

SCHOOL-BASED THREAT ASSESSMENT: 3225P

Definitions

For purposes of District or school-based threat assessments of scholars, the following definitions will apply:

- A **school-based threat assessment** means the formal process, established by the District, of evaluating the threatening, or potentially threatening, behavior of a scholar, and the circumstances surrounding the threat, to uncover any facts or evidence that the scholar 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 scholar in a way that increases the physical and psychological safety of scholars, staff, and visitors while providing for the education of all scholars.
- A **threat** is an expression of an intent to cause physical harm to self/others. The threat may be expressed/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 am going to get him.”
- **Screening of threat** means at least two members of the threat assessment team triage the initial report to determine for review or action by the full level 1 threat assessment team through evaluating level of risk ranging from low risk, moderate risk, high risk, and imminent threat.
- A **Level I threat assessment** means the assessment done by the school team utilizing the Student Threat Assessment and Management System Level I Protocol Form.
- A **Level II threat assessment** means the District Level multidisciplinary and multiagency team.
- A **low risk threat** is one in which it is determined that the individual/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence or serious harm to self/others, and any exhibited issues/concerns can be resolved easily.
- A **moderate risk threat** is one in which the person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence, or serious harm to self/others, at this time; but exhibits behaviors that indicate a continuing intent and potential for future violence or serious harm to self/others; and/or exhibits other concerning behavior that requires intervention.
- A **high-risk threat** is one in which the person/situation appears to pose a threat of violence, exhibiting behaviors that indicate both a continuing intent to harm self/others and efforts to acquire the capacity to carry out the plan; and may also exhibit other concerning behavior that requires intervention.

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

Principles of Threat Assessments

Six principles form the foundation of the threat assessment process. These principles are:

1. Targeted violence is the end result of an understandable, and oftentimes discernible, process of thinking and behavior.
2. Targeted violence stems from an interaction among the individual, the situation, the setting, and the target.
3. An investigative, skeptical, inquisitive mindset is critical to successful threat assessment.
4. Effective threat assessment is based upon facts rather than on characteristics or “traits.”
5. An integrated systems approach should guide threat assessment inquiries and investigations.
6. The central question in a threat assessment inquiry or investigation is whether a scholar poses a threat, not whether the scholar has made a threat.

Identifying and Reporting Threats

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

Anyone, including scholars, families, and community members, may report communication or behavior that appears to be threatening or potentially threatening to the school principal, the District Threat Coordinator, and/or the District Safety and Security Office.

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

Anyone who believes that a person or situation poses an *imminent* threat of serious violence that requires containment should notify school security and/or law enforcement.

Assessing Threats

A school-based threat assessment is distinct from any 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

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also distinct from scholar discipline procedures. However, the functions of a school-based threat assessment may run parallel to scholar discipline procedures.

Level I

The school team will utilize the Student Threat Assessment and Management System Level I Protocol Form. Following the completion of a Level I threat assessment, the results shall be reported to the District Threat Coordinator and the Team Assessment Team Leader shall determine if a Level II assessment is necessary.

Triage Team

Any target of a threat and/or parent/guardian of a scholar target will be immediately notified of the threat pursuant to Policy and Procedure 3208 Notification of Threats of Violence or Harm.

The principal shall inform their LIO and the District Threat Coordinator prior to beginning any threat assessment. At least two members of the threat assessment team, including the principal, shall determine if a level 1 threat assessment is necessary.

Imminent

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

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.

The threat assessment team's review may include, but is not limited to, reviews of records; interviews and consultations with staff, scholars, family members, community members, and others who know the individual; and interviews of the individual and target/recipient of the threat(s), once they have been notified of the potential threat pursuant to Policy 3208 Notification of Threats of Violence or Harm. The threat assessment team will also screen for self-harm and suicidal ideation, regardless of whether the alleged threat also included possible self-harm. If the threat assessment team determines that there is a potential for self-harm, CPS and Law Enforcement shall be immediately notified, pursuant to Policy 2145 Suicide Prevention.

Upon a determination that a scholar poses a threat of violence or physical harm to self or others, a threat assessment team shall immediately report its determination to the Superintendent or designee. The Superintendent or designee shall immediately attempt to notify the scholar's parent or legal guardian. The District will ensure that the notice is in a language the parent and/or legal

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guardian understands, which may require language assistance for parents or guardians with limited-English language 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/targeted, as needed. If these strategies include disciplinary consequences, the District will provide notice to the scholar and their parents or legal guardian consistent with Policy and Procedure 3241 Discipline and Corrective Action for Scholar Misconduct.

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 scholars.

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