

## Active Assailant Protocol: What Parents Need to Know

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. During the fall of 2018, Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) in partnership with the Baltimore County Police Department (BCoPD) introduced a new response to an active assailant, following two years of planning.

*You may ask, "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* response only resulted in an increase in casualties. Giving individuals options is recommended by the Department of Homeland Security, Maryland State Police, Maryland Center for School Safety, and the BCoPD.

### **The BCPS Model:**

The active assailant protocol selected for BCPS is called ALICE.

ALICE stands for:

- Alert - realization of an event
- Lockdown - securing of occupants behind closed doors
- Inform - provision of information during an event
- Counter - taking control of the event from the attacker
- Evacuate - leaving the area of the danger

These responses are not implemented in any specific order.

### *What's Different?*

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

- Lockdown was updated to an enhanced lockdown protocol.
- Evacuation will be to a location off school grounds.
- If an active assailant breaches a secure location, occupants may counter the attacker (not for younger students).
- Information will be provided during the event as available and as possible.

Any questions or concerns that are not addressed here can be referred to:

**The Department of School Safety**  
**9610 Pulaski Park Drive Suite 118**  
**Middle River, Maryland 21220**  
**443-809-4360**