



**YOUNG SCHOLARS
CHARTER SCHOOL**

Threat Assessment

Purpose

The Board of Directors (“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, as required by Pennsylvania Act 18 of 2019.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”) or designee, in consultation with the School Safety and Security Coordinator shall 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.

The CEO or designee, in consultation with the School Safety and Security Coordinator, shall appoint individuals to a threat assessment team, or, alternatively, direct an existing team (i.e. Student Assistance Program Team, Safe2Say Something Crisis Team, etc.) to carry out the required obligations of the School’s threat assessment team.

The CEO or designee shall designate a member of the team as team leader for the threat assessment team.

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.

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

Guidelines

Training

The CEO or designee shall ensure that threat assessment team members are provided individual and/or group training on:

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.
4. Confidentiality requirements under state and federal laws and regulations, and Board Policy.

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.

Information for Students, Parents/Guardians and Staff

The School shall notify students, staff and parents/guardians about the existence and purpose of the threat assessment team through posting information on the School's website.

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 School reporting hotlines or methods. Informational materials shall be available for review by parents/guardians.

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 School 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.

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.

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.

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.

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. Notify the CEO or designee and School Safety and Security Coordinator of the reported threat.
2. Notify the school principal(s) of the reported threat, who shall notify the student's parent/guardian.

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.

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.

Inquiry and Assessment

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.
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 Policy.
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.

The threat assessment team shall establish and implement procedures to address situations where the investigation of a reported threat shall be transferred to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

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.

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 school supports and services.

Response and Intervention

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The threat assessment team shall develop an individualized 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. A referral to the Student Assistance Program.
2. A referral to the appropriate law enforcement agency.
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.
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.
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.
6. With prior parental consent, a referral to a behavioral service provider, health care provider or county agency.
7. Addressing behavior in accordance with applicable discipline policies and the Code of Student Conduct.
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.

Monitoring and Management

If an individualized plan is developed for a student, the threat assessment team shall monitor the 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 plan.

The threat assessment team, in coordination with other appropriate teams and supports, shall determine when the student's individualized 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.

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. Student health records.
2. Prior school disciplinary records.
3. Records related to adjudication under applicable law and regulations.
4. Records of prior behavioral or mental health or psychological evaluations or screenings maintained by the School.
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 School.

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.

The threat assessment team shall maintain confidentiality and handle all student records in accordance with applicable law, regulations, Board Policy and the School's legal and investigative obligations.

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, and Board Policy.

Annual Board Report

The threat assessment team shall provide the required information to the CEO, 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 School's approach to threat assessment, which shall include:

1. Verification that the School's threat assessment team and process complies with applicable law and regulations.
2. The number of threat assessment teams assigned in the School, 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 School's threat assessment team operation.
6. Recommendations for improvement of the School's threat assessment processes.
7. Any additional information required by the CEO or designee.

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

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