

Alan J. McCarthy  
County Executive

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## CECIL COUNTY, MARYLAND

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June 29, 2018

Cecil County Citizens:

In the first six months of 2018, there have been 14 active shooter incidents in K-12 schools located throughout the United States. Ninety-nine people were injured or murdered, including adults and students. As a result, 32 people were killed with 26 of the lives lost being students, and an additional 67 individuals were wounded. During this past year the Cecil County Sheriff's Office, along with other law enforcement agencies, have been working with the Cecil County Public School leadership to assess levels of building security and educating students and staff in the event of an active shooter incident. It is unbelievable to me, that in 2018, we are expending our energies and resources on our ability to minimize the impact of such egregious acts.

During the Fiscal Year 2019 budget approval process, the topic of "safe schools" and the associated initiatives and needs were discussed with me and members of the County Council. The Cecil County Board of Education budget request included security projects associated with school entrances. In addition, needs associated with camera and other surveillance technology were discussed. The Cecil County Board of Education had previously sought and received approval from the Council to use funds from the school's Fiscal Year 2017 Fund Balance to address security issues at five schools. Those projects are either under construction or in the planning phase. With the completion of these current projects, school officials have informed me that an additional fourteen schools will still have security needs that must be addressed.

As a result, given the urgency and brief history provided, I have sent [legislation](#) to the County Council that will create a small caps budget line in the amount of \$1 million in the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget to support safe school initiatives in the Cecil County Public Schools. The legislation will be introduced to the Council on Tuesday, August 7, 2018. The money is stipulated to be used for safe school projects and will reimburse approved project costs only once submitted by CCPS Superintendent, Dr. Jeff Lawson.

The \$1 million dollars for school safety was previous assigned to cover costs associated with the *Comptroller of the Treasury of Maryland v. Wynne case*. The unfavorable ruling of the tax case against the State of Maryland requires Counties to reimburse for tax dollars previously disbursed. However, the State has determined that they will collect the \$3.1 million due from Cecil County by deducting, in 20 equal installments, an amount of \$159,100 commencing in the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2021. As a result, the payment arrangement gives flexibility to redistribute the remaining funds set aside for this case in the assigned fund balance.

I am very pleased to be able to provide additional support for this initiative to improve the safety and security of the 15,000 students attending our schools and the nearly 3,000 employees who serve our youth: the future of our County. Addressing this most depressing situation in our society today is not only the correct decision to make, but it is our obligation to take the steps necessary to minimize and deter this destructive force.

As always, thank you for your efforts and support as we work together to *move Cecil County forward*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alan J. McCarthy". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Dr. Alan J. McCarthy  
County Executive