

School-Based Threat Assessment

The Board is committed to providing a safe, secure, and equitable learning environment for students and staff. This policy establishes a school-based threat assessment program to provide for timely and methodical school-based threat assessment and management.

Threat assessment best occurs in school climates of safety, respect, and emotional support. Student behavior, rather than a student's demographic or personal characteristics, will serve as the basis for a school-based threat assessment.

The threat assessment process is distinct from student conduct procedures. The mere fact that the district is conducting a threat assessment does not by itself necessitate suspension or expulsion and the district will not impose suspension or expulsion, including emergency expulsion, *solely* for investigating student conduct or conducting a threat assessment. Further, suspension, or other removal from the school environment can create the risk of triggering either an immediate or a delayed violent response, unless such actions are coupled with containment and support. However, nothing in this policy precludes district personnel from acting immediately to address an imminent threat, including imposing an emergency expulsion, if the district has sufficient cause to believe that the student's presence poses an immediate and continuing danger to other students or school personnel or an immediate and continuing threat of material and substantial disruption of the educational process.

In consultation with the applicable Executive Director of Schools, a threat assessment may be conducted in the event of a student-based threat, or where there are behavioral indicators of potential harm to self, others, or school property. The threat assessment will be led by a member of the District's Safety and Security Department, with participation of applicable district staff members and others who are knowledgeable of the student, the nature of the threat and/or the precipitating event to ensure consistency and fairness throughout the process. The district will use the results of the threat assessment to guide the response to the threat, including possible intervention services, support, and/or corrective action consistent with Policy and Procedure 3241 – Student Behavior, Corrective Action, and/or Intervention.

Structure of Threat Assessment Teams

A threat assessment team will be led by a member of the Safety and Security Department who has received specialized training and has experience in administering student-based threat assessments. As the threat assessment team must be multidisciplinary and multiagency, it might include, but not be limited to, persons with expertise in:

- Counselors, e.g. school counselor, school psychologist, school social worker
- Current educator(s) of student under assessment

- Other educators, e.g. special education specialist, English language learner specialist
- School administration, e.g. principal, senior administrator
- Other district or school staff, e.g. equity specialist, coach,
- Community partners, e.g. mentor, service provider
- Law enforcement

Not every multidisciplinary team member need participate in every threat assessment. When faced with a potential threat by, or directed towards a student receiving special education services, the threat assessment team must include a team member who is a special education teacher. Although parents, guardians, or family members are often interviewed as part of the threat assessment process, neither the student nor the student's family members are part of the threat assessment team. This does not diminish the district's commitment that school personnel will make every reasonable attempt to involve parents and the student in the resolution of the student's behavioral violations, consistent with Policy and Procedure 3241 – Student Behavior, Corrective Action and/or Interventions.

Function of Threat Assessment Team

Each threat assessment team member, whether a teacher, counselor, school administrator, other school staff, contractor, consultant, volunteer, or other individual, functions as a “school official with a legitimate educational interest” in educational records controlled and maintained by the district. The district provides the threat assessment team access to educational records as specified by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). No member of a threat assessment team, including district / school-based members and community resource / law enforcement members, shall use any student record beyond the prescribed purpose of the threat assessment team or re-disclose records obtained by being a member of the threat assessment team, except as permitted by FERPA.

The threat assessment team:

- Identifies and assesses the behavior of a student that is threatening, or potentially threatening, to self, other students, staff, school visitors, or school property. Threats of self-harm or suicide unaccompanied by threats of harm to others should be promptly evaluated according to Policy 2145 – Suicide Prevention.
- Gathers and analyzes information about the student's behavior to determine a level of concern for the threat. The threat assessment team may conduct interviews of the person(s) who reported the threat, the recipient(s) or target(s) of the threat, other witnesses who have knowledge of the threat, and where reasonable, the individual(s) who allegedly engaged in the threatening behavior or communication. The purpose of the interviews is to evaluate the individual's threat in context to determine the meaning of the threat and intent of the individual. The threat assessment team may request and obtain records in the

district's possession, including student education, health records, and criminal history record information. The purpose of obtaining information is to evaluate situational variables, rather than the student's demographic or personal characteristics.

- Determines the nature, duration, and level of severity of the risk and whether reasonable modifications of policies, practices, or procedures will mitigate the risk. The threat assessment team will not base a determination of threat on generalizations or stereotypes. Rather, the threat assessment team makes an individualized assessment, based on reasonable judgment, best available objective evidence, or current medical evidence as applicable;
- Communicates lawfully and ethically with each other, school administrators, and other school staff who have a need to know particular information to support the safety and well-being of the school, its students, and its staff; and
- Reports its determination to the superintendent or designee with expediency.

Depending on the level of concern determined, the threat assessment team, working in concert with the applicable building administrator, Executive Director of Schools, and Threat Management Team will develop and implement intervention strategies to manage the student's behavior in ways that promote a safe, supportive teaching, and learning environment, without excluding the student from the school. The Executive Director of Schools or designee shall be responsible for providing follow-up communication with the source of the threat report, threat assessment team members, and other parties as deemed appropriate.

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

Although some of the functions of a school-based threat assessment may run parallel to the functions of a student's IEP team or 504 plan team, school-based threat assessments remain distinct from those teams and processes.

Data Collection, Review and Reporting

The superintendent shall establish procedures for collecting and submitting data related to the school-based threat assessment program that comply with OSPI's monitoring requirements, processes, and guidelines. Further, the superintendent will establish procedures that provide oversight and use an equity lens to conduct a review of data at least annually that will include but not be limited to, the number and source of threat reports, concluded assessment team meetings and composition, outcomes, and other implementation processes.

Other tasks of threat assessment team

The threat assessment team may also participate in other tasks that manage or reduce threatening or potentially threatening behavior and increase physical and psychological safety. This may include:

- Providing guidance to students and staff regarding recognition of behavior that may represent a threat to students, staff, school, the community, or the individual;
- Providing informational resources for community services boards or health care providers for medical evaluation or treatment, as appropriate;
- Assessing individuals other than students whose behavior poses a threat to the safety of students or staff and notify the superintendent or designee of such an individual.

Cross References:

2121 – Substance Abuse Program 2145
 – Suicide Prevention
 2161 – Special Education and Related Services for Eligible Students
 2162 – Education of Students With Disabilities Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
 3143 – District Notification of Juvenile Offenders
 3231 – Student Records
 3432 – Emergencies 3241 – Student Behavior, Corrective Actions and/or Interventions
 4210 – Regulation of Dangerous Weapons on School Premises
 4310 – District Relationships with Law Enforcement and other Government Agencies
 4314 – Notification of Threats of Violence of Harm

Legal References:

Chapter 28A.300 RCW
 Chapter 28A.320 RCW
 CFR 34, Part 99, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Regulations

Adoption Date: 08.19.20
Bellevue School District
Revised: