

Implementing the Behavioral Threat Assessment Process

The Texas School Safety Center(TxSSC) has developed [Model Policies and Procedures](#) for Behavioral Threat Assessment and Safe and Supportive School Program (SSSP) Teams. The TxSSC document and this guidance document should be used in the establishment and operation of each SSSP team.

Establishment of the Safe and Supportive School Program Team

In accordance with Texas Education Code (TEC), §37.115(c), a SSSP team must be established by the board of trustees to serve each campus within the school district. The number of SSSP teams and the number of campuses each team serves is a local decision based on the needs of and resources available to each school district. The SSSP team is a multidisciplinary team composed of individuals with a broad range of expertise with the responsibility of implementing the district SSSP. As part of its operation, the SSSP team is tasked with conducting behavioral threat assessments and determining the best course of action to support an individual who made a threat and the victims of the threat.

To ensure continuity of SSSP team operations, the team should annually review the following considerations:

- How does the district ensure all the areas of expertise specified in TEC, §37.115(d) are represented? How does the team document areas of expertise that are missing from the team including the reason they are not represented?
- How does the team replace expertise area vacancies on the team created through attrition or other circumstances?
- What is the process for ensuring all team members attend threat assessment training provided by the TxSSC or a regional education service center (ESC)? What procedure exists for collecting and maintaining the training certificates?
- How have the following been developed, systematized and communicated to each team member so that a common understanding exists?
 - The designated role of each team member
 - Signs of behaviors that pose a threat
 - The threat reporting mechanisms developed by the local education agency
 - Resources available to support students who made the threat and those who were targets of the threat
 - Annual training provided to staff, students, and community stakeholders regarding the signs of behaviors that pose a threat, the reporting mechanisms, and the responsibility to report the behavior
 - The process for documenting threat reports and threat assessments, and the method for maintaining and storing such documents
 - The way and type of threat assessment information that can be communicated to school staff, between other campuses within the district, and with outside entities including districts that receive the student after a threat has been reported
 - The data that must be reported to the TEA at the end of the school year and the way that the data will be collected, maintained, and stored
- How often does the team meet at regularly calendared intervals, to review student support plans, practice conducting scenario-based threat assessments, and to review available resources to support students?

Conducting Threat Assessments

In accordance with Texas Education Code (TEC), §37.115(f)(1), the SSSP team must conduct threat assessments, determine level of risk, and provide interventions to support the individual for whom the threat assessment was conducted and the victim of the threat.

To ensure all reported threats are screened and assessed by the SSSP team, the team should annually review the following considerations:

- How are threat reports communicated to the team?
- What is the procedure for convening the team to screen threat reports and to conduct threat assessments in a timely manner, ensuring normal school operations are not disrupted?
- What strategy does the team use to determine the information that is needed to screen a threat report?
- What method does the team use to conduct threat assessments? How are the [eleven key questions](#) that are included in the threat assessment training incorporated into that method?
- What process does the team use to ensure all relevant data (ie. anecdotal reports from peers and staff, social media posts and/or comments, school data [academic, attendance, special programs, additional supports, etc], family history, current and previous behavior, law enforcement interaction, etc) is collected from multiple sources (ie. school records, teacher reports, student incident reports, notes from interactions with counselor and other staffs, social media accounts, interviews, etc) during a threat assessment?
- How does the team adjust the manner in which threat assessments are conducted depending on the type of threat (threats of suicide or self-harm, threats toward others, and bullying or cyber bullying)?
- What is the systematic approach that the team uses while conducting threat assessments to determine the interventions and supports that will be provided to students who made the threat and the victims of the threat?
- How is support for the student who made the threat maintained throughout the threat assessment process when disciplinary or law enforcement action is taken? How are targets of the threat and the school community supported during and after the threat assessment process?
- What strategies do team members use to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and supports provided to students who made threats, their families, and the targets of the threats? How does the team ensure the needs identified during the threat assessment are addressed? How does the team determine when supports are no longer needed?
- What strategies does the team use to plan for and support reintegration of students and victims of threats into the school community, when appropriate?

Threat Assessment Resources

The TxSSC has developed a suite of resources to support LEAs with the establishment and operation of threat assessment teams. Additional guidance and resources from the TxSSC can be accessed through the [Threat Assessment Toolkit](#).

Year-at-a-Glance (YAG) Activities

The year-at-a-glance provides an overview to guide team activities for the school year.

SSSP Team Year-at-a-Glance Activities

Prior to the Start of School	(Specific Month)
Review team membership and fill area expertise vacancies in accordance with Texas Education Code, §37.115(d) , to the greatest extent practicable.	
Ensure that each team member employed by the local education agency (LEA) receives threat assessment training through an approved program provided by the Texas School Safety Center or a regional Education Service Center.	
Review resources developed by your LEA to support students who make threats and the victims of the threats.	
Review the procedure established by the LEA for documenting and storing threat reports and threat assessments.	
Identify the team members responsible for collecting, maintaining, and storing threat reports and outcomes of threat assessments in accordance with the data reporting instrument provided by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). SSSP Data Collection Instrument samples can be found on the SSSP webpage.	
Determine and develop the training method and materials to be used to train staff, students, and community members in recognizing the signs of harmful, threatening, and violent behavior and the responsibility to report those signs using the reporting mechanism developed by the LEA.	
Calendar meetings at regular intervals during the school year for the SSSP team to review student support plans, practice conducting scenario-based threat assessments, and to review resources to support students who make threats and their victims.	
Conduct training for staff in recognizing the signs of harmful, threatening, and violent behavior and in the reporting method developed by the LEA.	
The First Two Weeks of School	
Deliver the team developed training for students and community members in recognizing the signs of harmful, threatening, and violent behavior and in the reporting method developed by the LEA.	
Review student support plan recommendations from previous year to insure plan implementation. Develop integration and support plans for students returning to the campus after removal from previous school year.	
As threat reports are received , convene the team during sanctioned time to screen the report. Conduct threat assessments when appropriate based on the screening. (Ongoing as needed)	
Monitor student intervention and support plans. (ongoing)	
Within Each Nine Week Period of School	
Convene regularly scheduled meetings to consistently review student support plans and adjust as needed, conduct a practice scenario-based threat assessment, and review recent additions to available interventions and supports.	
Receive threat reports and convene the team to screen the report. Conduct threat assessments when appropriate based on the screening. (Ongoing as needed)	
Review reintegration and support plans for students returning from disciplinary or law enforcement removal.	
Monitor student intervention and support plans. (Ongoing)	
At the end of the School Year	
Convene a regularly scheduled meeting to review student support plans and make recommendations for the following school year.	

Review threat report and threat assessment data to make recommendations that inform schoolwide programs and practices for the following year.	
Review the effectiveness of threat report and threat assessment procedures and resources and supports to make recommendations to the LEA to improve outcomes for students.	
Report team activities using the method developed by the TEA. Information regarding submissions is shared with the SSSP Contact designated by the LEA in AskTed, and the superintendent.	