

Students

School Based Threat Assessment

Definitions

A **School-based threat assessment** means the formal process, established by a school district, of evaluating the threatening, or potentially threatening, behavior of a student, and the circumstances surrounding the threat, to uncover any facts or evidence that the student or other actor is likely to carry out the threat.

School-based threat management means the development and implementation of a plan to manage or reduce the threatening, or potentially threatening, behavior of a student in a way that increases the physical and psychological safety of students, staff, and visitors, while providing for the education of all students.

A **threat** is an expression of an intent to cause physical harm to self or others. The threat may be expressed or communicated behaviorally, orally, visually, in writing, electronically, or through any other means; and is considered a threat regardless of whether it is observed by or communicated directly to the target of the threat or observed by or communicated to a third party; and regardless of whether the target of the threat is aware of the threat. Threats may be direct, such as “I am going to beat you up” or indirect, such as, “I’m going to get him.”

A **low risk threat** is one in which it is determined that the individual or situation does not appear to pose a threat of serious harm to one’s self or others, and any exhibited issues or concerns can be resolved easily.

A **moderate risk threat** is one in which the person or situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence, or serious harm to one’s self or others, at this time; but exhibits behaviors that indicate a continuing intent and potential for future violence or serious harm to one’s self or others; and/or exhibits other concerning behavior that requires intervention.

A **high-risk threat** is one in which the person or situation appears to pose a threat of violence, exhibiting behaviors that indicate both a continuing intent to harm one’s self or others and efforts to acquire the capacity to carry out the plan, and may also exhibit other concerning behavior that requires intervention.

An **imminent threat** exists when the person or situation appears to pose a clear and immediate threat of serious violence toward one’s self or others that requires containment and action to protect identified or identifiable target(s); and may also exhibit other concerning behaviors that require intervention.

Identifying and Reporting Threats

Timely reporting of expression to harm is crucial to an effective school-based threat assessment program.

Anyone, including students, families, and community members may report communication or behavior that appears to be threatening or potential threatening to the building administrator, any school staff or through the district tip line at www.sno.wednet.edu.

All school district employees, volunteers, and contractors should report immediately to their supervisor or principal any expression that may be interpreted as an intent to harm another person, concerning communications, or concerning behaviors that suggest an individual may intent to commit an act of violence.

Assessing Threats

A school-based threat assessment is distinct from law enforcement investigation (if any). The goal of the threat assessment process is to take appropriate preventive or corrective measures to maintain a safe and secure school environment, to protect and support potential victims and to provide assistance, as needed, to the individual being assessed. School-based threat assessment is also distinct from student discipline procedures. However, the functions of school-based threat assessment may run parallel to student discipline procedures.

Triage

The Superintendent or designee will designate a team leader for each threat assessment team(s), such as a school principal or a district administrator. If it is not feasible for all team members to be involved with the screening of initial reports referred to the team, the threat assessment team leader may designate a subset of team members to triage cases and determine their appropriateness for review and/or action by the full team. If a team implements a triage process, at least two members of the team will review initial reports and determine if the full team should further assess and manage the situation. All triaged cases must be shared with all members of the assessment team to ensure the cases were adequately addressed. All threat assessment team members must be trained to triage cases effectively.

Imminent

Upon notification of threatening behavior or communications, the school administrator, threat assessment team, or the triage team will be the first to determine if an imminent threat is believed to exist. If the individual appears to pose an imminent threat of serious violence to themselves or to others in the school, the administrator or assessment team will notify law enforcement.

Moderate or High-Risk Threat

If the threat assessment team cannot determine with a reasonable degree of confidence that the alleged threat is not a threat, or is a low risk threat, then the threat assessment team will undertake a more in-depth assessment to determine the nature and degree of any safety concerns and to develop strategies to prevent violence and reduce risk, as necessary.

Upon a determination that a student poses a threat of violence or physical harm to self or others, a threat assessment team will immediately report its determination to the

Superintendent or designee. The Superintendent or designee will immediately attempt to notify the student's parent or legal guardian. The district will ensure that the notice is in a language the parent or guardian understands, which may require language assistance for parents or guardians with limited English proficiency under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

In instances where the threat is deemed a moderate risk or high risk, or requires further intervention to prevent violence or serious harm, the school administrator must notify the parent or guardian of any student who is the target/recipient of a threat as well as the parent or guardian of any student who made the threat. See Policy and Procedure 4314 and 4314P – Notification of Threats of Violence or Harm. The district will ensure that the notice is in a language the parents or guardians understands, which may require language assistance for parents or guardians with limited English proficiency under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

If the threat assessment team determines that an individual poses a threat of violence, based on the information collected, the threat assessment team develops, implements, and monitors intervention strategies to address, reduce, and mitigate the threat and assistance to those involved, as needed. If these strategies include disciplinary consequences, the district will provide notice to the student and their parent or legal guardian consistent with Policy and Procedure 3241 and 3241P – Student Discipline.

The threat assessment team may assist individual(s) within the school to access appropriate school and community-based resources for support and/or further intervention. This includes assisting those who engaged in threatening behavior or communication, and any impacted staff or students.

In cases where the student whose behavior is threatening or potentially threatening also has a disability, the threat assessment team must align intervention strategies with the student's individualized education program (IEP) or the student's plan developed under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 by coordinating with the student's IEP team or Section 504 plan team.

No Identifiable Threat or Low Risk Threat

If the threat assessment team concludes that no further assessment is necessary to determine the reported possible threat is not identifiable or constitutes a low threat of violence or harm to self or others, the threat assessment team need not intervene or take further steps.

Data Collection, Review and Reporting

The procedure for collecting and submitting data related to the school-based threat assessment program will comply with OSPI's monitoring requirement, processes, and guidelines.

Adoption Date: August 26, 2020