

Behavioral Threat Assessment Teams

Statement of Policy

The Orange Southwest School District is committed to providing a safe and secure learning environment for students and staff. This policy establishes a school behavioral threat assessment (BTA) and management program to conduct a fact-based, systematic process designed to gather information about, assess and manage behavior or communication that raises a concern that a person or situation may pose a threat of severe and significant targeted violence against the school community.

Nothing in this policy precludes Orange Southwest School District personnel from acting immediately to address an imminent threat, including immediately removing a student from school, subject to subsequent due process procedures when the student poses an immediate threat to themselves, others, property, or the educational environment¹.

The threat assessment process is distinct from and does not supplant Orange Southwest School District's student conduct and discipline policy. A behavioral threat assessment will not impose suspension or expulsion, including emergency suspension, solely for investigating student conduct or conducting a threat assessment. Any action that could result in removal of a student from the student's school environment pending or after a threat assessment will only be carried out in accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 1162, State Board of Education Rule 4300, and federal and state law applicable to students with disabilities. Behavioral threat assessment teams will operate in a manner that avoids bias, discrimination, and disproportionate impact on students in historically marginalized communities.

Threat assessment is not intended to refer students to the criminal justice system, but to facilitate the provision of resources and support to a student and to mitigate potential acts of violence. Law enforcement referral is not appropriate in the case of student behavior that is a violation of the school conduct code but that is not also a crime. This policy also exists to ensure compliance with 16 VSA § 1485.

¹ Vermont State Board of Education Rule 4311.3

Administrative Procedures

The Superintendent/Head of School or designee will establish procedures to:

1. Govern the functions of the Behavioral Threat Assessment Team. At minimum, the procedures will be consistent with the methodologies provided in the model BTA procedures and Best Practices provided by the Agency of Education;
2. Ensure an individual's behavior rather than an individual's demographic or personal characteristics will serve as the basis for a behavioral threat assessment;
3. Establish a mechanism which allows for students, staff and others to report threatening and troubling behavior to the behavioral threat assessment team;
4. Provide for:
 - a. involvement of law enforcement (outside of the inclusion of a School or District Resource Officer), that aligns with the model procedures issued by the Agency of Education, or
 - b. referral to law enforcement in the case of imminent danger to individuals or the school community when the conduct constitutes a crime.
5. Ensure that each threat assessment team member, whether a teacher, counselor, school administrator, other school staff, contractor, consultant, or other individual, functions as a "school official with a legitimate educational interest" in educational records controlled and maintained by Orange Southwest School District as specified by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
6. Provide for the collection and submission of data related to the behavioral threat assessment program to the Agency of Education as required by 16 VSA § 1485 (e).
7. Ensure behavioral threat assessment team members receive training at least annually in best practices of conducting behavioral threat assessments, as well as bias training.

Date Warned: Mar 11, 2026 -- First Read

Date Adopted: April 8, 2026