



Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

January 2, 2020

The Honorable Larry Hogan
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller
H-107, State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones
H-101, State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Gangs, Gang Activity, and Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behaviors (MSAR #8476)

Dear Governor Hogan, President Miller, and Speaker Jones:

Enclosed please find the report on the Implementation of State and Local School System Policies and Regulations to Address Gangs, Gang Activity, and Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior as required by § 7-424.2 of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. The report provides insight as to how Maryland's local school systems address gang activity, awareness, and prevention.

If you have questions or require additional information, please contact Tiffany Clark, Director, Education Policy and Government Relations at (410) 767-0090 or by email at tiffany.clark1@maryland.gov.

Best Regards,

Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools



**Implementation of State and Local School System Policies and
Regulations to Address Gangs, Gang Activity, and Similar
Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior**

January 2020



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*Implementation of State and Local School System Policies and Regulations to Address Gangs,
Gang Activity, and Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior*

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Allegany County Public Schools	5
Anne Arundel County Public Schools	6
Baltimore City Public Schools	8
Baltimore County Public Schools	9
Calvert County Public Schools	11
Caroline County Public Schools	12
Carroll County Public Schools	13
Cecil County Public Schools	15
Charles County Public Schools	17
Dorchester County Public Schools	19
Frederick County Public Schools	20
Garrett County Public Schools	22
Harford County Public Schools	23
Howard County Public Schools	25
Kent County Public Schools	26
Montgomery County Public Schools	27
Prince George’s County Public Schools	31
Queen Anne’s County Public Schools	34
St. Mary’s County Public Schools	35
Somerset County Public Schools	37
Talbot County Public Schools	39
Washington County Public Schools	41
Wicomico County Public Schools	43
Worcester County Public Schools	45

Local School System Questionnaire Gang Policies/Regulations

Implementation of State and Local School System Policies and Regulations to Address Gangs, Gang Activity, and Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior

Introduction

The Safe Schools Act of 2010 (Act) (2010 Maryland Laws, Chapter 188) required the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to submit a report on or before January 1, 2011, and each year thereafter, to the Maryland General Assembly regarding the implementation of State and local school system policies and regulations to address gangs, gang activity, and similar destructive or illegal group behavior. This report provides the requested information for Maryland's 24 local school systems for the 2019-2020 school year.

The Act also required the Maryland State Board of Education, in consultation and collaboration with the Department of Juvenile Services, the Department of State Police, the Department of Human Resources, and local school systems to develop a *Model Policy to Address Gangs, Gang Activities, and Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior* (Model Policy) no later than March 31, 2011. Local school systems were also required to develop local policies/regulations to address gangs, gang activity, and similar destructive or illegal group behavior, which included all components of the State Board's Model Policy, and to submit these policies/regulations to the State Superintendent of Schools no later than September 1, 2011.

Each local school system was required by law to: 1) publicize its policies/regulations in student handbooks, on school system websites, and at any other locations or venues local school systems determined was necessary or appropriate; and 2) develop educational programs to address gangs, and gang-like activity in schools. Educational programs must include an educational gang awareness program for students, staff, volunteers, and parents and a teacher and administrator development program that trains teachers and administrators to implement the policy.

This report to the Maryland General Assembly addresses the requirements outlined in the Safe Schools Act of 2010 and is designed around three core areas: 1) where local school system gang policies and regulations are publicized; 2) what educational gang awareness program(s) are being provided for students, staff, volunteers, and parents; and 3) how administrators and teachers are trained to implement the gang policy/regulations. In addition to these core areas, the MSDE has developed a questionnaire for the purpose of identifying other areas that need to be addressed to optimize technical support. The questionnaire is constructed to appraise the implementation of State and local policies and regulations to address gangs, gang activity, and similar destructive or illegal group behaviors by all 24 local school systems.

Per the attached questionnaires, local school systems have updated their policies and have posted them to their local websites. All systems provide gang awareness training such as training from local law enforcement agencies, the Gang Resistance Education And Training (G.R.E.A.T.) program in elementary and middle schools, information from the U.S. Attorney's Office, and the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program. All local school systems have a mechanism through which communities can report alleged gang activity and receive information regarding how investigation procedures will be conducted by appropriate staff members. In addition, the MSDE and the Maryland Center for School Safety meet regularly with Directors of Student Services and School Safety Supervisors to provide technical assistance on gang policies, awareness, and prevention.

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Allegheny County Public Schools

- 1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?**
June 15, 2011.
- 2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.**
No.
- 3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?**
On the School system's website.
- 4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?**
The system conducts yearly trainings for all stakeholders. These trainings are provided by local law enforcement as well as system administrators.
- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?**
Stakeholders are aware of the look-fors for identifying and reporting activity.
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?**
All administrators are trained in a train-the-trainer method. Administrators then train the staff of the school.
- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**
Yes, we use the forms and methods provided by MSDE.
- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**
Within our schools it has remained the same.
- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**
NA

Local School System Questionnaire Gang Policies/Regulations

Anne Arundel County Public Schools 2018-2019

1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?

JCCB Gang and/or Gang like Activity was adopted on July 13, 2011.

JCCB-RA Gang and/or Gang like Activity was adopted on July 13, 2011.

* see AACPS Policies and Regulations (<http://aacpsschools.org/boardpolicies/?p=1686>).

2. Have your gang policy/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.

Board of Education Policy of Anne Arundel County Public Schools, JCCB Gang and/or Gang like Activity, Regulation, JCCB-RA Gang and/or Gang like Activity is currently a documented violation of the Anne Arundel County Public Schools Code of Student Conduct. The research based and collaborative approach to handling gang related concerns currently start at levels 3-5 consequences and may carry a major incident referral for a request of a 1 to 45-day suspension pending outcomes of the level 5 investigation. Our gang related policy/regulations is designed to prevent student participation in gang and/or gang-like activity, irrespective of whether schools are in session, within Board of Education owned or leased property, including school buildings or on school grounds; on school buses or other school vehicles; or during any school, school-related, or school sponsored activity, whether held on school property or at locations off school property. This includes, but is not limited to: wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying, or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, or other item which evidences or reflects membership in or affiliation with any gang, commission of any act which furthers the interests of any gang, gang-like activity, or act of violence, including but not limited to: solicitation for membership in a gang, requesting any person to pay for protection or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person, committing or inciting criminal acts or violation of AACPS policies, soliciting other students to engage in physical violence against any other person, engaging in any act, either verbal or nonverbal, including gestures handshakes, slogans, drawings, etc. showing membership or affiliation with any gang, challenging or provoking fights, stare-downs, mad-dogging (threatening glance; to stare fixedly at someone in a hostile manner), flashing colors, verbal remarks, etc., marking or defacing school property with messages, symbols, or slogans that may signify gang affiliation, displaying gang apparel, signs, symbols, or slogans on personal property, engaging in physical confrontations where one or more persons confront another individual or group, and using electronic devices not limited to; pagers, cell phones, or computers to communicate gang activities while on school property.

3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?

The Anne Arundel County gang policy/regulations and policies are outlined in the AACPS Code of Student Conduct which is electronically located on the Anne Arundel County website www.aacps.org. The policy and regulation is also found at these direct links:

- <http://aacpsschools.org/boardpolicies/wp-content/uploads/bsk-pdf-manager/2016/08/JCCB-Gang-and-or-Gang-Like-Activities.pdf>
- <http://aacpsschools.org/boardpolicies/wp-content/uploads/bsk-pdf-manager/2016/08/JCCB-RA-Gang-and-or-Gang-Like-Activities.pdf>

4. What educational gang awareness programs are your school system providing for students, staff, and volunteers? Gang related lessons for students implemented during advisory period in each school. Professional Development included for faculty, staff and volunteers at the beginning of each school year.

Local School System Questionnaire Gang Policies/Regulations

- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?** The most effective approach is one that involves communication between representatives of the groups involved. Students have been encouraged to seek assistance with staff members or programs, which may be available at schools included conflict resolution/peer mediation, mentors, school nurses, teachers, school counselors, principals, school psychologists, pupil personnel workers, school resource officers, school social workers, and school administrators.
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?** The Office of School Security provides the schools with the gang awareness packets. Professional Development is included for faculty and staff at the beginning of each school year. Gang related lessons for students are implemented during advisory period in each school. An administrative review of gang related activity, identification of pattern of criminal gang activity, underlying crime, anti-social behavior, gang-like activities, and signs of gang membership is conducted.
- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**
- Electronic Share Point for New Gang-Related Incident Report is located on the AACPS website www.aacps.org for students and parents.
 - Electronic Share Point for Bullying, Cyber-Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation Report is located on the AACPS website www.aacps.org for students and parents,
 - Electronic Bullying, Cyber-Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation Investigative Report Form for administrators.
 - Office of Safe and Orderly Schools, 410-222-5288.
 - Office of School Security 410-222-5083.
 - Student Safety Hotline: 1-877-676-9854.
 - AA County Crisis Response System: 410-768-5522.
 - The Maryland Youth Crisis Hotline: 1-800-422-0009.
- 8. Do you feel the gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior has increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**
- Increased: 2016-17- (14) incidents of reported gang-related issues.
 - Decreased: 2017-2018- (13) incidents of reported gang related issues.
 - Increased: 2018-2019- (22) incidents of reported gang related issues.
- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**
NA

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Baltimore City Public Schools

- 1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?**
July 26, 2011.
- 2. Have your policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.**
No.
- 3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?**
Our policy can be located at: <http://www.boarddocs.com/mabe/bcpss/board.nsf/public#>
- 4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?**
G.R.E.A.T. Gang Resistance Education and Training.
- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?**
The G.R.E.A.T. Program has allowed us to have programs in schools and at summer camp.
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?**
School based administrators were trained as part of the ongoing climate work since the policy came out. Annual training is provided to school police who we have found have the greatest impact in supporting schools relating to the most current awareness of gang activities.
- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**
A gang-related Incident Reporting Form is located inside of the code of conduct.
- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**
We have not had any reported gang activity to date. It appears to be on the decrease.
- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**
NA

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Baltimore County Public Schools

1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?

The current Baltimore County Public Schools' (BCPS) gang policy and rule were approved by its board of education on July 12, 2011.

2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.

The BCPS gang policy and rule were updated in December 2016.

3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?
Policy 5551

(http://www.bcps.org/system/policies_rules/policies/5000Series/POL5551.pdf
and Rule 5551

http://www.bcps.org/system/Policies_rules/rules/5000Series/RULE5551.pdf are listed on the BCPS Web site.

A synopsis of the policy and rule is published in the *Student Handbook* and titled Gangs, Gang Activity and Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior. This handbook is distributed to all students at the beginning of each school year, reviewed, and taken home by students to be shared with their parents.

4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?

Baltimore County Public Schools provide training annually for staff and administrators in partnership with local agencies. School resource officers provide education to students at the secondary level as a part of their teaching responsibilities. Several schools utilize the Gang Resistance Education And Training (G.R.E.A.T) program for middle school students. Health education teachers provide gang related education at the secondary level. Community presentations are made available through PTAs, advisory groups, and other community associations.

5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?

The BCPS uses a variety of strategies to provide gang prevention education and makes resources available on its Web site along with the form for reporting concerns. The partnership between BCPS and the Baltimore County Police Department (BCoPD) facilitates training and communication of concerns. When an issue arose involving English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students, the BCoPD sent Spanish speaking officers to the school to develop a rapport with students and hired a Spanish speaking officer as a permanent member of its SRO team.

6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?

Administrators received training in the gang policy/rules through the annual Safe Schools Conference and during professional learning opportunities offered after school hours.

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**

Community members can access the *Gang-Related Incident Reporting Form* on the BCPS Web site at *Gang-Related Incident Reporting Form*. The form is submitted to a school who enters the data and addresses the issue.

- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**

Anecdotal reports show that there might be a slight increase in gang activity in some areas of the County.

- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**

The partnership with the BCoPD has enhanced the district's awareness of gangs and gang activities as well as prevention and intervention strategies. The BCoPD has recently added a Spanish speaking SRO to the team of SROs at one of our schools to increase communication with students in the regional ESOL program.

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Calvert County Public Schools

- 1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?**
July 14, 2011
- 2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.**
Gang Policy #1119 was reviewed and updated on 8/10/2017, however there were no changes made since the policy was originally adopted.
- 3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?**
It is available electronically over the Calvert County Public Schools web site.
- 4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?**
The school system's web-site; Students Rights and Responsibilities Booklet; and grade level assemblies for each school in the system.
- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?**
Collective involvement between the school system, local and state law enforcement, and State's Attorney Office have joined together to share any reported gang-like activities on school property. Information is also shared regarding student involved gang-like activities occurring in the community.
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?**
Administrators and Supervisors were informed during (A&S) meetings. Administrators then were to convey this information to their staff. All staff have access to an on-line "SafeSchool" course as a resource to identify gang-like activities.
- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**
The Gang Related issues and similar Destructive or Illegal Behavior Report is inserted in the Students' Rights and Responsibilities Booklet that all students in the district receive. The data is collected on file in the Department of Student Services.
- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**
There have been no changes since the previous year's report.
- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**
NA.

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Caroline County Public Schools

- 1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?**
June 7, 2011
- 2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.**
Amended March 6, 2012 to include: “Activities on or near school vehicles or property”.
- 3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?**
The policy is on our school system’s website.
- 4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?**
Caroline County Public Schools provides training for staff and teachers on gang prevention and locally available resources annually. This is typically done through a web-based “Safe Schools Training” or “Public School Works.”
- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?**
Our school resource officers who are deputies from the county Sheriff’s office are instrumental in keeping the school informed. According to policy, these people meet monthly with the appropriate school staff to share information about gang related activity in general and discuss the educational plan for and progress of each student who has been arrested or adjudicated delinquent for gang-related activity...”
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?**
Our local police were helpful in addition to training on the “Gang Related Incident Investigation Reporting Form.”
- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**
Reports can be made on the Bullying Harassment and Intimidation Reporting Form of any gang related activity.
- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**
It has remained the same.
- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**
NA

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Carroll County Public Schools

1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?
Adopted July 6, 2011.

2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.

Revised on February 22, 2012.

3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?

General Information:

<https://www.carrollk12.org/about/Documents/2019-2020InformationalCalendar-web.pdf>

Reporting Form:

<https://www.carrollk12.org/instruction/studentservices/Documents/Gang.pdf>

4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?

Health curriculum, counselor lessons, presentations by Vince DeVivo – School Outreach Coordinator, U.S. Attorney’s Office. Carroll County State’s Attorney’s Office provided staff training in August 2018.

5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?

The training has made staff aware that gangs are not just found in large cities. It has also provided staff with gang indicators and current trends to look for in Carroll County Public Schools. Carroll County Public Schools takes a proactive approach and because of our informational ongoing training, we try to be very alert for the potential of gangs forming at all times.

6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?

Utilizing the train-the-trainer model, administrators were trained by Larry Faries (former CCPS Supervisor of Security) and/or Vince DeVivo. Additional professional development was provided in August 2018.

7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).

We have a good partnership and communication with our local law enforcement agencies therefore, if any gang activity involving school age students occurs, they will alert Carroll County Public Schools. Information collected typically goes through the normal referral process for school infractions; however, the new Safe Schools Maryland anonymous tip line can also be used to report gang activity.

8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?

Gang related activity has remained the same as previous years.

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**

N/A

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Cecil County Public Schools

1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?
Gang Policy approved July 11, 2011. Regulations were updated in September 2012.

2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.

The Cecil County gang policy was reviewed on April 1, 2016. No changes were made to the existing policy.

3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?

The Gang Policy and Regulations are publicized on the Cecil County Public Schools' (CCPS) website, along with being published in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook. This handbook contains the Code of Conduct. The handbook is distributed to each student in Cecil County Public Schools during the first week of classes.

4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?

Throughout the year, opportunities are presented to the public to engage with law enforcement to address and inform the public about current trends in adolescent behavior and gang related activities. Opportunities are also presented throughout the year for students to learn about gang awareness through DARE classes. These classes are taught by local law enforcement agents and are presented to all middle and elementary age students. Also, during Local Management Board Meetings, information is shared by participating groups about gang activity and recruitment. These meetings occur monthly. At monthly School Resource Officers (SRO) meetings, all of the local law enforcement agencies gather to share pertinent information regarding criminal activities in CCPS. Standing agenda items include a report on gang activity and recruitment. At the September meeting, law enforcement officials were all in agreement that gang activity is at a minimum but one particular community was beginning to see issues with a small group within the community. The principals of schools within this community have been notified of the activities and reminded of our Gang Policy. This was reinforced at the October meeting as well.

5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?

The information shared with various stakeholders is critical to keeping knowledge about gangs and gang activity in the forefront of key individuals. While Cecil County has not seen growth in gang activity, keeping information flowing is critical to being proactive in limiting the spread of this activity.

6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?

Throughout the year, meetings occur with our Safe School Steering Committee. Various law enforcement agencies are present, along with representatives from the school system, community agencies, and the school resource officers assigned to each of our schools. At this meeting, current trends in student and adolescent behaviors are discussed, along with community trends. During these discussions, gang related activities are also discussed.

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

School resource officers also have frequent communication with school level administration and teachers discussing adolescent behavior trends and gang related activity.

- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**

Cecil County has a Gang Incident Reporting Form that is available online for any interested stakeholders to complete and return to the appropriate school. Cecil County has an open door policy for community members who should and would feel comfortable coming forward to report gang activity.

- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**

It has remained the same. We have very little gang activity in Cecil County.

- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**

NA

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Charles County Public Schools

- 1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?**
August 9, 2011
- 2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.**
No.
- 3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?**
 - School system website (ccboe.com)
 - Dept of Student Services Resource Handbook available on our internal drive and distributed to all schools
 - Located on Board Docs
 - Referenced in our Code of Student Conduct
- 4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?**
 - Schools hold Safe Schools presentations for staff and parents that are conducted by SROs and includes information on gang awareness
 - DARE and Truth and Consequences programs also include this information and are presented to our students
 - Summer Youth Achievement Program for at-risk students includes gang awareness and resistance
 - As of 2018, all volunteers must complete training and a background screening
- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?**

During the 2018/19 school year CCPS began hosting a quarterly gang intervention and prevention meeting where an administrator from each middle and high school, along with gang detectives meet to share information and intelligence on local gangs operating within Charles County. The meetings have resulted in the identification of no less than 3 criminal street gangs and closed a number of felony arrests.
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?**

Administrators were trained and in turn train their school staff.
Administrative staff receives updates from quarterly meetings with the Sheriff's Office.
- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**

Community members have access to and can complete the gang reporting form.
Police officers visit various communities and speak to residents about on-going issues.

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**

Charles County is experiencing an increase in gang related activity, however, the perceived increase could be resulting from better awareness and collaboration between CCPS and law enforcement.

- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**

NA

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Dorchester County Public Schools

- 1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?**
September 15, 2011.
- 2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.**
Not since implemented in 2011.
- 3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?**
The policy is available on our district website and listed under the Student Services tab and hard copies will be available to parents/community upon request.
- 4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?**
Staff complete annual training using our SafeSchools online program.
- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?**
It provides detail on a process for anyone who may feel that gangs are present.
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?**
Staff complete annual training using our Safe Schools online program.
- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**
We have posted the reporting form on our website and provide the link in the calendar handbook for parents and students.
- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**
Reports and data reveal that currently there has not been an increase or decrease in gang related issues. Therefore, it has remained the same.
- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**
NA

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Frederick County Public Schools

1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?

Board Policy 423 *Gang Activity* adopted 9/14/11
<https://apps.fcps.org/legal/doc.php?number=423>

FCPS Regulation 400-87 *Gang Activity* issued 10/3/07, amended 2/27/12
<https://apps.fcps.org/legal/doc.php?number=400-87>

2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.

FCPS Regulation 400-87 *Gang Activity* was amended 2/27/12 as follows:

- Updated to correspond with state’s model
- Added language – if a report is of a high level of severity then an investigation will be initiated immediately, but not later than 24 hours
- Listed additional resources, including FCPS brochure “Youth Gang Involvement”

3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?

Policy and regulation are located on the FCPS Web site:
<https://apps.fcps.org/legal/?type=R>

4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?

The “Youth Gang Involvement” brochure (English and Spanish) is distributed to all schools. It is also located on the FCPS Web site under Security and Emergency Management:
<https://www.fcps.org/centraloffice/security-emergency-management>

5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?

- Educating parents/guardians on “look fors” regarding gang related behavior.
- Educating administrators on “look fors” regarding gang related behavior; how to intervene; the importance of connecting with local law enforcement.

6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?

- One of the mandatory online trainings required by FCPS is “Gang Awareness” through SafeSchools: <http://fcps.md.safeschools.com/login>
This course provides basic information about gang culture, ideology, and behaviors.
- Currently planning annual training for designated school administrators with an expert on gang behavior.

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**

Per FCPS Regulation 400-87 *Gang Activity*, reports can be filed at school or with the FCPS Supervisor of School and Emergency Management.

FCPS Regulation 400-48 *Bullying – Harassment – Intimidation Complaint Process for Students* includes descriptors for “gang related” and “gang recruitment” on the reporting form and investigation form.

<https://apps.fcps.org/legal/?type=R>

The bullying, harassment or intimidation reporting form is attached to the regulation. It is located on the FCPS Web site:

<http://education.fcps.org/publicforms/bullying>

Other information related to bullying, harassment, or intimidation can be located on the FCPS Web site:

<http://www.fcps.org/academics/Stop-Bullying.cfm>

- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**

The student data report demonstrates gang related disciplinary offenses have increased.

- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**

FCPS Regulation 400-08 *Discipline* lists gang activity consequences with tiers of intervention, including applicable criminal and civil penalties with specific reference to FCPS Regulation 400-87 *Gang Activity*.

<https://apps.fcps.org/legal/doc.php?number=400-08>

Section 439.III.5 of Board Policy 439 *Dress Code for Students* indicates: “Students are prohibited from wearing specific gang-related attire.”

<https://apps.fcps.org/legal/doc.php?number=439>

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Garrett County Public Schools

- 1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?**
September 14, 2011.
- 2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.**
No.
- 3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?**
Board of Education Website and Policies & Procedures Handbook.
- 4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?**
Training has been scheduled for administrators, teachers and support staff. Consultation regarding the policy and procedure is provided on a case-by-case basis as needed.
- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?**
Students become aware of the impact of their choices and decisions
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?**
Safe schools training videos are utilized online to insure training of designated staff. Discussion and consultation regarding the application of the policy and procedures are provided with staff as needed.
- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**
Activity can be reported by submitting the Gang reporting form, or reporting to the School Resource Officers or local and state police.
- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**
It remained the same.
- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**
NA

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Harford County Public Schools

- 1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?**
April 25, 2005
- 2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.**
On December 3, 2012 the addendum to the policy included a distinction of a “School Security Officer”.
- 3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?**
All HCPS policies available on the HCPS Website by clicking on Board of Education and selecting HCPS Procedures and Board Policies.
- 4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?**
The SROs provide gang awareness in selected elementary and middle schools through the Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) program. This is a school-based gang and violence prevention program with three primary goals: 1) teach youth to avoid gang membership; 2) prevent violence and criminal activity; and 3) assist youth in developing positive relationships with law enforcement.

In middle and high schools, the SROs communicate frequently with administrators to identify known gang members in their schools.
- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?**
Principals now collaborate with the School Police Team/SROs on identifying emerging gang activities within schools. Students who are involved with gangs generally keep their gang-related activities and affiliation out of school, based on principal reports. We distribute gang awareness brochures to counseling offices and they are in the waiting room at the Superintendent’s suspension hearing office.
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?**
Originally, the Harford County Sheriff’s Office provided a presentation to school administrators. That information is available on the Sheriff’s office website link. SROs now keep administrators informed of emerging gang activities and incidents that occur in the community that may impact their school. All staff are able to access the policy on the school system’s website.
- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**
Yes, it is usually reported using the online bullying report.

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**

County-wide, there has been a decrease. However, we have had an increase in a few of our schools. Gang-related reportable offenses have also increased leading to several crimes involving firearms, attempted murder, and armed robberies.

Criminal charges have increased because of the inclusion of 2nd degree assault as a reportable offense for incidents outside of school and for fights within school. Fights and attacks have increased, likely a function of the aggravating nature of social media. The increase in reportable offenses have been associated with increased awareness and the incorporation of including a check off block on incident reports identify gang involvement.

- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**

NA

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Howard County Public Schools

- 1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?**
July 1, 2011.
- 2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.**
No.
- 3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?**
Through our web site HCPSS.org, along with other HCPSS policies.
- 4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school provide to students, staff, and volunteers?**
When requested, our school system works with the Howard County Police Department Gang Unit to conduct the most up-to-date gang information training.
- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?**
By providing increased awareness through education is the key to reducing gang activity.
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?**
We request support from the Howard County Police Gang Unit to provide up-to-date training.
- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**
Students staff and parents are encouraged to report any gang related activity to an administrator who is required to complete and submit a Gang Related Incident Reporting Form. We have posters at every school prohibiting gang activity and encouraging the reporting of any gang related activity.
- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**
Gang activity has remained about the same.
- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**
HCPSS is looking into an on-line training module through Safe Schools to be tailored with our gang policy for staff to access throughout the school year.

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Kent County Public Schools

- 1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?**
The policy was approved on August 1, 2011
The procedure was approved on June 4, 2012.
- 2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.**
No.
- 3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?**
The policy/regulations are communicated through our website and Board Docs.
- 4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?**
Students – Material from MSDE is being used in health classes.
Volunteers and Staff – Safe Schools training.
- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?**
Our program offers general awareness and resistance skills.
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?**
Through the Safe Schools Training.
- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**
Community members can report activity to our schools and schools will complete the needed paperwork.
- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**
It has remained the same – we have few issues in Kent County. We communicate with local and state police at our security meetings held twice per year.
- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**
If you see that other counties are using something more effective, we could definitely use more resources/curriculum. Technical assistance from MSDE regarding student training and education is always appreciated.

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Montgomery County Public Schools

1. When (date) was your gang policies/regulations approved by your board of education?

MCPS Regulation JHG-RA, Gangs, Gang Activity, or Other Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior Prevention, was developed initially in August 2011, revised in September 2012, and revisions were made July 24, 2017, to address where copies of the gang reporting form are distributed to facilitate better reporting and monitoring and to reflect the appropriate MSDE contact name and contact information.

2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.

MCPS Regulation JHG-RA, Gangs, Gang Activity, or Other Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior Prevention, was revised in September 2012 to incorporate information received from the Maryland State Department of Education. The major change by the state was that upon receipt of a Gang-Related Incident Reporting Form, the principal or designee, assistant principal, and the school security officer would initiate an investigation within 24 hours. Revisions were made again in July, 2017 to establish reporting requirements that allow MCPS to track and monitor the number of incidents, types of behaviors, and findings from school investigations.

Documents related to the MCPS gang regulation include:

- a) New Montgomery County Board of Education Policy COA, Student Well-being and School Safety, (June, 24, 2019) which builds upon the ongoing work of MCPS to promote student well-being and school safety. The new policy begins also aligns with Board Policy JPG, Wellness: Physical and Nutritional Health, MCPS work on the Be Well 365: The Framework to Support the Physical, Social, and Psychological Well-being of All Students as well as the MCPS Restorative Justice initiatives. Specifically, Board Policy COA addresses safety from the Perspective of: promoting a positive school climate, accountability for all, Behavioral threat assessment, facilities, security staff, and technology, Collaboration with county partners including health and law enforcement Agencies, and emergency planning and preparedness.
- b) Revised MCPS Regulation COA-RA, Behavior Threat Assessment, which addresses Maryland legislative mandates in the Maryland Safe to Learn Act of 2018, and the Maryland's Model Policy for Behavior Threat Assessment that sets forth mechanisms, best practices, procedures, policies, and guides for the establishment of an assessment team or teams in each local school system.
- c) Board Policy JFA, Student Rights and Responsibilities
- d) MCPS Regulation JFA-RA, Student Rights and Responsibilities
- e) Related publications include the 2019-2020 Student's Guide to Rights and Responsibilities in MCPS, and the 2019-2020 Student Code of Conduct in MCPS, and the Office of Student and Family Support and Engagement Resource Guide, which are revised, translated and published annually.

Local School System Questionnaire Gang Policies/Regulations

3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?

The MCPS gang regulation is located on the MCPS website at: www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/policy/pdf/jhgra.pdf. It is also referenced in the [Annual Mandatory Compliance Training](#) for staff (see #6 below). The regulation is available in multiple languages to ensure broad access to our school community.

4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?

The curriculum for the high school Health Education course includes specific objectives that address the issue of gang awareness. MCPS collaborates with the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Identity, Inc. to provide gang awareness programs and interventions to students, staff members, and volunteers. An extremely valuable resource and intervention specialist is Luis Cardona, administrator, Positive Youth Development Initiative, DHHS. He serves as the coordinator of the Street Outreach Network whose mission is to “prevent, neutralize, and control hostile behavior in high risk youth and youth gangs through the development of positive relationships between youth [and] community stakeholders and outreach workers. The outreach worker utilizes positive youth development programs and leisure time activities as the intervening vehicle for redirecting antisocial and aggressive behaviors.”

MCPS also collaborates with the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) and the Montgomery County State’s Attorney’s Office (SAO) on gang awareness programs. For example, in addition to the training and other activities discussed further in response to question six and below, the SAO has conducted a number of school-based assemblies, as well as community meetings on gang and other inappropriate behaviors. As discussed further below, the MCPD and the SAO also have pledged to coordinate services with MCPS and other agencies to promote prevention and mitigation efforts of gang and gang-related activities.

5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?

MCPS has maintained a proactive approach towards training of staff members to recognize, document, and report any suspected gang-related signs or activities. As a result, gang activity in schools is limited, and when it does occur, staff members respond immediately to mitigate the negative impact it could have on a positive and safe learning environment.

6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?

In 2017, MCPS renewed and updated its Memorandum of Understanding with law enforcement agencies in Montgomery County, including the MCPD and the SAO, to add a section specifically focused on gang awareness and prevention. The revised MOU was executed on October 17, 2017 and is available at the link below: <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/departments/security-new/Executed%20SRO%20MOU.PDF>. In addition to the gang awareness activities

Local School System Questionnaire Gang Policies/Regulations

specified elsewhere in the MOU, the parties expressly agreed “to develop and implement gang awareness, prevention, and intervention programs for MCPS students and their families with a focus on outreach to at-risk MCPS students.” In addition, the SAO and law enforcement agencies agreed to “assist MCPS in developing ongoing training on gang awareness for MCPS staff”; “to meet regularly to address current trends in gang activity; and to “convene regular school security meetings for the middle schools and high schools to ensure the coordination of gang prevention, intervention, and suppression efforts.” To implement the MOU, meetings have been held throughout the school year with secondary principals and their security staff, as well as the MCPS Office of School Safety and Security, the SAO, the MCPD, and DHHS (School Year 2017-2018 - October, December, February, and April).

The MCPS Department of School Safety and Security collaborates with the Maryland School Safety Center to share information and learn how other counties throughout the State of Maryland have or are developing strategies to reduce gangs or gang-like activities.

The MCPD also presented gang awareness training to all MCPS security staff, which included an overview of gang activity in the region, what administrators and security staff should watch for, and how to report suspected gang activity (August 2017).

Beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, MCPS incorporated training on gang awareness into the [online compliance training](#) that is mandatory for all employees. The training, which was revised to be more interactive and engaging, includes guidance regarding:

- Definitions of criminal gang and patterns of criminal gang activity, as well as warning signs (behavioral, social, and physical);
- Requirements that schools must have prevention and intervention strategies;
- Requirement that all school employees must report any incident of suspected gang behavior using MCPS Form 230-37, as well as the investigation process and timeline;
- Prevention and intervention strategies such as making changes to the physical building and creating a school climate that is conducive to a safe environment;
- Information as to why students join gangs, and factors that may increase the risk of participation in gang activity; and
- Links to in-school resources, community resources, internet sites, and hotlines

7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).

Community members are advised to contact school staff members and complete [MCPS Form 230-37, *Gang-Related Incident Reporting Form*](#), whenever they learn of suspected gang-related behavior, or [MCPS Form 230-35, *Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form*](#), which includes “gang related” and “gang recruitment” as categories of bullying, harassment, or intimidation.

8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior

Local School System Questionnaire Gang Policies/Regulations

have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?

There has been a perceived change in gang activity in Montgomery County, MD. The MCPD and the SAO received supplemental funding from the Montgomery County Council to increase their prevention, mitigation, and suppression efforts of gang activities within the county. Both agencies have acknowledged that there is minimal gang activity within MCPS schools but the areas around some schools are impacted. DHHS, MCPD, and the MCPS Office of Student and Family Support and Engagement (OSFSE) and the MCPS Department of School Safety and Security work closely to monitor gang activity in the community-at-large and develop appropriate interventions to support MCPS students and maintain the safety of our students.

9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.

In the spring 2017, the Superintendent of Schools commissioned a thorough review of the security procedures and practices within MCPS. The Department of School Safety and Security conducted the review with input from two nationally recognized experts in the field of school security.

From the review came several recommendations that MCPS is planning to implement, including a number that touched upon gang awareness, including:

- Develop a School Climate dashboard of incidents and behaviors including gangs and gang-like activities.
- Establish a basic training program for all new security staff that includes gang awareness and prevention.
- Establish a working group of stakeholders to share information on gang activities and gang prevention efforts.

A copy of the *Interim Report, School Safety and Security*, is available at this link: www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/departments/security-new/0204.18_MCPS%20InternalReview.pdf

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Prince George's County Public Schools

1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?

The Gang Policy 5157 was approved on June 20, 2011, by the Prince George's County Board of Education. On August 1, 2011, the Superintendent and Executive Cabinet approved the administrative procedure (AP 5142), which explains the process by which the policy is implemented.

2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.

There have been no updates to the regulation or the Administrative Procedure; however, a multi-disciplinary taskforce has updated the procedure; which is currently being reviewed by our General Counsel.

3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?

The Prince George's County Public School system posts all policies and Administrative Procedures on a web site that is accessible to all employees and the public-at-large. In addition, available in both Spanish and English, an informational brochure on gangs has been published and distributed to schools. *The Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* has information about gangs. An electronic version of the handbook is available to students and parents each year. This handbook addresses consequences for gang involvement, gang activity, and similar destructive or illegal behavior. Prince George's County Public Schools also maintains a Gang Google site, which has resources for schools to use.

4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?

Pupil Personnel Workers (PPWs) review *The Student Rights and Responsibility Handbook* with all students annually. Students are required to sign a Code of Conduct Memorandum of Understanding indicating that they understand the policies and regulations outlined in *The Student Rights and Responsibility Handbook*. The system-wide student dress code also prohibits the wearing of gang colors and/or gang paraphernalia.

Staff members receive awareness training annually at the beginning of the school year. PPWs receive an annual refresh on gang involvement and the implications for student truancy. Principals have had the School Resource Officers and staff members from the Department of Student Services conduct parent informational sessions on gang and how to look vigilantly for signs that gangs may be recruiting their children. Schools also develop school-based interventions and programs that are germane to the needs of their buildings.

Additionally, Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) has reached out to parents to provide awareness on gangs through the Department of Family and School Partnerships and Community Outreach (DFSPCO). This division also provided a session

Local School System Questionnaire Gang Policies/Regulations

on “Warning Signs: Gangs/Drugs and At-Risk Behaviors developed to illuminate adolescent behaviors indicative of gang involvement.

5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?

The programs were effective in helping both staff and parents understand what signs to look for in children of gang related activities. These programs have increased gang awareness for adults.

6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?

Over the years, school administrators received training on the implementation of the Administrative Procedure related to gangs and gang prevention. All security staff members have received training through local police entities. An internal Google site maintained by the Department of Security is a place where administrators can go for information. We currently provide a Gang Awareness Training module through the Safe-Schools portal that is available to all school staff on gangs and school safety.

The goal of this course is to provide school staff members with basic information about gang culture, ideology, and behavior. Knowledge gained through the 30-minute course will help school staff better understand gang activity and the role they play to build a safe school environment. Topics covered include gang facts, why young people join gangs, identifying gang members in school, and actions you can take to increase safety in your school.

7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).

PGCPS’ Anti-Bullying website has a link which may be accessed to complete the Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Form. This form also provides an opportunity to report gang-related or gang recruitment activity.

Schools are required to conduct an investigation for each reported incident. In every case, schools use the student information system to record gang information. The Department of Student Services and the Department of Security Services work collaboratively to record and review data to determine trends and action steps to reduce gang related incidents.

To make anonymous reporting easier for students, parents and community onlookers, PGCPS has developed a new Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation (BHI) app that will be released in January 2020. This platform can be used to report Gang-related activity. Videos for staff members to provide training on how to use the app as well as a BHI Parent Tutorial have been developed to provide guidance on how to use this new tool. We recognize this avenue provides all stakeholders with the power to report incidents without trepidation.

Local School System Questionnaire Gang Policies/Regulations

Additionally, PGCPS has collaborated with Crime Solvers in a program called “See Something Say Something”. Community members are able to report incidents via a toll free number.

- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**

Gang related activity has remained flat from the prior year.

- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**

PGCPS realizes gang activity, involvement, and recruitment are not just community issues but involve those who enter our school doors. We have sought ways to address at-risk behaviors that students exhibit that are “warning signs” for gang involvement.

We have partnered with a number of community agencies that provide after school activities and family partnerships to include Latin American Youth Center, CASA Multicultural Center, Youth Services Bureau and Community Conferencing to name a few. We have now hired a Restorative Practices Coordinator to usher in restorative circles aimed at connecting students and teachers that would facilitate an environment that is nurturing, positive, and fosters a sense of belonging for all of our students. When we build in opportunities for greater student engagement through academics, career academies, mentoring, and community services, we are hoping to build mechanisms for better student-school connectivity and self-fulfillment.

Lastly, through trauma informed approaches, we will be able to build bridges with students whose life changing traumatic experiences are often fertile ground for gang involvement or other at-risk behaviors.

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Queen Anne's County Public Schools

- 1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?**
September, 2011
- 2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.**
We have not updated our policy. We continue to model the state policy.
- 3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?**
Our Gang Policy is publicized on our website. It is available for download at www.qacps.org. The policy is also mentioned in our calendar/handbook which goes home to every parent.
- 4. What educational gang awareness programs are does school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?**
We have provided professional development to school counselors and school administrators. The Sherriff's Department has also worked with school staff in an effort to educate staff about gang awareness.
- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?**
We feel our gang program is effective. We feel that our school staff is aware of the policy and how to report. We did not receive any gang reports for the 2016-2017 school year.
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?**
The Supervisor of Student Services reviewed the policy with principals and provided a Power Point that they were to share with all staff. As a follow-up to that presentation the Supervisor of Student Services contacted principals to make sure they were sharing information with staff.
- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**
The Gang Policy is on our webpage and all community members can make a report.
- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**
We have a low incidence of gang related activity in Queen Anne's County. Overall gang activity has decreased over the past few years.
- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**
NA

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

St. Mary's County Public Schools

- 1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?**
June 8, 2011
Policy JF - Student Responsibilities - Gang Activity and Similar Destructive Behaviors Prohibited in School Number JFDJ
- 2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.**
The policy was reviewed on November 13, 2013. The companion regulation was reviewed and revised on July 1, 2013. There were no changes.
- 3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?**
The gang policy and regulation are posted on the St. Mary's County Public School's (SMCPS) website.
SMCPS - Student Handbook & Code of Conduct
- 4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?**
Gang awareness information is included in the Student Handbook and is reviewed annually by students and staff. All staff receive training through an online training program.
- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?**
SMCPS has been transparent about emerging student involvement in reported gang related activities and the increasingly destructive and disruptive actions taken by individuals identifying themselves as members of local community gangs. We have actively partnered with the Sheriff's office to coordinate messaging, information, and appropriate response. The Memorandum of Understanding between schools, the State's Attorney's Office (required under Maryland Education Article 7-424.2) was reviewed and revised on August 15, 2017 for a term of three (3) years. The Memorandum of Understanding between schools and law enforcement (required under Maryland Education Article 7-424.2) was reviewed and revised on August 24, 2019.
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?**
Administrators and teachers are trained annually as part of the required online trainings through Safe Schools. Staff members are required to complete the training by mid-October of each school year.
- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**
There are three options available for community members to report gang-related activity. First, the school system has a confidential tip line to report information. Information regarding the tip line is posted on the school system website. Second, the gang-related

Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations

incident reporting form is available on the school system website. Third, the gang-related incident reporting form is also available in the electronic student handbook.

8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?

The number of gang-related incidents in St. Mary's County remains the same and is having a residual impact on the school environment. We continue to work with local and state law enforcement agencies to investigate reported gang activity. We continually work with the Southern Maryland Information Center (SMIC) to validate potential gangs impacting our school communities. The number of students involved is isolated to a very small percentage of the total number of students. Disruptions in the school environment have occurred ranging from physical attack on students and staff as well as other illegal activity to include vandalism, drug possession, and weapons on campus. This has resulted in outreach to law enforcement partners to investigate and potentially validate suspected gang activity. Meetings are held on a weekly basis with law enforcement and school administrators to address any gang related concerns. The Department of Student Services is proactively engaged in intervention strategies and to assist students who have been determined to be a significant risk to the school environment due to their declared gang affiliation and participation in crimes both on and off the school campus.

9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.

St. Mary's County Public Schools and law enforcement have a collaborative working relationship that is beneficial to the ongoing work in both the schools and community.

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Somerset County Public Schools

- 1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?**
Originally approved on June 14, 2011.
- 2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.**
Yes; Reviewed on December 13, 2011 & July 15, 2014; revised policy effective August 19, 2014 to reflect the changes made to align the discipline code/policy.
- 3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?**
The gang policy/regulation information is publicized in student handbooks, the county calendar (given to every student for parents), on the county website, and also shared with the County Safety Team.
- 4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?**
 - A gang prevention and resource guide was developed and distributed to all schools, has been posted on our website, and was shared with administrators and support staff
 - School Counselors in middle and high schools reviewed this guide with their students and a copy was sent home to parents (annual requirement).
 - Core Essentials (Character Education) lessons and announcements are shared with teachers at all schools on a monthly basis to be incorporated in the classrooms (i.e. respect).
 - Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) initiatives at all eligible school includes specific strategies that address a safe and healthy school climate
 - Elementary students (5th grade) at one of our schools receive DARE instruction.
 - Parent Orientations were held for all schools and the review of procedures and expectations was shared for academics, attendance and behavior.
 - Annual review with school Administrators and school staff.
- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?**
Improved school climate; staff and student awareness.
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?**
 - Policy/regulation review requirement was shared with Administrators during an Administrators & Supervisors meeting.
 - Annual requirement for all staff to be trained at each school; principals submit verification of that training to Central Office.
 - Ongoing periodic school safety meetings occur with school administrators (school safety officers), local police representatives, State Attorney's Office, and various community agencies where data, programming, and local supports are shared and discussed.

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**

Yes; the gang reporting form is available on our website and at schools; we have a partnership with our local police departments that provide officers that conduct walk-throughs regularly; we have an SRO that is based at our middle school and an SRO that is based at one of our high schools.

- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**

In reviewing the incidents that have been reported, there has been a decrease in the schools.

- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**

NA

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Talbot County Public Schools

- 1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?**
May 18, 2011
- 2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.**
No.
- 3. Where are your policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?**
Talbot County Public Schools (TCPS) sends a summer mailing to all parents and guardians every year that includes the Talbot County Board of Education Gang Policy and Administrative Regulation. The TCPS Board Policy and Administrative Regulation is also available on the Talbot County Public Schools website. In addition, the Gang Reporting Form is posted on the Talbot County Public Schools website under the Student Services Department.
- 4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?**
All TCPS staff complete a 30 minute online Safe Schools' Gang Awareness course prior to the start of each school year. Gang awareness is presented to the elementary students through Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) classes and is taught by an officer from the Talbot County Sheriff's Department. Middle and high school students review gang awareness through the health curriculum. Annually, administrators, counselors, local police representatives, State's Attorney and Public Defenders meet yearly to discuss trends in local gang activity. Information from these meetings is shared with other administrators and staff.
- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?**
Our efforts have been effective in making administration, staff, students, and the community aware of the identification and reporting of gang related activities.
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?**
All TCPS staff complete a 30 minute online Safe Schools' Gang Awareness course prior to the start of each school year. Policies and procedures are generally reviewed at the school levels.
- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**
Yes, community members are able to report gang activity involving school age youth by completing and submitting the Gang Reporting Form which is posted on the Talbot County Public Schools website under the Student Services Department.

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**

Talbot County is a rural school system with very little gang related activity. The amount of gang related activity has remained the same over the past few years. Talbot County Public Schools will continue our efforts to maintain a safe and gang free environment for our students.

- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**

NA

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Washington County Public Schools

- 1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?**
July 12, 2011
- 2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.**
May 15, 2012. The MSDE review team recommended that the principal or designee initiate an investigation within 24 hours of receiving a Gang-Related Incident Reporting Form. WCPS Policy JICF, entitled “Addressing Gangs, Gang Activity, and Similar Destructive or Illegal Group Behavior; “was updated to include this language.
- 3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?**
Our policy is communicated through our student handbook and online.
- 4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?**
Our School Resource Officer at South Hagerstown High School is a member of the Mid Atlantic Regional Investigators Network. The Officer meets with the school administrators, PPWs, Counselors’ (etc.) and our County Gang & Safety Committee. Each middle and high school has a representative on the committee. Several elementary schools attend the meetings, but are not mandated.
- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?**
There is communication between the police, the school administration and students who identify as gang members. The communication has prevented problems in the schools and the community.
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?**
The School Resource Officers are members of the school-based safety committees and discuss issues with staff. The students, parents and staff are informed of the definition of gangs and what constitutes gang activity. All parties are made aware of the procedures to report gang activities. Staff is required to report suspected gang activity.
- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**
Students, parents and staff have access (paper and electronically) to the Gang Related Incident Reporting Form. Each Middle and High School has an Assistant Principal tasked as the School Safety Security Coordinator. The coordinator and school resource officer initiate an investigation upon receiving a written or verbal concern.

We have a school resource officer who is a member of the Mid Atlantic Regional Gang Investigators Network (MARGIN). We also have a Task Force Members meeting with

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

the school administration on a regular basis. Information received by social media or parents is shared with the above contacts.

8. Do you feel the gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?

It appears that students are identifying to a gang. At one point, there were small groups of students from a neighborhood that spent 12 years in school together. When they graduated, the group dissolved. Now we have a steady group of students who identify with a local group/gang and not just a bunch of friends. Outside influences have increased. The group homes are not just students in need of guidance; many are there because of illegal activity.

9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.

NA

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Wicomico County Public Schools

- 1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?**
Adopted 9/14/2011; Approved Revision 7/12/2016
- 2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.**
 - Format changes for presentation purpose.
 - Removed term “gang-like” and replaced with “gang related”.
- 3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?**
 - Included in student handbook.
 - Posted on wboe.org website.
 - Posted on Safe Schools page.
- 4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?**
Wicomico County Sheriff’s Office provides sharing sessions on an as needed basis with school communities.
- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?**
Gang activity in our schools is minimal. Very limited/minimal presentation of flags, colors, etc.
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?**
 - Original PD – through policy review with director
 - Implementation – When gang activities are suspected or detected, the school administrators contact the Office of Safe Schools and the School Resource Officer unit.
- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**
Community members can contact school administrators with suspicion/concern. School administrators, in turn, communicate such suspicion/concern with the Office of Safe Schools and, again in turn, the information is forwarded to the school resource officer (SRO) unit to conduct an investigation and/or determine validity of gang information.
- 8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?**
There has been a decrease from past reporting periods.

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

- 9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.**
NA

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

Worcester County Public Schools

- 1. When (date) was your gang policy/regulations approved by your board of education?**
July 2011.
- 2. Have your gang policies/regulations been updated? If so, please provide date and brief summary of changes.**
No.
- 3. Where are your gang policy/regulations located/electronically communicated?**
All policies are kept in at least two different locations in each school. In addition, the policies are housed on the county website.
- 4. What educational gang awareness programs does your school system provide to students, staff, and volunteers?**
 - Some schools have researched the G.R.E.A.T. Program.
 - School administrators and school deputies address the issues of gangs during faculty meetings.
 - We work collaboratively with Worcester County Sheriff's Department to present information to the community.
 - Our Administrators and Supervisors receive periodic trainings from law enforcement agencies.
- 5. In what ways do you feel your gang awareness programs were effective?**
The gang awareness programs were effective because it prepares the staff to be proactive with identifying characteristics of gang related activity.
- 6. How were/are administrators and teachers trained to implement your gang policy/regulations?**
 - Administrators are formally trained every two to three years.
 - We review our policies and practices on a monthly basis with school administration.
As a result, we review this policy at least one time per school year.
- 7. Is there a mechanism in place for community members to report gang activity involving school age youth to local schools? If so, please describe the procedure (data collection).**
 - Entered into a memo of understanding with the State Attorney's Office to foster coordination of current, and future gang prevention, intervention, and suppression efforts.
 - Anyone having knowledge of alleged gangs, gang activity, similar destructive behavior, or illegal group behavior shall report it immediately to the principal/designee.
 - A report of alleged gang-related activity, similar destructive, or illegal behavior is required using the Worcester County Public Schools Gang-related Incident Reporting Form.

**Local School System Questionnaire
Gang Policies/Regulations**

- Initial reports may be given verbally or in writing. If a verbal report is given, a written report shall be requested and submitted using the WCPS Gang-related Incident Reporting Form.
- If a student, parent, or guardian, or other person informs a school employee of any alleged gang-related activity, similar destructive or illegal group behaviors, the school employee shall report that information to the principal/designee.
- Reporting forms can be obtained from the principal/designee. The principal/designee shall maintain original alleged gang reports and related information in a secure file and shall not be part of student's educational record.
- Retaliation against a student for making a report in good faith is prohibited. Individuals knowingly making a false report will be subject to the range of consequences under the WCPS Code of Conduct.

8. Do you feel that gang related issues and similar destructive or illegal behavior have increased, decreased, or remained the same as the previous school year?

Activity remained the same as the previous school year.

9. Optional: Please share any other thoughts, questions, or comments regarding gang activity, regulation, policies, or awareness programs in your local school system.

NA