

# A WORD FROM MSEA'S LEGAL TEAM

## What Can I Do? Intervening in Fights



All public school employees have a legal obligation to create and maintain a safe learning environment. To protect students, educators, and the learning environment, the Annotated Code of Maryland gives all public school employees the authority to intervene in fights or physical struggles between students or others on school property. If you encounter a fight, you should not walk away even if another staff member is present.

Here are three things you can do to keep students, fellow educators, and visitors out of harm's way when confronting a fight at school:

- 1 Issue a verbal command to stop.
- 2 Send someone for help.
- 3 Control the crowd.

Taking these steps—one or all of them—will cover your employee obligation to maintain a safe learning environment. Under no circumstances, however, are you obligated to put yourself in danger.

The decision to physically intervene depends on the situation, the size of students, and your own physical health. No matter what, remember that you must do something, even if it is to call or send someone for help.



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