

## School-Based Threat Assessment

The Board is committed to providing a safe and secure 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. 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 discipline procedures. The mere fact that the district is conducting a threat assessment does not require suspension or expulsion. The district will not impose suspension or expulsion, including emergency expulsion, *solely* for the purposes of investigating student conduct or conducting a threat assessment. However, nothing in this policy precludes district personnel from acting immediately to address an imminent threat, including imposing a suspension or 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.

### Structure of Threat Assessment Teams

The superintendent shall establish and ensure the training of a threat assessment team (or teams) to serve district schools. Threat assessment teams may include persons with expertise in:

- Best practices for threat assessment, such as the district safety coordinator;
- The student or situation, such as other school or district staff;
- Counseling, such as a school counselor, a school psychologist;
- Law enforcement, such as a school resource office;
- School administration, such as a principal or other administrator;
- Community resources, such as a counselor, social worker or safety staff;
- Classroom practice, such as teachers

Not every team member will 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 will consider the content and requirements of the student's IEP or 504 plans.

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 Discipline.

### 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 shall use any student record beyond the prescribed purpose of the threat assessment team or re-disclose records obtained in the threat assessment process, 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 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 student records in the district’s possession, including education, health, discipline and criminal history records.
- Determines the nature, duration and severity of the risk posed by the individual responsible for the threatening behavior or communication. The threat assessment team will make an individualized assessment, based on reasonable judgment, best available objective evidence, or current medical evidence as applicable. The team will also determine what reasonable modifications of policies, practices, or procedures will mitigate the risk if any such modifications exist.
- Communicates lawfully and ethically with each other, school administrators, parents 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.
- Reports its determination to the superintendent or designee and, as necessary, other community agencies such as law enforcement, Child Protective Services, etc.

After concluding the threat assessment, the team will take reasonable action based on the severity of the threat determined in the process. When necessary to ensure the safety of students, staff and/or others, the threat assessment team will work with appropriate building staff to develop and implement intervention strategies to manage the student’s behavior in ways that promote a safe, supportive teaching, and learning environment. When possible, efforts will be made to avoid excluding the student from the school.

In cases where the student whose behavior is threatening, or potentially threatening, also has an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or Section 504 plan, the threat assessment team will consider the content and requirements of these plans and will coordinate with the student’s IEP or 504 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.

### **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 information to staff and/or students about resources in the community for medical, mental health or other services, 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 Discipline
- 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

Management Resources:

- 2019 – December Issue

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Classification: **Essential**

Revised Dates: