPS' second edition of *School Safety and Security at a Glance*. Following last year's format, the 2008-2009 report provides data from the most recent school year on suspensions, serious incidents, and Code Red and Code Blue drills. It also summarizes the results from MCPS' surveys of the school climate, and lists the school safety and security-related programs being implemented at each school.

Councilmembers are asked to bring their copy of *School Safety and Security at a Glance 2008-2009*. The full report is also available on-line at:  
<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/regulatoryaccountability/SafetyGlance/>

The Council's recommendation that MCPS compile a report on school safety and security emanated from the Office of Legislative Oversight's FY07 study of MCPS serious incident reporting. As stated in his October 6, 2009 transmittal memo to the Council President, Superintendent Weast describes the goal of *School Safety and Security at a Glance* as follows:

The ultimate goal of compiling and reporting this information is to improve the ways in which schools address incidents that threaten the safety and security of school staff and students or disrupt the process of effective teaching and learning. *School Safety and Security at a Glance* is a valuable tool to help achieve this goal by disseminating accurate reporting of incidents related to school safety and security. It provides concise, easily understood, and easily accessible data which administrators, teachers, students and parents can use to ensure the best learning environment possible in every school.

## Recommended Discussion Questions on the School Safety Report

1. Could MCPS staff provide some specific examples of how information compiled in *School Safety and Security at a Glance* was used during the past year?
2. Last year, one of the concerns raised by the Committees was the consistency of reporting serious incidents across all schools. How does MCPS assess the districtwide progress made on this issue?
3. Last year, the Committees discussed their interest in seeing summary data for *School Safety and Security at a Glance* that is similar to what MCPS currently provides in the County Summary Profile section of *Schools at a Glance*. Has MCPS given any additional thought to adding those summary pages to the report?
4. Last year, the Committees also expressed an interest in measuring changes over time in the data tracked in *School Safety and Security at a Glance*. Has MCPS considered preparing a report that reviews trends in school safety and security measures from one year to the next?
5. The Committees may want to ask MCPS whether there has been any change in their response to the Victim Services Advisory Board's recurring request that MCPS track victim-related information and ensure that victims receive notice of appropriate support services. See statement provided to the HHS Committee in September 2009, attached at ©5.

Attachments	
10/06/09 transmittal letter to the Council from Superintendent Weast	© 1
Explanation of report sections and sample school profile	© 2-4
September 2009 statement from the Victim Services Advisory Board on policy priorities (provided for HHS Committee's meeting with Boards and Commissions)	© 5

SCHOOLS & ED

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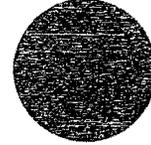


**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
MARYLAND  
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org

October 6, 2009

The Honorable Phil Andrews  
President, Montgomery County Council  
Stella B. Werner Council Office Building  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

051773



Dear Mr. Andrews:

ENCL IN FILE

Enclosed for your information is the second annual edition of Montgomery County Public Schools' (MCPS) safety report, *School Safety and Security at a Glance*. This report summarizes data from the 2008-2009 school year for each school on suspensions, serious incidents, Code Red and Code Blue drills, school climate, and local school safety and security program descriptions. *School Safety and Security at a Glance* will not replace the other reports reflecting safety and security-related data that currently are produced. Other reports relating to serious incidents and out-of-school suspensions will continue to be provided. I understand that a joint meeting of the Education and Public Safety committees has been scheduled to discuss this report on November 9, 2009. Mr. Larry A. Bowers, chief operating officer, and Mr. Stephen L. Bedford, chief school performance officer, will be present for that meeting.

You also may access the current *School Safety and Security at a Glance* Report on the MCPS website at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/regulatoryaccountability/SafetyGlance/>.

The ultimate goal of compiling and reporting this information is to improve the ways in which schools address incidents that threaten the safety and security of school staff and students or disrupt the process of effective teaching and learning. *School Safety and Security at a Glance* is a valuable tool to help achieve this goal by disseminating accurate reporting of incidents related to school safety and security. It provides concise, easily understood, and easily accessible data which administrators, teachers, students, and parents can use to ensure the best learning environment possible in every school.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Mr. Bowers at 301-279-3626 or Mr. Bedford at 301-517-8258.

Respectfully,

Jerry D. Weast, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

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JDW:sp  
Enclosure  
Copy to:

Members of the Board of Education, Mr. Bowers, Dr. Lacey, Mr. Bedford, Dr. Scott, Mr. Hellmuth

Office of the Superintendent of Schools

850 Hungerford Drive, Room 122 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850 ♦ 301-279-3381

1

## Explanation of School Profile Sections

### Section 1: Number of Out-of-School Suspension Incidents

This chart reports the number of suspension incidents for particular categories. This information is reported annually to the Maryland State Department of Education and is available in more detail on their website. The number in the column represents the number of students suspended for the category. This represents a duplicated count of students, meaning a student could be counted in more than one category and/or a student could be counted more than once in the same category. A list of the categories and an explanation of the incidents in each category is included in the glossary of terms.

### Section 2: Out-of-School Suspension Rate

This chart reports the number and percentage of students suspended during the school year. This information is reported annually to the Montgomery County Board of Education and is available in more detail on the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) website. These data represent an unduplicated count of students, meaning a student is only counted once, regardless of the number of times that student may be suspended. A description of the column labels and of each column's content is included in the glossary of terms.

### Section 3: Reported Serious Incidents

This chart states incidents reported to the Office of School Performance as well as the number of incidents for which police were notified. Notification is dictated by several documents, including MCPS Regulation COB-RA, *Reporting a Serious Incident*; MCPS Regulation JFA-RA, *Student Rights and Responsibilities*; and the *Memorandum of Understanding Between MCPS and Montgomery County Department of Police and Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office*. A list of the categories and an explanation of the incidents found in each category is included in the glossary of terms.

### Section 4: Drills Conducted

This chart reflects the actions taken by schools to prepare students for emergency situations and those situations at a school that require declaration of some alert status. Definitions for each category are included in the glossary of terms.

### Section 5: Programs

This section lists those programs offered in the school to develop the behaviors and skills that promote safe and secure school environments.

## Section 6: School Climate

This chart reports the percentage of students, parents, and school staff who responded positively to items related to perceptions of safety and security on the *Surveys of School Environment*. Survey results are reported to each school. The student and parent *Surveys of School Environment* are available in more detail on the MCPS website.

### MCPS High School

address

www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/mcpshs/

Principal: name  
Community Supt: name  
School Hours: 7:25-2:10

Office Phone: (301) 555-0000  
Fax Number: (301) 555-0000  
Cluster Name: name

2008-2009 Number of Out-of-School Suspension Incidents Related to School Safety*										2008-2009 Out-of-School Suspension Rate **			
	Arson Fire Explosives	Attack	Dangerous Substances	Disrespect Insubordination Disruption	Fighting	Theft	Threat	Weapons	Other	Total Students Enrolled	Percent Enrolled	Number Students Suspended	Percent Students Suspended
Total Incidents	1	7	4	53	51	8	7	4	24	Total Students	1450	119	8.2
Male		6	3	40	36	6	3	3	20	Male	754	83	11.0
Female	1	1	1	13	15	2	4	1	4	Female	696	36	5.2
A/In										A/In			
AsAm	1	1	1	2	1			1		AsAm	164	6	3.7
AfAm		1	2	38	33	7	5	2	14	AfAm	626	69	11.0
Wh		1	1	3	3				4	Wh	218	8	3.7
Hisp		4	1	10	14	1	2	1	6	Hisp	442	36	8.2
SpEd		3	1	26	15	5	3		9	SpEd	208	47	22.6
LEP					7					LEP	168	8	4.8
FARMS		3	2	22	17	3	4		9	FARMS	468	45	9.6

\* Duplicated count of students

\*\* Unduplicated count of students

2008-2009 Reported Serious Incidents								
Description	Police Called		Description	Police Called		Description	Police Called	
	No	Yes		No	Yes		No	Yes
Academic Dishonesty			Disruptive Behavior		3	Protective Services		
Accident	1	1	Drugs			Robbery, Strong-armed		
Alcohol			Extortion		1	Serious Injury		
Arrest		1	Fighting			Sexual Offenses		
Arson			Fire, Not Arson			Suicide		1
Bomb			Gang-related Incident/Crime			Theft	1	
Bomb Threat			Hate Incident			Threat, Physical or Verbal		
Bullying			Malfunction, Essential Equipment			Vandalism	1	2
Bus			Medical Assistance			Weapon		
Computer Abuse			Missing Child			Weapon, Toy, Facsimile		
Crisis Center			Physical Assault/Attack			Other		

Drills Conducted		
Code Red	Code Blue	Fire/Evacuation
2	2	10

Safety Incidents Requiring Code Status	
Code Red	Code Blue
0	0

School Safety Programs	
Counseling Programs/Groups PBIS - Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Peer Mediation Sharp Street Program for Suspended Students Student Assistance Programs Study Circles	<span style="font-size: 2em;">5</span>

School Climate - From School Surveys of Environment			
Students (74% Returned)	Agree	Parents (14% Returned)	Agree
I feel safe at school	70.2	My child feels safe at school	81.5
My things are safe in this school	37.6		
		Staff (22% Returned)	Agree
		This school is a safe place to work.	95.2
		My personal belongings are safe in this school.	63.4

6

4



## VICTIM SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

Poverty and socio-economic concerns are chief among the causes of crimes, which results in victims who are referred to the victim services that Montgomery County provides. One of the primary policy issues that our board would like to address is the need for adequate staffing. Over the past several years as the population has risen there has been an increase in staff in the law enforcement side of the safety equation, however; there has been little done to increase the emotional and financial support of crime victims seeking services from HHS. As our population grows and more foreign born citizens enter our county, whose poverty rate is inherently higher, we have not increased the bilingual therapists in the Victim Assistance and Sexual Assault Program (VASAP) since 2001 and at the Abused Persons Program for over a decade. In Silver Spring, the VASAP temporary, no benefits grant position that helped victims of crimes was reduced to a half time position funded by two sources of grants. This is the only position that can serve general crime victims seeking legal relief at the Silver Spring district courthouse. The crime victims in the Silver Spring area are reliant on the hopes of grant funding in order to have their needs served in a location near home. Our board is sensitive to the fact that we are in an economic crisis, but the economic crisis itself in addition to poverty is a cause for an increased need for staffing particularly to assist crime victims in the down county area. There have been significant increases in crime victims seeking services:

In FY09 there was an increase of 25% over FY08 being spent on crime victim related losses through the County's Crime Victim Compensation Fund.

1. In FY09 there was a 17% increase over FY08 of crime victims served at VASAP.
2. In FY09 there was a 25% increase in domestic violence victims seeking services.
3. Ninety percent or more of crime victims seeking counseling are paying less than \$8 on the sliding fee scale attesting to their low financial status.

The second policy issue that the Victim Services Advisory Board would like to address is the students in Montgomery County Public Schools that are victims of crime and in need of specialized crime victim counseling. We do not have a formal method of referral so that we know that students that are victims of crimes from bullying to assault are referred to VASAP for services. We know that a database was formulated to track the number of crime events that occur in schools, but there is no codified method of referral or a way to track referrals to crime victim services. We know that children who are victimized and go unnoticed or untreated for the emotional issues associated with victimization can have major issues during their adulthood.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide input on important policy issues facing the County,  
Samantha Davis, Chair for the Victim Services Advisory Board



Department of Health and Human Services

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