

SECTION: PUPILS
TITLE: THREAT ASSESSMENT
ADOPTED: JUNE 17, 2014

Tyrone Area School District

	255. Threat Assessment
1. Purpose	<p>The Tyrone Area School District recognizes that threats are a significant concern to the school environment. Whether real and carried out or intended as a prank or for some other purpose, a threat represents a potential danger to the safety and welfare of students and staff.</p> <p>The purpose of this policy is to provide a mechanism to assure that threats of violence in the school environment are addressed, whenever possible, before they are carried out. The protocol is intended to identify credible threats of violence and address those threats and the individual making the threat.</p> <p>Threats outlined in this policy include, but are not limited to, those made: on school property, during a school session, anywhere at a school sponsored function, before and after school while under the supervision of the school, or Internet threats that materialized and substantially disrupts the operations of the school or the administration reasonably anticipates that the expression or conduct is likely to materialize and substantially disrupt the operations of the school.</p>
2. Definitions	<p>Threats – an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. Posing a threat means engaging in behaviors that further a plan to harm a target. Examples would include but not limited to: threats made directly against students, school officials or school property; writings, artwork, communications, or behaviors suggesting a student’s intent to harm; allegations of bomb-making or possession of a firearm by a student; or direct or indirect threats that may be written, verbal, posted on the Internet, or made by gesture.</p> <p>Early Warning Signs – those behavioral and emotional signs that, when viewed in context, cause concern for members of the school system. A combination of events, behaviors, and emotions may lead to aggressive or violent behavior toward self or others. Early warning signs call for a referral to the threat assessment team.</p> <p>Imminent Warning Signs – those that indicate a student is very close to behaving in a way that is potentially dangerous to self and/or others. Imminent warning signs require an immediate school and law enforcement response.</p> <p>Precipitating Events – recent events or “triggers” which may increase potential for violence.</p> <p>Threat Assessment Inquiry – initiated and controlled by the school threat assessment team (with law enforcement consultation and participation).</p>

255. Threat Assessment - Page 2 of 5

<p>3. Authority</p> <p>4. Delegation of Responsibility</p> <p>5. Guidelines</p>	<p>Threat Assessment Investigation – controlled by a law enforcement agency.</p> <p>Any threat will be regarded as a serious matter and treated accordingly. A Threat Assessment Planning Committee shall be authorized by the Board of School Directors to develop a procedure and implement a process for investigating threats of violence.</p> <p>The Superintendent will direct each building Threat Assessment Team to react promptly and appropriately to information concerning all levels of threats and to initiate the threat assessment process. Training should be provided to all members of the threat assessment team. Threat assessment may be initiated by any communication or behavior of concern. The team shall be responsible for investigating, analyzing, and where appropriate, recommending responses to the alleged threat. The Board of School Directors supports the administration and staff in their commitment to effectively cooperate with the community, family, and law enforcement agencies to intervene in the potential threat of violence.</p> <p><u>Reporting Requirements</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Students, staff, volunteers, and agency personnel in the school community have the responsibility to report immediately all threats of violence or harm. Any student, parent, or school staff member, upon receiving information that a person is threatening shall assume the threat is serious and immediately report the threat to a school administrator or law enforcement officer. If the alleged act appears to represent an immediate threat of harm, the building administrator will immediately contact local law enforcement.2. Other information indicating a concern that a student may pose a threat of violence should be reported to the point of contact for the Threat Assessment Team. The Threat Assessment Team will identify a point of contact for the building and inform all members of the school community.3. Prior to any threat assessment protocol being implemented, all students, staff, and parents shall be provided with information about the protocol and procedures. This will serve as notice that threat behavior will not be tolerated. This notice shall be given at least annually and as deemed necessary by the administration.4. Students, staff, and parents should be advised on the kinds of information that should be brought forward regarding potential threats of violence. <p><u>Threat Assessment Team</u></p> <p>A trained Threat Assessment Team should be comprised of school administrators, law enforcement, guidance counselors/school psychologists, and mental health professionals. The district may also include other representatives as needed such as Student Assistance Program team members.</p>
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Roles and Responsibilities

1. Any building administrator who becomes aware of a threat shall determine whether the information warrants convening the Threat Assessment Team or referring for immediate law enforcement intervention. If it is determined that the team should not be convened and law enforcement intervention is not necessary, the incident will be documented for future reference.
2. The building administrator should be the designated a point of contact for the Threat Assessment Team. Individuals who have information about students that is cause for concern should provide that information to the administrator. Information not requiring immediate intervention will be maintained by the point of contact. This individual will keep the entire Team apprised of information that may warrant a full team inquiry.
3. The building administrator or designee shall initiate the protocol for convening the Threat Assessment Team. The roles and responsibilities of the Threat Assessment Team are to gather and analyze information about the behavior and communications of the student of concern. To achieve this goal, the Threat Assessment Team will:
 - A. Use all available resources to assess the seriousness of the threat and will take all necessary steps to ensure the safety of the school community.
 - B. Actively gather and analyze information to determine the level of risk and intervention required. This would include obtaining school information and conducting interviews with teachers/ staff, the student of concern, parents/families, potential targets, and other collateral school contacts. This would be done in accordance with applicable state and federal laws.
 - C. Determine the appropriate notification and involvement of parents and guardians.
 - D. Communicate with administration, law enforcement, and other professionals not represented on the team.
 - E. Develop and monitor a long-term intervention plan, including follow-up observations and services for the individual student as well as steps to guard the safety of the entire school community.
 - F. If appropriate, refer to law enforcement for further investigation.
 - G. When the Threat Assessment Team is convened, the team shall follow outlined procedures and document findings.

255. Threat Assessment - Page 4 of 5

If the threat assessment team concludes that there is enough information and the weight of the information is convincing that the student does not pose a threat of targeted school violence, then the threat assessment team may conclude the threat assessment inquiry.

If there is insufficient information or the team cannot conclude that the student does not pose a threat, or the student appears to be on a path to attack, the team would recommend that the matter be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency for a threat assessment investigation.

Confidentiality

To promote the safety of all concerned, the threat assessment team shall determine if classroom teachers, school staff, school security, and others working with the student(s) involved in the threat circumstance, should be notified. Building administrators shall consider confidentiality provisions when determining the extent of information to be shared, including prior disciplinary records, official juvenile court records, and documented history of violence of the person who made the threat.

Students and school employees who are the subject of credible threats of violence or harm shall be notified of these threats in a timely manner. Timing and details of the notice will be as extensive as permitted by FERPA, other legal limitations, and the circumstance.

All records and reports of the threat assessment team should be deemed confidential.

School officials, law enforcement, and mental health professionals should review existing policies, procedures, and legal parameters for accessing and sharing of information (i.e., including Memorandum of Understanding as required by Act 26).

Intervention and Monitoring Procedures

The goals of an intervention plan would be to: control/contain the situation and/or student in a way that will prevent the possibility of an attack; protect and aid possible targets; provide support and guidance to help the student deal successfully with his or her problems; and pursue a course of action to deter the potential attacker from posing a future threat of violence.

The steps in an intervention plan may include any or all of the following:

- A. Involve appropriate agencies such as law enforcement, mental health, Children & Youth Services, TSS workers, probation, crisis, student assistance program, etc.
- B. Assist parents in accessing services and provide them with counseling regarding increased supervision, decreasing access to money, weapons, violent video games, and the Internet.

255. Threat Assessment - Page 5 of 5

- C. Follow school discipline policy and procedures.
- D. Conduct search of the student's locker in accordance with school district policy.
- E. Counselor works with teachers and the student to assess student's strengths, areas of need, and provide helping opportunities for the student to increase positive attention and teach responsibility.
- F. Determine cross-agency implementation and coordination, including authorizations/releases to facilitate communications.
- G. Monitor to determine if the potential attacker is moving toward or away from the plan.
- H. Develop a transition plan for the student's return to school which includes, but is not limited to, a full psychological evaluation.

REFERENCES:

Early Warning Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools. Washington, D.C. U.S. Department of Education. August 1998.

Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and Creating Safe School Climates. Washington, D.C. U.S. Secret Services and the U.S. Department of Education. May 2002.