

THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM REGULATIONS

DIVISION-LEVEL THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

In accordance with Va. Code § [22.1-79.4](#) the Superintendent shall establish a Threat Assessment Team, or “Safety Team,” to oversee Division-level threats and those pertaining to multiple facilities. In addition, the Division-level team shall oversee the individual Safety Teams located at each school. This Division-level team shall include the Chief Student Services Officer, Student Services Support Team Leads, the Chief Human Resources Officer, and the Assistant Director of Health, Safety & Risk Management. It will also include other staff as appropriate.

The Division-level Safety team will ensure that procedures are maintained for effective information sharing between the school division and community mental health and law enforcement agencies; assess the effectiveness of the threat assessment process throughout the school division; and recommend changes to policies and procedures, as needed, to ensure an effective threat assessment process reflecting known best practices. The Division-level Safety team shall oversee and provide support for school Safety Teams and will work in consultation with designated representatives of the Community Services Board and the Alexandria Police Department.

SCHOOL SAFETY TEAMS

Each school Safety Team will include persons with expertise in counseling, instruction, school administration and law enforcement. The team leader will be the principal or other senior administrator for the school.

Team members shall work collaboratively with each other, with other school staff, and (as appropriate) with community resources to support the purposes of the team and the safety of the school and its students and staff.

The Safety Team leader may designate a subset of team members to screen cases reported to the team. This process serves to determine their appropriateness for review and/or action by the full team. If the team elects to implement a screening process, at least two members of the team will review initial reports of concern to determine if existing resources and mechanisms are sufficient to address those concerns, or whether the full team should further assess and manage the situation. All members of the team should have the opportunity to review screened cases to ensure they have been adequately addressed.

Unless it is not feasible to do so, all team members should be involved with the assessment and intervention of individuals whose behavior poses a threat to the safety of school staff or students.

Although only some members may be involved in management of the crisis depending on the situation, team members shall actively, lawfully, and ethically communicate with each other; with school administrators; and with 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.

In fulfilling statutory responsibilities, school Safety Teams shall:

- Provide guidance to students and staff regarding recognition of threatening behavior that may represent a threat by conducting presentations, broadly disseminating relevant information, and ensuring access to consultation from threat assessment teams;
- Clearly identify members of the school community to whom threatening behavior should be reported; and
- Implement School Board policies in an effective manner for the assessment of and intervention with individuals whose behavior poses (or may pose) a threat to the safety of school staff or students, including (where appropriate) referrals to community services boards or health care providers for evaluation or treatment.

PROCEDURES

Identifying and Reporting Threats

- When an individual makes a threat or engages in concerning communications or behaviors that suggest the likelihood of a threatening situation, the **ACPS Threat Assessment Guidelines** shall be followed. The goal of the threat assessment process is to take appropriate preventive or corrective measures to maintain a safe and secure school environment, to protect and support potential victims, and to provide assistance, as needed, to the individual being assessed.
- Regardless of threat assessment activities, disciplinary action and referral to law enforcement are to occur when required by School Board policy or the Code of Virginia.
- In accordance with the Code of Virginia, when threats of self-harm are accompanied by threats to harm others, or investigation suggests the existence of a threat to others, the school Safety Team (and Division-level Safety Team, if applicable) shall be notified and take appropriate action to prevent acts of violence. The Safety Team shall work collaboratively with other entities involved in the case.
- All school division employees, volunteers, and contractors are required to report immediately to an administrator any expression of intent to harm another person, concerning communications, or concerning behaviors that suggest an individual may intend to commit an act of violence.

Anyone who believes that a person or situation poses a clear and immediate threat of serious violence that requires containment shall notify school security and/or law enforcement in accordance with Policy EB.

Certain types of threats require immediate notification to law enforcement. In accordance with Policy KNAJ, the principal shall immediately report to the local law enforcement agency:

- Assault and battery that results in bodily injury, sexual assault, death, shooting, stabbing, cutting, or wounding of any person, or stalking of any person, on a school bus, on school property, or at a school-sponsored activity;
- Threats against school personnel while on a school bus, on school property or at a school-sponsored activity;
- Illegal carrying of a firearm or pneumatic weapon onto school property;
- Illegal conduct involving firebombs, explosive materials or devices, or hoax explosive devices, or explosive or incendiary devices, or chemical bombs, on a school bus, on school property, or at a school-sponsored activity; and
- Threats or false threats to bomb made against school personnel or involving school property or school buses;

In accordance with Policy CLA, the Superintendent Designee or school administrator shall also immediately report any act noted above that may constitute a criminal offense to the parents and/or guardians of any minor student who is alleged to have committed the act and shall report that the incident has been reported to local law enforcement, as required by law. The school administrator shall inform the parents and/or guardians that they may contact local law enforcement for further information, if they so desire. In addition, the school administrator may report other threats to the local law enforcement agency as necessary and appropriate.

ASSESSING THREATS

When a threat is reported, the school administrator and/or Safety Team leader shall initiate an initial inquiry/screening and, in consultation with the Safety Team, make a determination of the seriousness of the threat as expeditiously as possible in accordance with **ACPS Student Threat Assessment Guidelines**.

Upon notification of threatening behavior or communications, the school administrator or Safety Team leader shall determine if an imminent threat is believed to exist. If the individual appears to pose a clear and immediate threat of serious violence, the administrator shall notify law enforcement and school security in accordance with Policies EB and EBB.

If there is no reasonably apparent imminent threat present, or once such an imminent threat is contained, the Safety Team leader shall ensure that the situation is screened to determine if the full Safety Team needs to be involved. This screening may include (as necessary and appropriate):

- Review of the threatening behavior or communication;
- Review of school and other records for any prior history or interventions with the individual(s) involved; and

- Conducting timely and thorough interviews (as necessary) 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, so that the meaning of the threat and intent of the individual can be determined.

If it is determined that the threat is not identifiable or a low threat of violence or harm to self or others, and the threat assessment team determines that no further assessment, intervention, or monitoring is required at this time to prevent violence:

- The Safety Team leader shall ensure that the incident and review is adequately documented via the **ACPS Threat Assessment and Response Form**. The threat assessment team shall maintain the documentation in accordance with Policy EBB.
- If the individual (about whom the report was made) does not pose a threat but could benefit from or is in need of some other assistance, the Safety Team leader shall ensure that the individual is referred to the appropriate school or community-based resources.

If it cannot be determined with a reasonable degree of confidence that the alleged threat is no/low threat, then a more in-depth assessment is to be undertaken by the Safety Team to determine the nature and degree of any safety concerns and to develop strategies to prevent violence and reduce risk, as necessary. The assessment may include but not be limited to reviews of records; interview and consultation with staff, students or community who know the individual; and interviews of the individual and the target/recipient of the threat(s).

Based on information collected, the school Safety Team shall determine strategies to mitigate the threat and provide intervention and assistance to those involved, as needed.

Upon a determination that a student poses a threat of violence or physical harm to self or others, a Safety Team shall immediately report its determination to the Division-level Safety Team, as well as to the Superintendent or designee, including designated school administrators. The school-based administration shall immediately attempt to notify the minor student's parent or legal guardian.

In accordance with Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) Threat Assessment Guidelines, instances where the threat is deemed moderate risk or high risk, or requires further intervention to prevent violence or serious harm, the school administrator *shall* notify, in consultation with law enforcement, the parent and/or guardian of any student who is the target/recipient of a threat as well as the parent and/or guardian of any student who made the threat. Timing of notifications should be made in consultation with law enforcement.

In cases involving no/low risk threats, the school administrator *may* notify the parent and/or guardian of any student who is the target/recipient of a threat and/or may notify the parent and/or guardian of any student who made the threat.

INTERVENING, MONITORING, AND RESOLVING THREATS

If it is determined that an individual poses a threat of violence, the Safety Team shall develop, implement, and monitor an individualized plan to intervene with, address and reduce the threat. The Safety Team shall maintain documentation in accordance with DCJS Threat Assessment Guidelines.

The Safety Team shall assist individual(s) within the school who engaged in threatening behavior or communication, and any impacted staff or students, in accessing appropriate school and community-based resources for support and/or further intervention.

For each case, a member of the Safety Team shall be designated as a case manager to monitor the status of the individual(s) of concern (in that case) and to notify the Safety Team of any change in status, response to intervention/referrals, or additional information that would be cause for a re-assessment and changes in intervention strategies. Updates regarding the case are to be documented in accordance with (DCJS) Threat Assessment Guidelines. These updates are to be submitted regularly (e.g., at least every 30 days) until the case is resolved and is no longer assessed to pose a threat to the school or its staff or students.

Resolution and closure of the case is to be documented in accordance with (DCJS) Threat Assessment Guidelines.

Established: June 22, 2017

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 16.1-301, 18.2-83, 22.1-79.4, 22.1-272.1, 22.1-277.07, 22.1-279.3:1,

Threat Assessment in Virginia Public Schools: Model Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, 2nd Edition, 2016.

| | | |
|---------------|---------|--|
| Policy Refs.: | CLA | Reporting Acts of Violence and Substance Abuse |
| | EB | School Crisis, Emergency Management and Medical Emergency Response Plan |
| | EBB | Threat Assessment Team |
| | JFC | Student Conduct |
| | JFCD | Weapons in School |
| | JFC-R | Standards of Student Conduct |
| | JFCI | Substance Abuse-Student Assistance Program |
| | JGD/JGE | Student Suspension/Expulsion |
| | JDGA | Disciplining Students with Disabilities |
| | JFCE | Gang Activity or Association |
| | JFCC | Student Conduct on School Buses |
| | JHH | Suicide Prevention |

| | |
|------|--|
| JM | Restraint and Seclusion of Students |
| JO | Student Records |
| KNAJ | Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities |