



Book	Southern Lehigh School District
Section	200 Pupils
Title	Threat Assessment
Code	236.1 Vol III 2021
Status	Active
Adopted	September 27, 2021
Last Reviewed/Revised	New Policy

Purpose

The Board is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its students and the school community and providing the resources and support to address identified student needs. The Board adopts this policy to address student behavior that may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community and others.[\[1\]](#)

Authority

The Board directs the Superintendent or designee, in consultation with the School Safety and Security Coordinator, to establish a threat assessment team and develop procedures for assessing and intervening with students whose behavior may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community and others.[\[1\]](#)

Definitions

Behavioral service providers – includes, but is not limited to, a state, county or local behavioral health service provider, crisis intervention center or psychiatric hospital. The term includes a private service provider which contracts with a state, county or local government to act as a behavioral health agency.[\[2\]](#)

Bias – the attitudes or beliefs we have about a person or group that affects our understanding, actions and decisions in a conscious or subconscious manner.[\[3\]](#)

Individualized Management Plan – a plan developed for a student who is referred to the threat assessment team that documents the concerns that brought a student to the team’s attention, as well as the resources and supports a student might need based on the information gathered during the assessment.

Threat assessment – a fact-based process for the assessment of and intervention with students whose behaviors may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee, in consultation with the School Safety and Security Coordinator, shall appoint [\[1\]](#) individuals to a district threat assessment team.

The Superintendent or designee shall designate a member of the team as team leader for the threat assessment team. [\[1\]](#)

The threat assessment team shall include the School Safety and Security Coordinator and individuals with expertise in school health; counseling, school psychology or social work; special education and school administration, .[\[1\]](#)

The Superintendent or designee may assign additional staff members or designated community resources to the threat assessment team for assessment and response support.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative regulations to support the threat assessment process.

Guidelines

Training

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that threat assessment team members are provided individual and/or group training on:[\[1\]](#)

1. Responsibilities of threat assessment team members.
2. Process of identifying, reporting, assessing, responding to and intervening with threats.
3. Identifying and avoiding racial, cultural or disability bias.[\[3\]](#)[\[8\]](#)
4. Confidentiality requirements under state and federal laws and regulations, and Board policies.[\[4\]](#)[\[6\]](#)[\[9\]](#)[\[10\]](#)[\[11\]](#)

5. Youth suicide awareness, prevention and response.[7]
6. Trauma-informed approach.[12]
7. Safe2Say Something procedures.[6]
8. Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support.

Threat assessment team training shall be credited toward professional education requirements and school safety and security training requirements for staff, in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.[1][6][13][14][15][16]

Information for Students, Parents/Guardians and Staff

The district shall annually notify students, staff and parents/guardians about the existence and purpose of the threat assessment team through posting information on the district website, publishing in handbooks and through other appropriate methods.[1]

The threat assessment team shall make available age-appropriate informational materials to students regarding recognition of threatening or at-risk behavior that may present a threat to the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others and how to report concerns, including through the Safe2Say Something program and other district reporting hotlines or methods. Informational materials shall be available for review by parents/guardians.[1][7][8][17][18][19]

The threat assessment team shall make available informational materials for school employees regarding recognition of threatening or at-risk behavior that may present a threat to the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others and how to report concerns, including through the Safe2Say Something program and other district reporting hotlines or methods. Information for school employees shall include a list of the staff members who have been appointed to the threat assessment team.[1][7][8][17][19]

The district shall annually provide mandatory training for school staff on identification or recognition of student behavior that may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, other individuals, school facilities or the community, in accordance with law, Board policy and the standards specified by the state's School Safety and Security Committee.

Reporting and Identification

The threat assessment team shall document, assess and respond to reports received regarding students whose behavior may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others.[1]

The threat assessment team shall assist in assessing and responding to reports that are received through the Safe2Say Something Program identifying students who may be a threat to themselves or others.[1][6]

The threat assessment team shall assist in assessing and responding to reports of students exhibiting self-harm or suicide risk factors or warning signs, as identified in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.[1][7]

When the threat assessment team has made a preliminary determination that a student's reported behavior may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others, the team shall immediately take the following steps:[1]

1. Notify the Superintendent or designee and School Safety and Security Coordinator of the reported threat.
2. Notify the building principal of the school the student attends of the reported threat, who shall notify the student's parent/guardian of the reported threat.

When a reported student's behavior indicates that there may be an imminent threat to the safety of the student or others, or an emergency situation, a threat assessment team member shall take immediate action, which may include promptly reporting to the appropriate law enforcement agency and school administration.[1][5][6][20]

Where a threat assessment team member has reasonable cause to suspect that a reported situation indicates that a student may be a victim of child abuse, the member shall make a report of suspected child abuse in accordance with law and Board policy.[1][21][22]

Inquiry and Assessment

In investigating, assessing and responding to threat reports, the threat assessment team shall make a determination if the report should be addressed under one or more specific Board policies or administrative regulations, based on the subject matter of the report and the requirements of law, regulations and Board policy, including, but not limited to, reports involving:

1. Discrimination/Title IX Sexual Harassment.[8][17]
2. Bullying/Cyberbullying.[19]

3. Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Response.[7]
4. Hazing.[23]
5. Dating Violence.[24]

Members of the threat assessment team shall engage in an assessment of the reported student behavior that may indicate a threat, in accordance with training and established procedures. This process may include, but is not limited to:

1. Interviewing the student, other students, staff, parents/guardians or others regarding the subject(s) of the reported threat.
2. Reviewing existing academic, health and disciplinary records and assignments, as appropriate, regarding the subject(s) of the report.
3. Conducting searches of lockers, storage spaces, and other possessions on school property as applicable, in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[25]
4. Examining outside resources such as social media sites, in coordination with law enforcement, or contacting law enforcement, juvenile probation, or community agencies to request additional information about the subject(s) of the report, in accordance with law, regulations and Board policies.
5. Where appropriate, convening the appropriate team to assess and/or address the situation that is the subject of the report, such as the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, Section 504 Team, Behavior Support team, Student Assistance Program team, or others.[4][26][27][28][29][30]

The threat assessment team shall establish and implement procedures, in accordance with the district's Memorandum of Understanding, to address situations where the investigation of a reported threat shall be transferred to the appropriate law enforcement agency.[5][20]

The threat assessment team may request that the county agency or juvenile probation department consult and cooperate with the team in assessing the student who is the subject of a preliminary determination regarding a threat.[\[1\]](#)

When assessment of a student's behavior determines that it is not a threat to the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others, the threat assessment team shall document the assessment and may refer the student to other appropriate resources such as a child study team, the Student Assistance Program team, an IEP or Section 504 Team or other district supports and services.

Response and Intervention

The threat assessment team shall develop an Individualized Management Plan for each student identified and assessed as posing a threat to the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others. The plan should document the team's evaluation of the threat and recommendations for disposition of the threat, including the information gathered during the assessment and recommendations for response and intervention.

Following notification to the student's parent/guardian, the threat assessment team may refer the student to an appropriate program or take action to address the reported situation in accordance with applicable Board policy, which may include, but is not limited to:[\[1\]](#)

1. A referral to the Student Assistance Program.[\[4\]](#)
2. A referral to the appropriate law enforcement agency.[\[5\]\[6\]\[20\]](#)
3. An appropriate evaluation to determine whether the student is a qualified student with a disability in need of a Section 504 Service Agreement or in need of special education services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP), in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.[\[26\]\[27\]\[30\]](#)
4. A referral to the student's IEP Team to review and address the student's IEP and/or Positive Behavior Support Plan. This could include, but is not limited to, a manifestation determination or functional behavioral assessment in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[\[27\]\[28\]\[29\]\[30\]](#)
5. A referral to the student's Section 504 Team to review and address the student's Section 504 Service Agreement and/or Positive Behavior Support Plan.[\[26\]](#)
6. With prior parental consent, a referral to a behavioral service provider, health care provider or county agency.[\[31\]](#)
7. Addressing behavior in accordance with applicable discipline policies and the Code of Student Conduct.[\[32\]\[33\]\[34\]\[35\]](#)
8. Ongoing monitoring of the student by the threat assessment team, a child study team, Student Assistance Program team or other appropriate school personnel.
9. Taking steps to address the safety of any potential targets identified by the reported threat.[\[6\]\[36\]](#)

Safe Schools Incident Reporting –

For Safe Schools reporting purposes, the term **incident** means an instance involving an act of violence; the possession of a weapon; the possession, use, or sale of a controlled

substance or drug paraphernalia as defined in the Pennsylvania Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act; the possession, use, or sale of alcohol or tobacco; or conduct that constitutes an offense listed under the Safe Schools Act.[20][[37](#)][[38](#)][[39](#)]

When a reported threat also meets the definition of an incident under the Safe Schools Act, in accordance with reporting requirements, the Superintendent or designee shall immediately report required incidents, if not previously reported by district staff, and may report discretionary incidents committed by students on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.[20][32][[37](#)][[38](#)][[40](#)][[41](#)][[42](#)]

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian, if not previously notified by district staff, of any student directly involved in an incident on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity, who is a victim or suspect, immediately, as soon as practicable. The Superintendent or designee will inform the parent/guardian whether or not the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee will document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.[20][[38](#)][[43](#)]

Students With Disabilities - When reporting an incident committed by a student with a disability or referring a student with a disability to a law enforcement agency, the district shall provide the information required by state and federal laws and regulations and shall ensure that copies of the special education and disciplinary records of the student are transmitted for consideration by these authorities. The district shall ensure compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act when transmitting copies of the student's special education and disciplinary records.[9][11][[44](#)][[45](#)][[46](#)][[47](#)]

Monitoring and Management

If a student has an Individualized Management Plan, the threat assessment team shall monitor the Individualized Management Plan and coordinate with the designated team or resource to provide support and follow-up assessment as necessary. Follow-up assessments, referrals, re-entry plans and other supports shall be documented as part of the student's Individualized Management Plan.

The threat assessment team, in coordination with other appropriate teams and supports, shall determine when the student's Individualized Management Plan is no longer needed for disposition of the threat(s), and may transfer appropriate information in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[4][7][9][11][26][27]

Records Access and Confidentiality

In order to carry out their duties and facilitate the timely assessment of and intervention with students whose behavior may indicate a threat, the threat assessment team shall have access to the following student information to the extent permitted under applicable law and regulations:[\[1\]](#)

1. Student health records.[\[48\]](#)[\[49\]](#)
2. Prior school disciplinary records.[\[9\]](#)[\[11\]](#)[\[50\]](#)
3. Records related to adjudication under applicable law and regulations.[\[50\]](#)[\[51\]](#)[\[52\]](#)[\[53\]](#)[\[54\]](#)[\[55\]](#)
4. Records of prior behavioral or mental health or psychological evaluations or screenings maintained by the district.
5. Other records or information that may be relevant to evaluating a threat or determining treatment or referral options for a student that are maintained by the district.
6. The threat assessment team shall use all information or records obtained in fulfilling the team's duty in accordance with law to evaluate a threat or to recommend disposition of a threat. Team members shall not redisclose any record or information obtained or otherwise use any record of a student beyond the purpose for which the disclosure was made to the team, in accordance with law.[\[1\]](#)

The threat assessment team shall maintain confidentiality and handle all student records in accordance with applicable law, regulations, Board policy, the Student Records Plan and the district's legal and investigative obligations.[\[4\]](#)[\[7\]](#)[\[9\]](#)[\[10\]](#)[\[11\]](#)[\[19\]](#)[\[44\]](#)[\[46\]](#)[\[50\]](#)[\[56\]](#)

Threat assessment members whose other assignments and roles require confidentiality of specific student communications, in accordance with law, shall ensure that all confidential communications and information are addressed in accordance with applicable law, regulations, Board policy and administrative regulations.[\[10\]](#)[\[57\]](#)[\[58\]](#)[\[59\]](#)[\[60\]](#)

Annual Board Report

The threat assessment team shall provide the required information to the Superintendent, in consultation with the School Safety and Security Coordinator, to annually develop and present to the Board, at an executive session, a report outlining the district's approach to threat assessment, which shall include:[\[1\]](#)

1. Verification that the district's threat assessment team and process complies with applicable law and regulations.
2. The number of threat assessment teams assigned in the district, and their composition.
3. The total number of threats assessed that year.
4. A summary of interactions with outside law enforcement agencies, juvenile probation and behavioral service providers.
5. An assessment of the district's threat assessment team(s) operation.
6. Recommendations for improvement of the district's threat assessment processes.
7. Any additional information required by the Superintendent or designee.
8. The annual threat assessment report shall be presented as part of the annual report to the Board by the School Safety and Security Coordinator on district safety and security practices.[\[1\]](#)[\[5\]](#)

The threat assessment team's information addressing verification of compliance with law and regulations, the number of threat assessment teams assigned in the district and their composition, the total number of threats assessed that year, and any additional information required by the Superintendent or designee shall be included in the School Safety and Security Coordinator's annual report on district safety and security practices that is submitted to the state's School Safety and Security Committee.[\[1\]](#)[\[5\]](#)[\[61\]](#)

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Legal References

1. 24 P.S. 1302-E
2. 24 P.S. 1301-E
3. Pol. 832
4. Pol. 236
5. Pol. 805.2
6. Pol. 805
7. Pol. 819
8. Pol. 103
9. Pol. 113.4

10. Pol. 207
11. Pol. 216
12. Pol. 146.1
13. 24 P.S. 1205.2
14. 24 P.S. 1205.5
15. 24 P.S. 1310-B
16. Pol. 333
17. Pol. 104
18. Pol. 105.1
19. Pol. 249
20. Pol. 805.1
21. 23 Pa. C.S.A. 6311
22. Pol. 806
23. Pol. 247
24. Pol. 252
25. Pol. 226
26. Pol. 103.1
27. Pol. 113
28. Pol. 113.1
29. Pol. 113.2
30. Pol. 113.3
31. Pol. 146
32. Pol. 218
33. Pol. 218.1
34. Pol. 218.2
35. Pol. 233
36. Pol. 709
37. 24 P.S. 1303-A
38. 22 PA Code 10.2
39. 35 P.S. 780-102

40. 24 P.S. 1302.1-A
41. 22 PA Code 10.21
42. 22 PA Code 10.22
43. 22 PA Code 10.25
44. 20 U.S.C. 1232g
45. 20 U.S.C. 1415
34 CFR Part 99

46. 34 CFR Part 300

48. 24 P.S. 1409

49. Pol. 209

50. Pol. 216.1

51. 24 P.S. 1304-A

52. 24 P.S. 1305-A

53. 24 P.S. 1307-A

54. 42 Pa. C.S.A. 6341

55. Pol. 218.3

56. 24 P.S. 1304-D

57. 22 PA Code 12.12

58. 42 Pa. C.S.A. 5945

59. 42 Pa. C.S.A. 8337

60. 42 CFR Part 2

61. 24 P.S. 1309-B

20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq

35 P.S. 7601 et seq

Pol. 203.1

PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency, School Safety and Security Committee Model K-12
Threat Assessment Procedures and Guidelines

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