

● PVSD THREAT ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

June 2019, Act 18 of 2019 amended the Public School Code of 1949 by adding Article XIII-E, Threat Assessment. Among its provisions, Article XIII-E requires all school entities in Pennsylvania to establish at least one Threat Assessment Team by the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year.

A threat is a communication of intent to harm someone that may be spoken, written, gestured, or expressed in some other form, such as via text messaging, email, or other digital means. An expression of intent to harm someone is considered a threat regardless of whether it is communicated to the intended target(s) and regardless of whether the intended target is aware of the threat. There are two types of threats:

- **Imminent Threat:** An individual/situation appears to pose a clear and immediate threat of serious violence towards others that requires containment and action to protect an identified or identifiable target(s); and may also exhibit other concerning behavior that requires intervention.
- **Direct Threat:** An individual/situation poses a significant risk to the health or safety of themselves and/or others that cannot be eliminated by a modification of policies, practices, or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services. The direct threat standard applies when the Threat Assessment Team or school entity administration determines that an individual/situation poses a direct threat and that applicable disciplinary procedures are not available or sufficient to mitigate the threat.

Each PVSD School has establish a trained **Threat Assessment Team** that will complete the process of identifying, reporting, assessing, responding to, and intervening with threats, including identifying and avoiding racial, cultural, or disability bias. The districts TAT's are currently utilizing the Comprehensive Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG) Model.

Threat Assessment Teams will consist of the building principal(s), school counselor, school psychologist, school police officer, and may also include the school nurse, special education teacher, or any person that has special training in threat assessment processes. The responsibilities of the Threat Assessment Teams include:

- Assessing and intervening with individuals who may pose a threat to self or others
- Ensuring **school employees** know:
 - **Who** the team members are
 - **How** – and to whom – to report threatening or at-risk behavior, including through Safe2Say Something

Per Policy 236.1, No parent/guardian, solicitor or advocate shall be present while the threat assessment is being performed.

The approach the threat assessment teams will take will include identifying, inquiring, assessing and managing the situation:

Approach

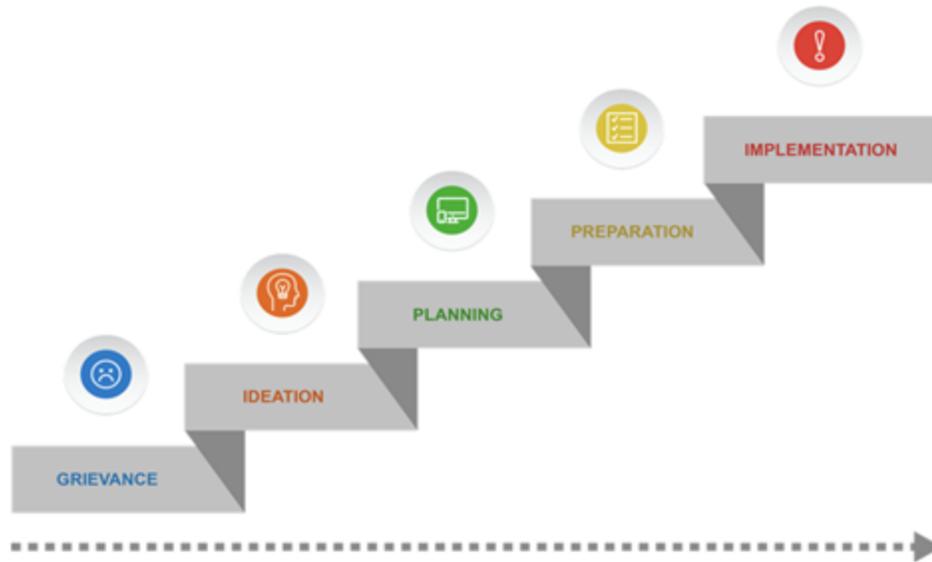


Key considerations for Threat Assessment Teams include:

- Identify individual(s)/situation(s) where behavior causes concern for violence and capacity to carry out a threat, (i.e., determine whether a student poses a threat for harm or violence to themselves or others, not just whether the student has made a threat);
- Gather the most relevant information about the student's communications and behaviors, negative or stressful events the student has experienced, and resources the student possesses to overcome those setbacks and challenges;
- Assess the individual(s)/situation(s) in context based on the totality of information available; and
- Identify strategies to prevent violence and mitigate impact of harm to the student, school, and/or community.

The **principles** of the threat assessment process include understanding that targeted violence is the end result of an **understandable** and frequently **discernible** process of **thinking and behavior** known as the Pathway to Violence.

Pathway to Violence



The goals of the threat assessment team are to:

- Control the situation/individual to prevent the possibility of violence
- Protect and aid possible targets to the extent possible
- Provide support and guidance to help individuals deal successfully with their problems

No member of the threat assessment team may disclose any record or documentation pertaining to threat assessments as this information is confidential and protected as such under the school code.

Per Policy 236.1, No parent/guardian, solicitor or advocate shall be present while the threat assessment is being performed.