



# ALICE: THE BCPS ACTIVE ASSAILANT PROTOCOL

*Department of School Safety*

An enhancement to the response to an active assailant is among the improvements to school safety being implemented through the Department of School Safety this year.

A Comprehensive Safety Plan has been posted for staff, parents, and community members.

SROs have been assigned to elementary schools- one for each police precinct.

An enhanced active assailant protocol has been adopted.

This presentation provides information regarding the enhanced response to an active assailant.



# ACTIVE ASSAILANT APPROACH

## Safe Schools Act of 2018

The Safe Schools Act of 2018 requires school systems in Maryland to conduct active assailant drills. An active assailant is someone who enters or approaches a building with the intent of doing harm to others. In many cases, an active assailant is an active shooter but could also use other means to inflict harm.

In the final week of the 2018 legislation session, a more than 40-page piece of legislation was drafted, amended, and ultimately enacted as the Maryland Safe to Learn Act of 2018 (Senate Bill 1265, Chapter 30).

The bill authorizes the Maryland State Department of Education to adopt regulations for active shooter drills including age and developmentally appropriate procedures for students or school personnel in: (1) securing classrooms; (2) barricading classrooms and school entries; (3) taking refuge in the classroom; and (4) when appropriate, escape from the classroom or school.



# ACTIVE ASSAILANT APPROACH

## PARTNERSHIP

During the fall of 2018, Baltimore County Public Schools in partnership with the Baltimore County Police Department will introduce a new response to an active assailant.

Baltimore County Police Department staff have been engaged with BCPS for the last two years in planning for an active assailant response.

Baltimore County Police already practice their active shooter drills in select schools across the county, usually two a year.



# ACTIVE ASSAILANT APPROACH

## PREPARATIONS

- During summer 2018, over 300 administrators, law enforcement personnel, and lead teachers received certification in the selected protocol.

Three, 2-day instructor trainer sessions were held during the months of July and August. Instructors had to complete an online test for certification in order to train school staff.

- School staff first completed a one-hour, online training and then school staff participated in a three-hour face-to-face training prior to the start of school.

Preparations for the rollout of the new protocol have been extensive.

Staff in the Department of School Safety as well as some school resource officers attending training sponsored by the Maryland Center for School safety.

School resource officers received information during their national training.

BCPS convened an Implementation Committee with many subcommittees to address professional development; social-emotional concerns; individuals with disabilities; and communication of changes among other topics.

The Board of Education approved funding for the selected protocol.

Three train-the-trainer sessions were held- July 30-31; August 13-14; and August 20-21. Instructors had to complete an online test for certification.

Staff were provide access to an online training upon the start of the new school year.

Staff participated in a face-to-face training prior to the start of school.



# ACTIVE ASSAILANT RESPONSE

## WHY CHANGE?

Case studies of several active shooter incidents such as Columbine High School, Virginia Tech University, and Sandy Hook Elementary School have shown that using a *lockdown* protocol alone resulted in an increase in casualties.

Federal and local agencies and law enforcement partners recommend an option-based protocol.

In each of the cases cited, there were numerous casualties when staff and students used lockdown as their only response.

Giving individuals options is recommended by the Department of Homeland Security, Maryland State Police, Maryland Center for School Safety, and the Baltimore County Police Department.



# ACTIVE ASSAILANT PROTOCOL

## ALICE

The active assailant protocol selected for Baltimore County Public Schools is called ALICE. ALICE stands for:

- Alert – receiving initial notice of a critical event
- Lockdown – securing occupants behind closed doors
- Inform – notifying staff and students of potential danger throughout the event
- Counter – creating noise, movement, distance, and distraction
- Evacuate – leaving the area of the danger

*These responses are not implemented in any specific order.*

Read slide.



# ACTIVE ASSAILANT APPROACH

## WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

ALICE is an option-based protocol. Staff and students will respond based on the information they have about the situation. In the past, the only option available was *lockdown*.

- Lockdown will be updated to an enhanced lockdown protocol.
- Evacuation will be to a location off of school grounds.
- If an active assailant breaches a secure location, occupants will counter the attacker.
- Information will be provided during the event as available and as possible.

While we cannot go into great detail about all of the precautions taken and strategies used,

An enhanced protocol means that students will no longer sit in a group passively. They will learn to barricade entrances to their environment.

Instead of evacuating on school grounds as they do for a fire drill, students will move to a greater distance from the building.

Countering is not fighting. It is not going after an attacker. It is creating a disruption in the attacker's attempt to cause harm.

Staff and students will be informed in real time during the event so they can make the best decision possible. For example, "The attacker is on the cafeteria wing."



# ACTIVE ASSAILANT RESPONSE

## HOW WILL STUDENTS LEARN THE NEW PROTOCOL?

- Current protocols will remain in place until students have been informed and trained.
- Students will receive information about the various protocol in an age-appropriate way. *Students are already familiar with the protocols currently used by BCPS.*
- Students will participate in scenario-based drills that will gradually acquaint them with the best response protocol based on their situation. *Students currently practice eight emergency responses.*
- Parents will receive notification of active assailant drills and a summary of the content of the drill as the new protocol is introduced.

We will continue to use the measures in place until students have been trained.

Students are already familiar with lockdown, evacuate, and other protocols. The changes will be explained to students in an age appropriate way.

The scenario-drills will begin with “tabletop” exercises. During these exercises, students will talk about what they would do if there school was attacked.

As we begin implementation of the new protocol, notification will be sent through School Messenger that students will be doing a drill and a brief summary of the drill.





# ACTIVE ASSAILANT RESPONSE

**QUESTIONS??**

Any questions or concerns that cannot be addressed here can be referred to the Department of School Safety at 443-809-4360 or by e-mailing the executive director, April Lewis at [alewis7@bcps.org](mailto:alewis7@bcps.org).