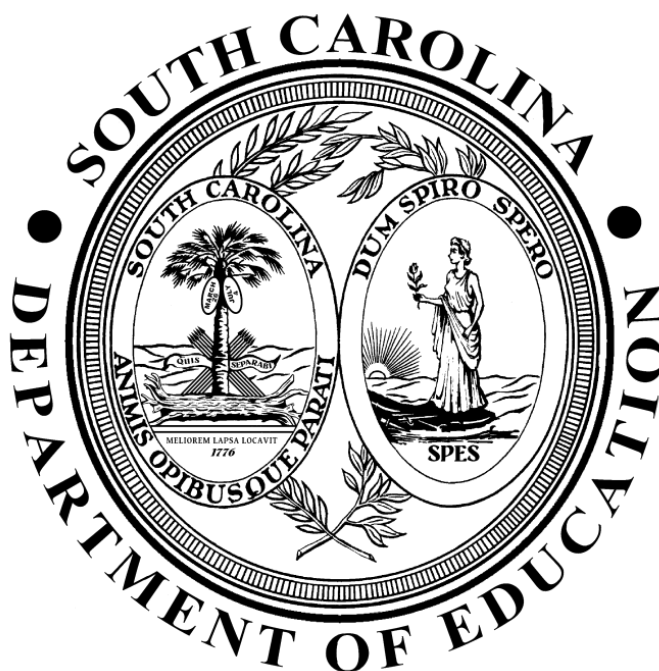


STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



**SCHOOL-BASED BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND
MANAGEMENT:
BEST PRACTICES GUIDE FOR SOUTH CAROLINA K-12 SCHOOLS
2ND EDITION
OCTOBER 2023**

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BEST PRACTICES GUIDE FOR SOUTH CAROLINA K–12 SCHOOLS
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OCTOBER 2023

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CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES	iii
FOREWORD	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
DISCLAIMER	vi
INTRODUCTION.....	1
WHAT IS BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT (BTAM)?	2
ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING A BTAM PROGRAM	7
Step 1: Establish a multidisciplinary threat assessment team.....	7
Step 2: Define concerning and prohibited behaviors.....	11
Step 3: Create a central reporting mechanism	11
Step 4: Determine the threshold for law enforcement intervention.....	12
Step 5: Establish assessment procedures	13
• Gather preliminary information and complete the <i>BTAM Screening Tool</i>	13
• Complete the <i>BTAM Full Protocol</i> , if warranted.....	15
○ Gather additional information from multiple sources	15
○ Organize and analyze the information	20
○ Answer assessment questions and determine level of concern.....	21
Step 6: Develop and implement a Management Plan, if warranted.....	24
Step 7: Create and promote safe school climates.....	28
Step 8: Conduct and promote training for all stakeholders.....	28
DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION SHARING	28
KEY RESOURCES	33
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	35
REFERENCES.....	36
APPENDIX A: BUILDING A BTAM PROGRAM: 8 STEP ACTION PLAN.....	40
APPENDIX B: BTAM PROCEDURES FLOWCHART	43
APPENDIX C: BTAM SCREENING TOOL	44
APPENDIX D: BTAM CASE WORKSHEET.....	46
APPENDIX E: BTAM FULL PROTOCOL	52

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLES

Table 1. Common Concerning Behaviors Displayed by Attackers (NTAC, 2019)	5
Table 2. No Intent to Harm vs. Possible Intent to Harm	15
Table 3. Sample Interview Questions.....	18
Table 4. Risk Factors for Targeted School Violence	19
Table 5. Warning Signs for Targeted School Violence.....	20
Table 6. Investigative Themes (NTAC, 2002, 2018)	21
Table 7. Levels for Consideration	22
Table 8. Potential Responses Based on Level of Concern	25
Table 9. FORT: Recording of Documentation	29
Table 10. Educational Records Covered Under FERPA.....	31

FIGURES

Figure 1. Overview of BTAM Process.....	3
Figure 2. BTAM Team Structures.....	8
Figure 3. Key Data Sources for Decision Making.....	16
Figure 4. STEP Approach for Contextual Assessment	17
Figure 5. The Pathway to Violence	22

FOREWORD

In response to recent acts of violence on school campuses, law enforcement officials and school safety experts have cited research which indicates that before a student commits a violent act on a school campus, warning signs are usually evident. Research indicates that if appropriate action is taken in light of the warning signs, the risk of violence can be mitigated. This guide is intended to help South Carolina schools establish threat assessment teams and implement protocols more effectively.

In schools where threat assessment teams and protocols exist, educators and other staff are more likely to work collaboratively to share information about students who may pose danger to themselves or others. The goal of behavioral threat assessment and management is to intervene and help the student of concern onto a more positive pathway. Thus, the timely and appropriate sharing of information could enhance the safety of all students, including the student at risk.

Because of the hard work of dedicated educators in South Carolina, schools will have access to a resource designed to keep our students, educators, and staff safe.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The South Carolina Department of Education wishes to express its sincere gratitude to the individuals who contributed to the development of this guide.

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DISCLAIMER

This guide and the documents contained herein do not predict future violence nor are they a foolproof method of assessing an individual's or group's risk of harm to others. The guide and accompanying documents are not checklists that can be quantified. They are designed to assist in the inquiry/investigation of potential danger (identify circumstances and risk factors that may increase risk for potential youth aggression) and to assist school districts in development of a threat assessment and management plan. Furthermore, as circumstances change, an individual's potential for violence may increase or decrease. A particular level of concern assigned by a threat assessment team at one point in time is not stagnant. Understanding this key point is paramount to remaining vigilant for signs that a level of concern may be increasing and also acknowledging when an individual has moved off the pathway toward violence in a more positive direction.

INTRODUCTION

The safety of South Carolina’s students is paramount. South Carolina law (S.C. Code Ann. § 59-63-910) requires that all public schools conduct fire, active shooter/intruder, and severe weather/earthquake drills annually at least twice year. In addition, state law mandates that each school in the state identifies key staff to serve on a threat assessment team. This guide and accompanying resources complement state law. Multiple reports and government agencies have recommended schools establish threat assessment policies, procedures, and teams (e.g., Arapahoe High School post incident reports, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Secret Service, U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Education, Sandy Hook Advisory Commission, and the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission). Effective threat assessment increases focus on violence prevention and resolution, increases access to counseling services and supports, and decreases long-term suspensions and alternative placements (Cornell, et al., 2012).

To support the implementation of effective threat assessment protocols and procedures, school boards should adopt a threat assessment policy, which establishes authority for school professionals to act upon reported threats and/or concerning behaviors. While policies are specific to each district, a policy addressing threat assessments should include the following:

- Establishment of multidisciplinary threat assessment teams at the school and/or district level
- Roles and duties to be performed by designated threat assessment team (TAT) members
- Expertise and training of professionals who will serve on the TAT
- Awareness training for staff, students, and parents
- Reporting procedures and requirements (i.e., mandatory reporters)
- Threat assessment protocol, procedures, and documentation, including exceptions to confidentiality
- Procedures for implementation of interventions, supports, and community services
- Timeframe required to responsibly act upon reported concern
- Engagement of school resource officers (SRO)/law enforcement in threat assessment process, to include parameters of information sharing
- Procedures for disciplinary actions and/or change of educational placement, if warranted

While this guide is focused on responding to potential threats posed by students, workplace violence can also impact school safety. Disgruntled current or former employees, or personal relationships that become hostile and/or violent, can pose a risk to school safety. Thus, districts must also have a formal process for assessing workplace-related threats of violence. A district’s Human Resources Department often works in collaboration with the school system’s safety and security and mental health resources, and law enforcement, as needed. Protocols need to be established regarding who will conduct the threat assessment, how to train staff in reporting procedures, mandated reporting requirements for protective and/or restraining orders, and support to help those involved. Due to an employee’s right to privacy and confidentiality, information disclosed must be limited to what is reasonably necessary to protect the safety of individuals in the workplace.

This guide is based on a synthesis of best practices and established standards pertaining to behavioral threat assessment in K–12 schools. The guidance follows the U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) model of K-12 threat assessment. Among other things, NTAC conducts behavioral-based research on the prevention of targeted violence. *Targeted violence* is a term coined by the Secret Service to refer to any

incident of violence where an attacker selects a particular target (NTAC 2019). *Threat assessment* is the best practice for preventing incidents of targeted violence.

The work by the Secret Service in threat assessment originated to prevent assassinations and has since expanded to the prevention of targeted violence in other contexts, including schools. Following the tragic shooting at Columbine High School in 1999, NTAC collaborated with the U.S. Department of Education to study 37 incidents of targeted school violence that occurred in the United States from 1974 to 2000. Key findings from the *Safe Schools Initiative Final Report* (Vossekuil et al., 2002) helped shape best practice recommendations for conducting school-based threat assessments (Fein et al., 2002).

In 2018, NTAC released *Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence*, the first resource in a series that provide updated research and guidance to school personnel, law enforcement, and other public safety partners on the prevention of school-based violence. It outlines eight steps needed to create a comprehensive targeted violence prevention program in schools. These eight steps are used to structure the information provided in this guide.

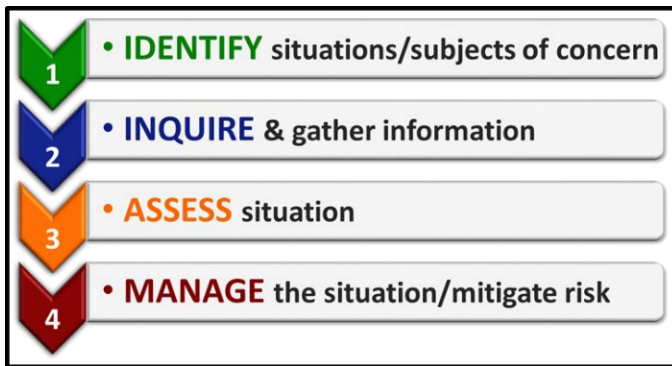
In 2019, NTAC released *Protecting America's Schools: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence*, which summarized the analysis of 41 incidents of targeted violence that occurred at K-12 schools in the U.S. from 2008 to 2017. In 2021, they released *Averting Targeted School Violence: A U.S. Secret Service of Plots Against Schools*, which summarized the analysis of 67 averted school attack plots from 2006 to 2018. NTAC, partnered with the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and released *Improving School Safety Through Bystander Reporting: A Toolkit for Strengthening K-12 Reporting Programs* (2023). This resource provides a roadmap to develop a trusted reporting program for students and other community members to report concerns and seek help when issues arise involving student wellness or safety.

Information from these important resources is integrated in this guide. The studies conducted by the National Threat Assessment Center have all concluded an important and consistent key finding, there is no one “profile” of a school attacker, nor is there a profile for the type of school that has been targeted. However, there is a discernable pattern of concerning behaviors that may signal an individual is on the pathway toward violence. These patterns provide a framework multidisciplinary teams may use to organize and analyze information to determine a level of concern that a student or group of students is likely to carry out an act of targeted violence. This guide is not intended to be prescriptive but rather informs the establishment of threat assessment teams and protocols in South Carolina schools. It is also important to note that behavioral threat assessment is not an exact science; it is impossible to 100 percent predict human behavior. However, there are identifiable indicators to the pathway to violence. Even more importantly, there are interventions and supports to help mitigate a potential threat to safety and help that person(s) toward a more positive pathway. Behavioral threat assessment and management is a key to keeping our schools safe.

WHAT IS BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT (BTAM)?

BTAM is a fact-based, systematic, process designed to identify, inquire, assess, and manage potentially dangerous or violent situations (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1. Overview of BTAM Process



Source: SIGMA Threat Management Associates (2017)

A key goal is to distinguish between *making* a threat and *posing* a threat. A threat is an expression of intent to cause harm. It may be communicated through behavior, orally, visually, in writing, electronically, or through other means and has the potential to significantly disrupt the school or workplace environment.

A threat may be:

- **Direct** – statement of clear, explicit intent to harm
- **Indirect** – violence is implied or phrased tentatively
- **Conditional** – made contingent on set of circumstances
- **Veiled** – vague & subject to interpretation

It is important to note that **context is more important than content** as most offenders do not threaten targets directly (US Department of Justice/FBI, 2017).

Elements of an effective BTAM process includes the following:

- Establishment of a **multidisciplinary behavioral threat assessment and management team** (BTAM)
- Establishment of integrated **interagency and community partnerships**
- Ongoing **training** for the BTAM team and awareness training for staff, students, parents, and community partners
- Clear and confidential **reporting mechanisms** to identify the subject(s)/situation(s) whose behavior or impact has raised concern
- Conducting an **inquiry** to gather additional information in a lawful and ethical manner
- **Assessing** information regarding situation, context, developmental, and disability factors to determine if the subject/situation *poses* a threat of violence or harm to self and/or others
- **Managing** the potential threat by implementing problem-solving supports, and if warranted, a management plan to prevent harm where possible and to reduce/mitigate impact of the situation

Principles of BTAM include understanding the following:

- There is a distinction between *making* a threat and *posing* a threat
- Targeted violence is the end result of understandable, process of thinking and behavior
- Violence stems from interaction among subject, target, environment, and precipitating events (STEP)
- Having an investigative and inquisitive mindset is critical

- Threat assessment is based upon facts and observations of behavior, not characteristics, traits, or profiles
- Threat assessment utilizes an integrated systems approach

Implementing the essential elements and principles of BTAM is critical to making informed decisions based upon objective data. This minimizes the risk of erroneous decisions being made based upon profiling characteristics, personal biases, or misperceptions. Threat assessment is not the same as profiling. Profiling involves making generalizations about an individual based on the individual's similarity to high-risk groups, whereas threat assessment is an individualized assessment of the person of concern, considering their particular situation at a particular point in time. Individuals “don’t just snap” but engage in a process of thought and behavior that escalates.

It is important to note that a threat assessment is a **safety assessment**. It is NOT the same as a criminal or disciplinary investigative process, nor is it a diagnostic evaluation, special education evaluation, or clinical evaluation. Behavioral threat assessment and management is a deductive, dynamic process that is responsive to the nature and process of the threatening situation (SIGMA Threat Management Associates, 2017).

Threat assessments conducted in schools are designed to identify if there is a safety concern and what interventions and supports need to be engaged to mitigate risk. While the results of a threat assessment may lead to the recommendation of an additional evaluation being needed, it is critical that schools and parents understand that the BTAM assessment is a safety assessment only.

Summary of Key NTAC Findings

It is important that BTAM teams are knowledgeable of the research that underlies the BTAM process. While there are many differences found among the perpetrators of targeted violence, there are some commonalities. The findings below are important to consider as teams conduct a threat assessment. If these indicators are identified within a threat assessment, the concern for risk increases.

In 2019, NTAC released an analysis of 41 incidents of targeted violence which occurred in K-12 schools from 2008 to 2017. Below are its key findings, which mirror findings from the original study (Fein et al., 2002):

- There is no profile of a student attacker or the type of school that has been targeted.
- Attackers usually had multiple motives, the most common involving a grievance with classmates.
- Most attackers used firearms, and firearms were most often acquired from the home.
- Most attackers had experienced psychological, behavioral, or developmental symptoms.
- Half of the attackers had unusual or concerning interest in violence or weapons.
- All attackers experienced social stressors involving relationships with peers and/or romantic partners.
- Nearly every attacker experienced negative home life factors.
- Most attackers were victims of bullying, which was often observed by others.
- Most attackers had a history of school disciplinary actions, and many had prior contact with law enforcement.
- All attackers exhibited concerning behaviors. Most elicited concern from others, and most communicated their intent to attack (see Table 1).

TABLE 1. Common Concerning Behaviors Displayed by Attackers

Behavioral Concern	Analysis
Threats to Target or Others and/or Intent to Attack	Most of the attackers (n = 29, 83%) shared verbal, written, visual, or video communications that referenced their intent to carry out an attack, threatened the target, and/or threatened others.
Intense or Escalating Anger	Three-quarters of the attackers (n = 26, 74%) displayed behaviors or shared communications indicating significant or increasing anger. These behaviors included having angry outbursts at school and engaging in aggressive acts at home.
Interest in Weapons	Nearly three-quarters of the attackers (n = 25, 71%) stockpiled weapons or communicated about weapons in a way that indicated an unusual or concerning level of interest. For some, their interest in weapons was expressed through drawings or artwork, while others had developed a reputation among classmates for having an intense interest in guns, knives, or explosives. A few attackers had built and detonated explosives.
Sadness, Depression, or Isolation	Nearly two-thirds of the attackers (n = 22, 63%) either spoke about their sadness, depression, or loneliness, or appeared through their observable behaviors to be experiencing these feelings. Some attackers confided in others about their feelings or wrote about them online or in school assignments. Bystanders also observed the attackers isolating themselves, withdrawing from others, appearing sad, or crying.
Changes in Behavior or Appearance	More than half of the attackers (n = 20, 57%) exhibited observable changes in demeanor, appearance, or routine prior to the attack. Examples included increased apathy about life, decreased effort on schoolwork, withdrawing from activities, decreased personal hygiene, spending time in new places or with new people, changes in eating and sleeping patterns, and changes in online behaviors (e.g., changing profile picture to something unusual for the person).
Suicide and/or Self-harm	Half of the attackers (n = 19, 54%) had communicated about, or engaged in behaviors related to, suicide or self-harm. In some cases, multiple friends knew that the attacker was suicidal. In other cases, evidence of self-harm was noted by friends, parents, and/or school staff.
Interest in Violence	About one-third of attackers (n = 13, 37%) spoke or wrote about their violent interests, including topics related to previous school attacks, Hitler/Nazism, and other violent themes. Sometimes these interests were shared openly, while in other instances the attacker was more subtle (e.g., viewing photos of previous school attacks while in the cafeteria).

Source: NTAC (2019)

Other common themes among the concerning behaviors included attackers talking about being bullied (n = 12, 34%), poor grades or attendance that elicited concerns from parents or school staff (n = 10, 29%), and the attackers harassing others (n = 5, 14%). In three of the five cases involving harassment, the victim of the harassment was later targeted in the attack (NTAC, 2019).

A follow-up study by NTAC released in 2021 analyzed 67 situations where school violence was averted. The findings affirm that there is no profile of an attacker, but individuals do display a variety of observable concerning behaviors as they escalate toward violence further highlighting the importance of the development of multidisciplinary threat assessment programs. The report points out that the primary objective of a student threat assessment is not to administer discipline or introduce students into the criminal justice system. While those responses may be necessary at times, the primary objective should be providing support for students experiencing distress, thereby deescalating situations before they become violent.

Key findings and implications from the 2021 NTAC study:

- Targeted violence is preventable when communities identify warning signs and intervene. In every case, tragedy was averted by members of the community coming forward when they observed behaviors that elicited concern.
- The sooner the better. Schools should intervene as early as possible. The primary function of a threat assessment is not criminal investigation or conviction. Communities should strive to identify and intervene with students in distress before their behavior escalates to criminal actions.
- Like students who perpetrated school attacks, the plotters in this study were more frequently motivated by interpersonal conflicts with classmates, highlighting a need for student interventions and de-escalation programs targeting such issues.
- Students are best positioned to identify and report concerning behaviors displayed by their classmates. Unfortunately, many cases involved students observing concerning behaviors without reporting them, highlighting the ongoing need for further resources and training for students.
- Eight plots in this study were reported by family members, illustrating the crucial role families can play in addressing a student's risk of causing harm. In some cases, other parents learned of the concerning information and passed it on to the school or law enforcement. This highlights the need to educate families on recognizing the warning signs and the supports and resources available.
- In nearly 1/3 of the cases, an SRO played a role in either reporting the plot or responding to a report made by someone else. In 8 cases, it was the SRO who received the initial report of an attack plot from students or others, highlighting their role as a trusted adult within the school community.
- Five plotters were former students who left the school within one year of the plot (expelled, enrolled in other school, graduated, or stopped attending). This indicates that simply removing a student from the school without appropriate supports may not remove the risk of harm they pose.
- Consistent with prior NTAC research studying school attackers, many of the plotters in this study displayed an interest in violent or hate-filled topics, particularly the Columbine High School attack. Nearly one-third of the plotters conducted research into prior mass attackers as part of their planning. Nine also displayed interest in Hitler, Nazism, and/or white supremacy.

- Many attacks were associated with certain dates, such as the beginning/end of the school year, or April 20 (Columbine). School professionals should approach these dates with extra consideration.
- Threat assessments must examine a student's access to weapons, particularly those in the home. Similar to school attackers, in most of the cases where potters intended to use firearms, they had unimpeded access to them (e.g., they owned them, or their parents allowed access). In other cases, they acquired firearms by prying a safe open, finding the key, or taking them when they were left out.

ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING THE BTAM PROCESS

The U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) has developed a best practice model for conducting school-based threat assessments that is based on their 20 years of research, training, and consultation on threat assessment and preventing targeted acts of violence in schools (2018). The eight steps below outline the critical components needed to support a high-quality BTAM assessment and program. Each school/district should ensure these eight steps are developed as part of their BTAM program. See Appendix A for an action plan that may be used for this purpose

STEP 1: ESTABLISH A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TEAM

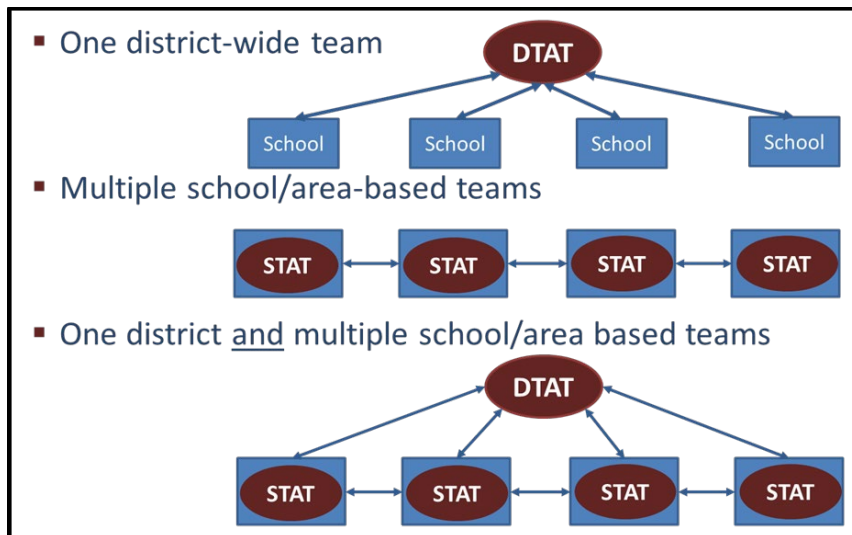
As noted in the introduction, SC state law mandates that each school in the state identifies key staff to serve on a threat assessment team. Prior to conducting threat assessments, the BTAM team must be carefully selected and receive appropriate training.

BTAM Team Structure

Depending on the size of the district and available responses, the structure of BTAM teams may vary. Options include (see Figure 2):

- One district-level threat assessment team (DTAT) that handles all threat cases, typically supported by triage teams in schools. This is more common in smaller school districts or in more remote areas where access to resources (e.g., mental health professionals) at the school level may be limited.
- A separate threat assessment team at each school (STAT).
- A combination where a DTAT provides oversight, consistency, and accountability for all BTAM processes (and manages threats impacting whole district) and individual teams at each school that address their respective cases and will consult with the district team if the situation warrants.

FIGURE 2. BTAM Team Structures



Source: Deisinger and Randazzo, SIGMA Threat Management Associates (2017)

BTAM Team Membership

The BTAM team must be multidisciplinary and include individuals with expertise in school administration and mental health, instruction, and law enforcement. Involving members from an array of disciplines enhances the team's ability to:

- Identify developing concerns/threats
- Gather information from multiple sources and organizational "silos"
- Maximize skills and resources to address concerns
- Monitor outcomes
- Communicate within the team and to other community support providers
- Collaborate regarding effective awareness and outcomes
- Coordinate and engage in purposeful planning of actions and interventions to help mitigate risk and engage the individual(s) of concern onto a more positive pathway

BTAM Team Roles and Responsibilities

The core BTAM team must include an administrator, at least one school mental health professional, and law enforcement. The SC BTAM process starts with a threat screener and moves to a full threat assessment when the situation cannot be adequately resolved through completion of the screener alone. The screener is completed by a minimum of two team members, one administrator and one school mental health professional. If an SRO and/or law enforcement office is available, it is also highly recommended they are consulted to ensure there are no behaviors of concern in the community that may impact the screening decision. The team expands to a minimum of three members when conducting a full threat assessment. It is important to have multiple individuals trained in each discipline, so back-up team members are available when primary team members are unavailable.

Effective BTAM team members understand and value (Amman et al., 2017):

- Caretaking and interventions to support individuals
- The need for urgency when responding to a concern
- Collaboration among team members
- The need for establishing BTAM rules and boundaries
- The limits of confidentiality
- The importance of providing guidance and follow-through
- Ensuring implementation of management plans
- Continually re-evaluating active cases and re-engaging when necessary
- The need for patience throughout the process

Roles and responsibilities for core BTAM team members typically include:

BTAM Team Lead

- Ensures the threat assessment process is conducted thoroughly, ethically, legally, and with fidelity
- Ensures proper documentation is completed and retained according to district guidelines, and federal and state laws
- Facilitates collaborative team discussions to ensure various perspectives are considered. This role may be filled by a school administrator or school mental health professional.

School Administrator

- Consults with core team members to collaboratively determine when to conduct an initial screening versus mobilize a full threat assessment inquiry
- Assists in conducting interviews of subjects, targets, witnesses, teachers, staff, and parents/guardians
- Assists in gathering additional information (e.g., school records)
- Determines and enforces disciplinary consequences, if appropriate
- Ensures that any threat management plan is followed and monitored
- Works closely with the public information officer or communications director to respond to community concerns and questions
- Works with public information officer/district officials to communicate safety information to the school community, if needed

School Mental Health Professional (School Psychologist/Social Worker/Counselor)

- Consults with core team members to collaboratively determine when to conduct an initial screening versus mobilize a full threat assessment inquiry
- Leads and/or assists in conducting interviews of subjects, targets, witnesses, teachers, staff, caregivers
- Serves as a liaison with community mental health providers
- Advises the team on school-based and community interventions and supports, including possible mental health assessments, where appropriate
- Assists with next steps and possible referrals
- May provide interventions and supports

School Resource Officer (SRO)

- Consults with core team members to collaboratively determine when to conduct an initial screening versus mobilize a full threat assessment inquiry
- Helps with critical data collection, particularly social media and if there has been law enforcement contact in the community, as privacy guidelines allow
- May conduct interviews with individual of concern, targets, witnesses, teachers, staff, parents, and students (if an official law enforcement investigation is initiated, they must follow investigative guidelines for interviewing minors)
- Assists with efforts to ensure safety and security (e.g., provides safety escorts/increased supervision to and from school, in hallways, and in common areas; works with local law enforcement to ensure community safety after school hours; welfare checks)
- Conducts independent criminal investigations, as needed
- Serves as a liaison with law enforcement, court personnel, juvenile justice, probation, to help student(s) onto a more positive pathway
- Determines the need for welfare checks, weapons checks, and home searches, where permissible
- Assists with next steps and possible referrals
- Provides mentoring and community supports

If a full threat assessment inquiry is conducted, other professionals will be engaged to work collaboratively with the core team to conduct the full threat assessment. These professionals have additional specialized skill sets to help conduct the threat assessment, have knowledge of the person and/or situation of concern, and/or expertise to develop supports and resources. These may include an additional administrator or mental health professional, or any of the following:

Educators, Coaches, and Mentors

- Educators with specific knowledge and/or expertise (e.g., general education teachers, coach, behavioral specialist) to serve as ad hoc members
- A professional with knowledge of special education policies and procedures (e.g., school psychologist, special education teacher) is critical to include on the threat assessment team when assessing a youth with an identified or suspected educational disability (i.e., IEP or 504 Plan)
- Other individuals who know the person(s) of concern well and can provide information pertaining to the situation

District-Level or External Persons with Expertise in: (if situation warrants)

- ***Human Resources*** – informed on personnel policy and practices if case involves staff
- ***Legal Counsel***
- ***Threat Management Specialist*** – relevant education, training, and experience to assist with challenging cases, provide consultation and coaching regarding consistency and implementation of process, and provide ongoing professional development
- ***Independent medical/psychological evaluator*** – expertise in conducting clinical violence risk assessments. Ideally the district will have a pre-established relationship with at least one, and preferably two qualified evaluators
 - *Important Note:* This evaluation should never replace the school/district's BTAM process. It is to be used to provide additional information in mitigating risk and planning interventions.

STEP 2: DEFINE PROHIBITED AND CONCERNING BEHAVIORS

There is a key distinction between *making* a threat and *posing* a threat. Schools serve students with a variety of developmental ages, disabilities, and emotional maturity levels. Students may make a threat, in response to a specific frustrating situation, be stated as a sarcastic joke, or be impulsive in nature with no intent to harm; thus, do not pose a threat. Previous research suggests that as many as 70% of threats may be transient/do not pose a threat (Cornell et al., 2004). When BTAM is properly implemented and if it is determined there is no intent to harm, it can often be resolved or managed through problem-solving, conflict resolution, a restorative approach, or existing supports. Thus, this type of situation can be used as a learning opportunity or as an opportunity to increase supports.

However, there are individuals who may pose a threat, and the school community needs to be educated on behaviors that are unacceptable, or “prohibitive” as the NTAC labels them (2018, p. 4). These include threatening or engaging in violence, bringing a weapon to school, bullying or harassing others, or other concerning or criminal behavior. NTAC points out that concerning behaviors occur on a continuum. Some concerning behaviors are not necessarily indicative of violence but should be considered as they may warrant some type of intervention (e.g., decline in performance/attendance, withdrawal or isolation, sudden changes in behavior or appearance, substance use). See pages 4-7 of this guide for additional key findings regarding concerning behaviors, as well as risk factors and warning signs outlined on pages 20-21.

Students, staff, and parents need to be explicitly taught to recognize and report when someone is struggling and is at risk for potential harm to self or others. These threats have communications, context, and meaning to support a legitimate safety concern with possible intent to harm others, the person(s) on receiving end is concerned; and the threat was not perceived as a joke or taken out of context. Thus, the BTAM assessment identifies more specifically the level of concern and actions needed to assure safety.

It is critical that the BTAM team stay objective when reviewing the facts of the case, as fear and emotions frequently affect why a person considers a threat an actual threat. Is this a threat to comfort (e.g., I am uncomfortable with how the person is dressed, acts, political views, etc., often influenced by implicit or explicit biases) or is this a potential threat to safety (e.g., concerning media post with access to weapons and a statement of desire to harm others). Thus, BTAM team decisions need to be based on objective facts, not emotions. The BTAM team also needs to take into consideration their own biases to ensure this process does not contribute to the disproportionality that can exist within disciplinary practices or influence what is perceived as a threat.

STEP 3: CREATE A CENTRAL REPORTING MECHANISM

The NTAC (2019) report that summarized 41 instances of targeted violence that occurred in U.S. K-12 schools from 2008 to 2017 noted that concerning behaviors of attackers were often observed but in many cases were not acted upon either out of fear, not believing the attacker, misjudging the immediacy or location, or believing they had dissuaded the attacker. These findings highlight the continued importance of encouraging students, school personnel, and family members to report troubling or concerning behaviors, to ensure that those in positions of authority can intervene. These same community members need to be trained in identifying risk factors for student violence and students in crisis.

“SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING... DO SOMETHING.”

To identify safety concerns, school community members must be willing to report. This means overcoming the “*bystander effect*” (noticing a concern and not reporting) through ongoing awareness training for students, staff, and parents on what, when, and how to report. A strong focus needs to be on connectedness and trust between student, staff, and parents, as relationships are the best mitigation against risk. It is also critical for reports to be taken seriously and handled responsibly (i.e., source remains confidential, actions taken are appropriate to the level of concern). If overly punitive actions are taken, students will stop reporting, as they do not typically want to be responsible for getting a peer suspended or expelled from school or for receiving serious punitive consequences only to find out the threat was not legitimate.

Schools must also be aware of any cultural implications that may impact others’ willingness to report. Due to past community traumas or historical incidents, some communities may believe it is not acceptable to disclose serious incidents to those in authority. Community beliefs may reflect “not sharing your dirty laundry” or “snitches get stitches.” The school climate must foster a sense of trust where members feel safe to report.

Schools must also have various methods for reporting concerns. These may include directly reporting to a trusted adult, a tip line, a reporting app, email, voice mail, a link on the school/district website to report, a QR code, and/or calling 911. It is important to have more than one confidential method to report, and students, staff, and parents need to be explicitly trained on how to report, what to report, and what is not appropriate to report via these methods (e.g., difference between tattling and telling). The various methods must be constantly monitored, and all information needs to be funneled to the BTAM team.

The most recent NTAC report, *Improving School Safety through Bystander Reporting: A Toolkit for Strengthening K-12 Reporting Programs* (2023), details several strategies, worksheets, and checklists focused on strengthening reporting systems, including:

- Improve accessibility by offering multiple reporting methods, such as text messaging or a mobile application, email, phone call, and reporting to a trusted adult.
- Set operating hours that improve availability, allowing for reporting outside of school hours.
- Consider using confidential or anonymous reporting.
- Respond to reports in a timely manner and in a way that is efficient, fair, and transparent.
- Offer training that builds awareness of the reporting system.
- Build a positive school climate by fostering trust and positive relationships.

STEP 4: DEFINE THRESHOLD FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT INTERVENTION

Schools need to be sensitive to concerns about policing in the schools. School resource officers/law enforcement officers must be properly selected and well-trained to work in schools and serve on BTAM teams. Their role is not to take punitive actions towards a student but to serve as a resource. SRO/law enforcement involvement can range from consultation by helping to identify positive interventions and supports to help a student off the pathway to violence; to taking directive action. Reports involving weapons, threats of violence, and physical violence should immediately be reported to local law enforcement. If the law enforcement officer is not a district staff member, it is highly recommended a memorandum of understanding (MOU) be developed that outlines the relationship between school staff and law enforcement and outlines what law enforcement responsibilities will be in the BTAM process.

In addition, when following BTAM best practices, behavior is *not* first reported to criminal authorities unless there is imminent risk (i.e., weapon on campus, assault, imminent threat of violence). The first step is to engage the school/district multidisciplinary threat assessment team to conduct a screening (for which the SRO/LEO is engaged but not taking directive action unless imminent risk), followed by a full threat assessment, if deemed appropriate. If there is a significant concern for safety the SRO/LEO will determine if an official investigation via law enforcement needs to begin and appropriate law enforcement protocols will then need to be followed.

School officials routinely seek to balance the interests of safety and privacy for students. While the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) generally requires written consent from the parent or adult-aged student before a school district can disclose educational records to outside law enforcement entities, including non-district employed School Resource Officers (SROs), FERPA gives schools and districts flexibility under certain limited circumstances, including when responding to circumstances that threaten the health or safety of individuals in their school community. For further guidance on this topic, see *School Resource Officers, School Law Enforcement Units, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (2019)

STEP 5: ESTABLISH THREAT ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Schools and districts must have consistent and standardized threat assessment procedures in place. This section of the guide, along with the appendices, provides procedures and a documentation system based on the NTAC model.

BTAM Procedures at a Glance

1. Gather preliminary information and complete the ***BTAM Screening Tool*** to determine whether full threat assessment is warranted.
2. Complete the ***BTAM Full Protocol***, if warranted
 - a. Gather additional information from multiple sources
 - b. Organize and analyze the information
 - c. Answer assessment questions and determine level of concern
3. Develop and implement a Management Plan, if warranted (discussed in Step 6)

*Refer to Appendix B for a flow chart of BTAM procedures

1. GATHER PRELIMINARY INFORMATION AND COMPLETE THE BTAM SCREENING TOOL

When a concern is reported regarding potential targeted violence, the core team consisting of an administrator and school mental health professional will assemble to gather preliminary information. If possible, it is highly recommended the core team also consult with their school resource officer/law enforcement liaison as they may have information about community concerns the school is unaware of.

The first decision is whether there is reason to believe the case may involve imminent risk (significant safety concern that requires protective actions (i.e., lockdown, immediate engagement of law enforcement due to weapon on campus). If there is no reason to believe the case involves imminent risk, the core team should

collect the preliminary information needed to complete the BTAM Screening Tool (Appendix C).

Preliminary information gathered prior to completing the screener should include:

- Talking with the referral source(s)
- Talking with the student of concern
- A brief check-in with the student's teachers
- A brief educational record review to check for red flags in grades, attendance, discipline; also check whether the student has an educational disability (IEP or 504 Plan)
- If possible, law enforcement records

In most cases, gathering the preliminary information will be enough to answer the questions on the screener and develop a plan for addressing the situation through problem solving, conflict resolution, a restorative approach, and/or current programming (i.e., supports being offered through the student's IEP or 504 Plan). The screening is more about why the team chose NOT to go to full assessment. In doing so, the team makes a decision regarding whether the information gathered indicates there is “*no evidence of intent to harm*” vs. there is “*possible intent to harm – needs further assessment*.” See Table 2 for examples.

If a full assessment will not be conducted, the documentation must support there was no intent to harm and how the situation was addressed/resolved. If there is any doubt, always error on the side of caution and proceed to full assessment.

Note: If there is a concern about weapon involvement and/or a threat with specificity, immediately proceed to full behavioral threat assessment and engage SRO/law enforcement in the BTAM process.

Presumptive Indicators of Intent to Harm:

- Specific, plausible details, “I’m going to shoot Mr. Smith with my shotgun.”
- The threat has been repeated over time or the student has told multiple parties of the threat.
- The threat is reported to others as a plan, or there are suggestions that violent action has been planned, “Wait and see what happens next Tuesday in the cafeteria!”
- There are accomplices or the student has sought out accomplices.
- The student has invited peers to observe the threat.
- Physical evidence of intent to carry out the threat (e.g., written plans, lists of victims, drawings, weapons, materials).
- Indicators of pathway behaviors: ideation, planning, and/or preparation with possible movement toward implementation.

In addition, consider developmental age, credibility, and discipline record of the student who made the threat. Judge credibility based on the student's presentation of what happened as well as on all other information you have about this student and accounts by other students. In general:

- An older student is more likely to demonstrate true intent/capability to harm than a younger one.
- A discipline record of previous aggressive behavior, dishonesty or both is considered more likely to demonstrate a true intent to harm.
- A student with disabilities may not fully understand the implications of their words or actions, and/or their behaviors may be consistent with disability (e.g., difficulties managing emotions) but they pose no true intent to harm.

TABLE 2. No Intent to Harm vs. Possible Intent to Harm

NO INTENT TO HARM	POSSIBLE INTENT TO HARM
<p>Threats are statements/actions that do not express a lasting harm to someone. These include statements intended as figures of speech or reflect feelings that dissipate in a short period after reflection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat was in response to specific situation; perceived as a joke; no intent to harm • Made a threat, but does not pose a threat • No “true” threat (person on receiving end does not feel threatened) <p><i>May be resolved through problem-solving, conflict resolution, and/or current resources</i></p>	<p>Statements that express a possible continuing intent to harm someone. Emotions/actions indicate a desire to harm someone that extends beyond the immediate incident when the threat was made. Context and meaning are more important than verbal content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Context and meaning support a possible legitimate safety concern • Threat communicated intent to harm others (verbal, gesture, electronic, written, pictures) • Person(s) on receiving end is concerned/ threat was not perceived as a joke <p><i>Requires additional assessment to determine level of concern and actions needed</i></p>
<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two students use their fingers to “shoot” at one another while playing cops and robbers • “I’m gonna kill you” - said as a joke • “I’m gonna kill you” - said in a competition • “I’m gonna bust you up” - said in anger but then retracted after student calms down • “I could break you in half”- said to intimidate but retracted after calms down • “I’ll get you next time”- said after a fight but retracted after the two students reconcile • “Watch out or I’ll hurt you”- intimidating manner but retracted after calms down • “I oughta shoot that teacher” - said in anger but retracted after student calms down • Student found with pocketknife he accidentally left in his backpack after a camping trip. 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two students exchange threats and then throw rocks at each other. • “I’m gonna kill you”- said with intent to injure • “I’m gonna kill you”- while holding weapon with intent to harm/displaying serious anger • “I’m gonna bust you up” - not retracted later • “I could break you in half” - in intimidating manner, followed by stony silence • “I’ll get you next time” - said after a fight and the student refuses mediation • “Watch out or I’ll hurt you”- said by a student with a history of bullying • “I oughta shoot that teacher”- later denies making the statement • A student who threatened to stab a classmate is found to have a pocketknife in his backpack

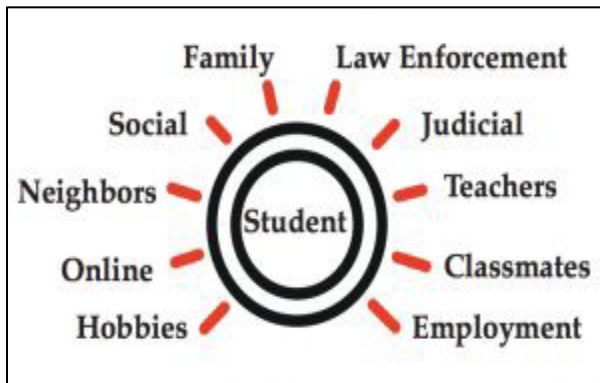
Sources: Cornell & Shears (2016); Charleston Co. Schools, SC (2018)

2. COMPLETE THE BTAM FULL ASSESSMENT, if warranted:

Step 2a: Gather Additional Information from Multiple Sources

The threat assessment is only as good as the data gathered. Therefore, data collection must be thorough and corroborated to facilitate good decision making.

FIGURE 3. Key Data Sources for Decision Making



Source: National Threat Assessment Center (2018)

Specific data sources may include the following:

- Academic and discipline records; including previous threat and suicide assessments.
- Previous school academic and discipline records.
- Law enforcement records of student.
- Search of student, locker, car (if applicable) on school property, according to district policy.
- Search (or search warrant) of room/home/vehicle with law enforcement, if appropriate.
- Interview with student of concern.
- Parent/guardian interview.
- Interview with school staff and/or classroom teacher(s).
- Interview with target individual(s) of threat.
- Interview with other student(s).
- Internet histories/activities; written and artistic material, etc.
- Social media history/activity.
- Information from probation, juvenile diversion, social services, and/or other involved agencies.
- Additional information determined necessary/helpful.

Data collection using multi-method and multi-source approach to conduct a contextual assessment is critical. Contextual assessment involves the STEP approach as *targeted violence stems from an interaction among the Subject(s), Target(s), Environment and Precipitating Incidents (STEP)*. See Figure 4.

FIGURE 4. STEP Approach for Contextual Assessment

VIOLENCE IS AN INTERACTION BETWEEN...	
Subject	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • person of concern • how individual perceives and deals with life • intensity of effort directed towards planning/preparation
Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identified target • persons fearful?
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • circumstances/situations affecting subject • external influences encouraging/discourage violence
Precipitating Events/ Protective Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • positive (protective) or negative impact that accelerate risk

Source: SIGMA Threat Management Associates (2018)

Thus, interviews with the person(s) of concern and potential targets, in addition to those who know the subject, are critical. Interviews can gather information not always captured by observations or records. In addition, interviews allow the BTAM team to assess if the subject(s) “story” is consistent with their actions. It is strongly recommended that interviews are led by a school mental health professional as they have received specialized training in interviewing skills. In addition, they are typically not seen as disciplinarians, thus oftentimes the subject will be more comfortable responding to questions.

**Note: If law enforcement/school resource officer leads the questioning, they could be perceived as acting as agents of law enforcement and thus Miranda Rights may need to be read as it can be considered investigative in nature. Thus, school officials are strongly encouraged to conduct the interviews as part of the inquiry process and involve law enforcement in the questioning when information reveals a potential high or imminent safety risk.*

When interviewing a student, it is critical for the adult to convey a neutral, non-biased, calm tone. The subject of concern and potential victims must feel heard and understood. It should feel like a conversation, not an interrogation. The following guidelines may be helpful, as well as the sample questions in Table 3:

- **Nonverbal Behaviors**

Be aware of your body posture. To convey interest and understanding, make good eye contact (be aware of cultural norms as eye contact between a student and someone of authority is not seen as culturally acceptable for some cultures), orient your body towards them, and maintain a physical posture of interest. Keep focused on the story/narrative of what the other person is disclosing.

- **Ask Skillful Questions**

How questions are phrased can be critical to the amount of detail you receive. Questions show you are interested in their perspective. There should be a balance between open and closed ended questions and avoid rapid firing of questions as you do not want the person to feel they are being interrogated. Questions should be interspersed with reflective statements, affirmations, and other ways that show the youth you are listening.

- **Use Open-Ended Questions**

The goal of open-ended questions is to get the interviewee talking and to provide more detail. It is best to start with open-ended questions the interviewee will respond to. An easy acronym to facilitate a good interviewing skill set is OARS—open-ended questions, affirmations, reflective statements, and summarizing.

- **Close-Ended Questions**

Close-ended questions can help provide clarification and help a person who may feel uncomfortable with the interview process to still engage in a conversation. Oftentimes, close ended questions are followed by open-ended questions to obtain additional information. Be careful not to ask too many closed-ended questions as the dynamics can then feel like an interrogation.

TABLE 3. Sample Interview Questions

Type of Question	Subject of Concern	Witness/Victim
Open-Ended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me what happened as your perspective is important. • What exactly did you say and do? (write down exact words) • Why did you say (or do) that? • How are you feeling right now? • How did you think he/she feels about what you said (or did)? • What are you going to do now that you have made this threat? • How do you think your actions might affect you? Your future? • Who are the people you turn to for support? • How can we help you? the situation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What exactly happened? What did you witness and/or observe? • What exactly did [student] say or do? (i.e., write down exact words, see if willing to share screenshots) • What do you think (the person of concern) meant when saying that? • What do you think led to the behaviors of concern occurring? • How do you feel about what he/she said (or did)? (note if perceived as a true threat) • Why do you think they said that or did those actions/behaviors? • How can we help you? the situation?
Closed-Ended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Do you know why you are here?” • “Are you feeling upset or angry right now?” If so, with whom/why? • “Did the conflict start because someone upset you?” • “Do you think carrying out your plan will solve all your problems?” • Are you concerned about what may happen next to you because of this process? • Do you use social media? Or are there websites you enjoy surfing? If so, are you willing to share which ones? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you concerned (scared, fearful, worried...)? • Are others concerned? • Are you scared to come to school? • Are you aware of a plan to harm others? If so, what details are you aware of? • Are you aware of any others that may be involved? If so, who are those individuals and what are the dynamics like between these individuals (e.g., leader, follower) • Do you think this can be resolved peacefully? If so, how?

In addition, data needs to be gathered to assess for *risk factors* and *warning signs*. Risk factors are variables that increase the probability of a student becoming violent. While far from perfect predictors, they signal the need to increase vigilance for warning signs. See Table 4 for a summary of identified risk factors.

TABLE 4. Risk Factors for Targeted School Violence

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially withdrawn • Isolated and alienated • Feels rejected • Violence/bullying victim • Feels persecuted/picked on • Low school interest and performance • Intolerance and prejudice • Drug and alcohol use • Affiliation with gangs • Expresses grievance/moral outrage • Thinking framed by ideology • Failure to affiliate with prosocial groups • Dependent on virtual community(ies) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational goals thwarted • Mental illness • Poor impulse control • Access to, and possession of, firearms • History of ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ violent expressions in writings and drawings ○ serious threats of violence ○ uncontrolled anger ○ impulsive and chronic hitting, intimidating, bullying ○ discipline problems ○ criminal violence ○ cruelty to animals
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Sources. Adapted from Amman et al. (2017); Dwyer et al. (1998); Meloy et al. (2011, 2014, 2015); Reeves & Brock (2017); U.S. Department of Education (2016).

Warning signs indicate a person of concern is actually considering an act of violence and is on the pathway to violence. Warning signs in isolation are concerning, but warning signs combined with a number of risk factors and stressors are especially worrisome. Direct special attention to the student who has suicidal thoughts, as such are often paired with homicidal thoughts. It is also important to note that the absence of violent behavior in one’s past might be irrelevant as some of these individuals do not display outward signs of violent behavior before carrying out an act of violence (de Becker, n.d., 2017). Table 5 below summarizes multiple factors associated with potential warning signs, which in turn indicate the need for BTAM team action. None of these factors alone are sufficient when it comes to predicting aggression and violence; thus, it is inappropriate, and potentially harmful, to use the risk factors and warning signs in simple checklist fashion.

TABLE 5. Warning Signs for Targeted School Violence

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targets identified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Persons ○ Places ○ Programs ○ Processes ○ Philosophies *Proxies of the above • Articulates motives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Personal ○ Political ○ Religious ○ Racial/ethnic ○ Environmental ○ Special interest ○ Grievances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing intensity of violence related <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Efforts ○ Desires ○ Planning • Direct and/or indirect communications about violence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Words consistent with actions ○ Sees violence as acceptable/only solution • Access to weapons or methods of planned harm • Leakage of ideations • Social withdrawal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional state <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hopelessness ○ Desperation ○ Despair ○ Suicidal thinking • Feelings of being picked on, teased, bullies, or humiliated • Increasing capacity to carry-out threats • Engagement with social media facilitating or promoting violence • Triggering events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Intimate partner problems ○ Interpersonal conflicts ○ Significant losses or personal failures
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Sources. Amman et al. (2017); de Becker (n.d.); Fein et al. (2004); Langman (2009, 2015); Meloy et al., (2011, 2014, 2015); Nicoletti & Spencer (2002); Reeves & Brock (2017).

Step 2b: Organize and Analyze the Information

Best practice guidelines highly recommend organizing and analyzing the information by answering the Secret Service key investigative questions. It is important to note these are NOT interview questions to be asked verbatim. Below are the questions the team needs to be able to answer collectively using the totality (all) of the information collected.

NTAC (2002, 2018) identified a set of investigative questions and themes that serve as framework to organize information. The original study identified 11 themes that are critical to identifying targeted school violence. In 2018, weapons access and emotional and developmental issues were added to the list of themes (however one could argue that weapon access was previously subsumed under capacity and emotional and developmental issues and considerations were considered throughout the entire BTAM process). Ultimately, these themes help the threat assessment team make a determination regarding the level of concern and potential the student will carry out a targeted act of violence. Information on each of the themes should be considered when conducting a school-based threat assessment. See Table 6 for the general question(s) associated with each theme. Appendix D provides a worksheet team members may use to organize information according to the themes as it is gathered.

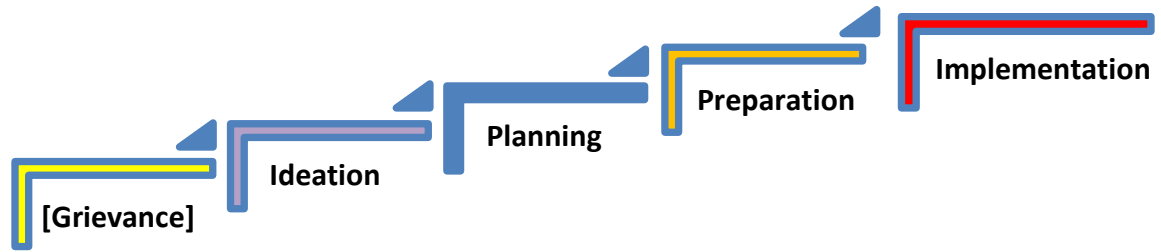
TABLE 6. Investigative Themes Outlined by NTAC (2002, 2018, 2019):

THEME	CENTRAL QUESTIONS
1. Motives	What motivated the student to engage in the behavior of concern? What is the student trying to solve?
2. Communications	Have there been any concerning, unusual, threatening, or violent communications? Are there communications about thoughts of suicide, hopelessness, or information relevant to the other investigative themes?
3. Inappropriate Interests	Does the student have inappropriate interests in weapons, school attacks or attackers, mass attacks, or other types of violence? Is there a fixation on an issue or a person?
4. Weapon Access	Is there access to weapons, especially firearms? Is there evidence of manufactured explosives or incendiary devices?
5. Stressors	Have there been any recent setbacks, losses, or challenges? How is the student coping with stressors?
6. Emotional and Developmental Issues	Is the student dealing with mental health issues or developmental disabilities? Is the student's behavior a product of those issues? What resources does the student need?
7. Desperation or Despair	Has the student felt hopeless, desperate, or like they are out of options?
8. Violence as an Option	Does the student think that violence is an acceptable, desirable, or only way to solve a problem or settle a grievance? Have they in the past?
9. Concerned Others	Has the student's behavior elicited concern for parents, friends, classmates, teachers, or others who know the student? Was the concern related to safety?
10. Capacity to Carry Out an Attack	Is the student's thinking and behavior organized enough to plan and execute an attack? Does the student have the resources?
11. Planning	Has the student initiated an attack plan, researched tactics, selected targets, or practiced with a weapon?
12. Consistency	Are the student's statements consistent with his or her actions or what others observe? If not, why?
13. Protective Factors	Are there positive and prosocial influences in the student's life? Does the student have a positive and trusting relationship with an adult at school? Does the student feel emotionally connected to other students?

Step 2c: Answer Assessment Questions and Determine Level of Concern

After the team has organized and analyzed the data, they answer the following assessment questions: 1) Does the person of concern POSE a threat of violence to others? 2) Does the person show a need for monitoring or intervention supports? When considering whether an individual poses a threat the team considers whether pathway behaviors are observed/identified. Figure 5 demonstrates the violence continuum and how specificity and intent can increase over time in absence of appropriate interventions at earlier stages.

FIGURE 5. The Pathway to Violence



Adapted from: Deisinger and Randazzo, SIGMA Threat Management Associates (2017)

While grievances are not the only way individuals begin entering the pathway to violence, perceived grievances were present in about half of the targeted violence and averted violence cases analyzed by the Secret Service/NTAC (2019, 2021). Often these grievances are related to bullying, feelings of victimization, personal relationship difficulties or feeling wronged. Other factors that contribute to individuals entering the pathway may include ideological, bias-related, political beliefs, psychotic symptoms, desire to kill, fame, notoriety, and other undetermined factors. The threat concern and need for directed attention increase as the situation moves further along the pathway to violence.

The BTAM team is to consider ALL data, including risk and protective factors, when answering the assessment questions and determining a level of concern. In turn, these decisions guide the team in directive actions and supports to be taken. The higher the level of concern, the more directive and intensive the supports must be. See Table 7 for guidelines on the various levels for consideration. *It is important to note that levels of concern are not predictive of future behavior and are not to be used to automatically determine a change of educational placement. However, the levels of concern are helpful to design interventions and supports that are appropriate for the level of concern.*

The BTAM Full Protocol in Appendix E may be used to document the team's findings. The assessment section organizes information gathered according to the SS/NTAC themes and documents the team's decisions. It also includes a management plan template should the team determine ongoing monitoring and interventions are needed for a period of time, as well as a parent notification form and reentry/follow-up meeting form. *It is recommended that districts/ISD's consult with their legal counsel to decide what information the district is comfortable including in formal educational records, sharing with parents, and potentially sharing following a FERPA request for educational records. Decisions regarding formal threat assessment documentation reside with the district/ISD.*

TABLE 7. Levels for Consideration

LEVEL OF CONCERN	DEFINITION
<i>Lower Concern</i>	<p>Individual/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence or serious harm to self/others, and any exhibited issues/concerns can be resolved easily.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat is vague, indirect, inconsistent, and implausible. • Information contained within the threat lacks detail or realism; no “true” threat. • Misunderstanding of what was communicated. • Taken out of context. • Student lacks developmental understanding. • Available information suggests that the person is unlikely to carry out the threat or become violent. • No identified grievances; thought was in passing to a specific circumstance/made in heat of the moment. • Subject is remorseful. • Supports are available and accessible. • Can be resolved with problem solving, conflict resolution, restorative approach, clarification, explanation, retraction, and/or an apology. • Managed through existing educational programming already in place.
<i>Moderate Concern</i>	<p>Person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence, or serious harm to self/others <i>at this time</i> but exhibits behaviors that indicate potential intent for future violence or serious harm to self/others (particularly if stressors cannot be addressed); and/or exhibits other concerning behavior that requires intervention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat is plausible but lacks specifics. • No clear indication the student has taken preparatory steps, although there may be ambiguous or inconclusive references pointing to that possibility • Some grievances but does not view situation as helpless • Moderate or lingering concerns about a student’s potential to act violently but willing to access supports. Open to help. • Has at least some protective factors present.
<i>High Concern</i>	<p>Person/situation appears to pose a threat of violence, exhibiting behaviors that indicate both a continuing intent to harm (ongoing ideation), and efforts to acquire the capacity to carry out the plan (planning and preparation); and may also exhibit other concerning behavior that require intervention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat is specific and plausible. There is an identified target or strong indication of target(s). • Information suggests concrete steps have been taken to act on the threat and has means (e.g., acquired or practiced with weapon, has victim under surveillance) but no plans for immediate execution of plan. • Information suggests a strong concern about a student’s potential to act violently in absence of interventions. • Strong grievance; intent on violence as only solution. • Minimal to no supports; resistive to problem solving/interventions.

<i>Imminent Threat</i>	<p>Person/situation appears to pose a clear and immediate threat of serious violence toward others (movement towards implementation) that requires containment and action to protect identified or identifiable target(s); and may also exhibit other concerning behavior that require intervention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same indicators as high risk but immediate containment is needed to address safety and/or mental health issues. • Notify law enforcement immediately.
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Adapted from: VA Center for School and Campus Safety (2016); Amman, et al (2017), FBI (2017)

In summary, the team answers the two key questions below and determines the level of concern.

1. Does the subject pose a threat of violence to others? (i.e., moderate, high, imminent risk)? Note, if the student poses a potential threat to self, a suicide risk assessment must also be completed.
2. Does the student need additional interventions, and *on-going* supports and engagement for a period of time to mitigate risk, decrease stressors, and/or build protective factors?

If “NO” to both (i.e., low level) then:

- Document the BTAM process followed, and actions taken to resolve the concern (e.g., conflict resolution, problem solving, restorative approach).
- *If the subject shows a need for help or intervention, such as mental health care or mentoring, then provide the subject/subject’s family with appropriate referrals and document.*
- Close the case.

If “YES” to one or both then:

- Take appropriate actions.
- Develop an intervention and monitoring plan, appropriate for level of concern.
- Provide the subject/subject’s family with appropriate mental health/support referrals.
- Document the case, including referrals made.
- Assign a case manager for progress monitoring, accountability, and follow-up.

The data to support the team’s decisions should be documented in the BTAM Full Protocol (Appendix E)

STEP 6: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A MANAGEMENT PLAN (if warranted)

To effectively manage and mitigate potential risk, interventions and supports need to be put in place to help the person of concern off the pathway to violence. ***It is critical to note that punitive measures such as suspension and expulsion can increase risk!*** Actions that further disconnect the subject from monitoring and supports can further escalate emotions and disenfranchise the person from the school and social environment. Thus, these types of consequences should be implemented only after careful team consideration and should always be paired with supportive interventions. For example, mitigation may best be done by not suspending the student of concern and keeping them at school to implement interventions and supports. This keeps the student connected and supervised and also decreases the opportunity for them to be at home alone where they have more time to conduct research and plan how to carry out the act of violence. In addition, further disconnecting the student can increase grievances.

TABLE 8. Potential Responses Based on Level of Concern

LOW LEVEL OF CONCERN RESPONSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Resolve threat with conflict resolution, problem solving, restorative approach, clarification, explanation, retraction, or an apology <input type="checkbox"/> Notify intend victim’s parent/guardian, if necessary; reassure situation has been resolved <input type="checkbox"/> Notify subject’s parents, explain situation and steps take to resolve <input type="checkbox"/> If subject to disciplinary action, ensure consequences are appropriate to level of concern; follow disciplinary due processes <input type="checkbox"/> Resolve with referral to appropriate school or community-based resources, if needed <input type="checkbox"/> If new information comes to attention of team, re-assess level of concern <input type="checkbox"/> Manage through existing educational programming
MODERATE LEVEL OF CONCERN RESPONSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Take precautions to protect potential victims; notify their parents/guardians <input type="checkbox"/> Reinforce actions taken to ensure safety; may need to share identity of subject who made threat <input type="checkbox"/> Subject of concern <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provide direct supervision <input type="checkbox"/> Explain the consequences of carrying out the threat <input type="checkbox"/> Contact parents/guardians to assume responsibility for supervision and to collaborate on management plan <input type="checkbox"/> Consult with SRO or local law enforcement to assist in monitoring and supervising the subject of concern; can help determine if law enforcement action is needed <input type="checkbox"/> Follow disciplinary procedures and due process; ensure consequences are appropriate to level of concern <input type="checkbox"/> Provide referrals for counseling, conflict mediation, or other interventions to reduce and/or address underlying conflict <input type="checkbox"/> If mental health issues are a contributing factor, a mental health assessment may be conducted or recommended <input type="checkbox"/> If risk potentially related to a disability, conduct appropriate review according to special education procedures/laws <input type="checkbox"/> Develop and implement a monitoring plan (see Appendix E)
HIGH LEVEL OF CONCERN RESPONSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Take precautions to protect potential victims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reinforce actions taken to ensure safety and need to share identity of subject who made threat <input type="checkbox"/> Subject of concern <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provide direct supervision <input type="checkbox"/> Explain the consequences of carrying out the threat <input type="checkbox"/> Contact parents/guardians to assume responsibility for supervision or law enforcement assumes responsibility for supervision <input type="checkbox"/> Engage law enforcement to help manage threat <input type="checkbox"/> Follow disciplinary procedure in accordance with conduct policy; follow disciplinary due processes <input type="checkbox"/> Provide referrals for counseling, conflict mediation, or other interventions to reduce risk of violence and/or address underlying conflict <input type="checkbox"/> If mental health issues are a contributing factor, a mental health assessment may be conducted by a qualified medical/psychological professional (mandating an evaluation conducted by non-school

<p>personnel at the parent’s expense as a condition of returning to school could be considered denial of FAPE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Evaluation needs to consider ALL available information and a written report needs to be provided back to the school; assessment must identify problem/conflict and recommend strategies to address the problem/conflict ○ Educational services must be provided if excluded from school during assessment process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ May be referred for special education or 504 evaluation □ School administrator or disciplinary hearing officer will determine conditions of readmission to the school (may include cooperation with a mental health evaluation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A reentry/readmission meeting is highly recommended prior to a subject’s return to school □ Threat assessment team will make every effort to obtain required signed permission for release of information to exchange information with other providers; document if parents refuse to sign a release(s) of information □ If risk may be potentially related to a disability, appropriate review needs to be conducted according to special education procedures/laws □ Develop and implement a management plan (see Appendix E)
IMMINENT THREAT RESPONSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ May need containment via emergency mental health hold or law enforcement taking into custody □ Consider all options provided above for high level, plus □ If student removed from academic setting due to violation of law, Code of Conduct, or school system policy, and/or it is determined student may pose a significant risk to health and/or safety of others, due processes for change of placement must be followed

The BTAM team should develop a written management plan. To effectively manage and mitigate potential risk, interventions need to focus on building resiliency and protective factors for the subject of concern while also addressing safety concerns. *The threat assessment process is designed to be collaborative in nature and interface with other processes already established in schools.* This may include MTSS, PBIS, student assistance teams, mentoring, problem solving, conflict resolution, skill-building groups, academic supports, counseling services, community-based resources, and/or the initiation or current revision of plans (e.g., Individualized Education Program (IEP), 504 plan, Functional Behavioral Assessment, Behavior Intervention Plan, etc.). Environmental stressors such as bullying and discrimination may also need to be addressed by implementing universal prevention programming and positive school climate initiatives (Maryland Center for School Safety, 2018; Reeves, 2020).

The goal is *not* to focus on punishment but to focus on supports that lead a student toward a pathway of success and a pathway of hope. Thus, collaborative partnerships between schools, community agencies and providers, caregivers, and students themselves, help to support successful educational and life outcomes.

Develop and Implement Intervention and Monitoring Plan (if warranted)

In addition to the information shared in Step 6 in the previous section, below are various strategies to be considered to help manage threatening situations, in addition to building resiliency and protective factors for the subject. Consider existing support and resources available within the school (i.e., multi-tiered systems of supports; MTSS, PBIS, etc.), and if the student is receiving special education services, it is important to follow special education procedures and guidelines. *It is important to note that completion of a threat assessment does not automatically necessitate a referral for special education and if any changes of placement or programming*

are to be considered for a student with an identified educational disability, which must be done by the special education team.

The Monitoring Plan in the BTAM Full Protocol (Appendix E) provides additional guidance on intervention and support options for consideration. This includes environmental (school climate and culture) considerations as there may be dynamics occurring within the school that are contributing to an escalation of behaviors. Strategies to directly help the individual of concern include monitoring, skill development, resiliency building, relationship building, and disciplinary strategies that include alternatives to suspension and expulsion. Punishment alone does not change behavior! In addition, overly punitive consequences can escalate grievances. Thus, even when consequences are warranted, when planning them please consider:

CONSEQUENCES WITH CARE

Implementing and Progress Monitoring

For students who the team determined to be at a low level, informal monitoring (Tier 1 supports) may be sufficient. For those subjects determined to be at moderate, high, or imminent levels, more formalized progress monitoring will need to be implemented. It is highly recommended a follow-up meeting(s) is scheduled to review progress and responsiveness to interventions and supports. It is important to reevaluate the plan and make adjustments as needed. If higher concern, progress monitoring will be more frequent (i.e., daily, weekly). If moderate concern, progress monitoring may be every few weeks or monthly. Progress monitoring should occur as long as necessary to mitigate risk with the goal of lessening the frequency of progress monitoring as the student of concern shows growth toward management plan goals.

Closing Case/Place on Inactive Status if Risk is Resolved

As for closure (or placing on “in-active” status) of the case, this is done when “no” can be answered to both assessment questions. Thus, formal monitoring is no longer needed, and the subject has responded well to interventions and is on a more positive pathway.

STEP 7: CREATE AND PROMOTE SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATES

Comprehensive Supports:

Threat assessment is most effective when embedded within a comprehensive multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS). Efforts to improve school climate, safety, and learning are not separate endeavors but require interdisciplinary collaborative partnerships that focus on prevention before there is a need for threat assessment. The document, *A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools* (Cowan, et al, 2015), specifies best practices for establishing safe and successful schools:

- Implement high-quality, rigorous curricula that address core academic competencies, character and resiliency building principles, mental and behavioral wellness, and positive behavior.
- Establish a process for regularly reviewing student data (both behavioral and academic).
- Require a multidisciplinary, data-based decision-making team comprised of diverse stakeholders, including principals/administrators, teachers (general and special education), parents, school-

employed mental health professionals (e.g., school psychologists) and other specialized instructional support personnel.

- Ensure access to a range of high-quality, evidence-based interventions to address the comprehensive needs of students.

School climate and safety surveys, focus groups, and safety and wellness initiatives are also important components to assessing and building a positive school climate. Positive school climates that focus on building connections and relationships are critical to individuals “breaking the code of silence” and reporting concerns. These actions can help to identify students before they enter onto the pathway to violence and also help to identify students who need a threat assessment and additional supports.

STEP 8: CONDUCT TRAINING FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS

School safety is the responsibility of all. Thus, direct, and explicit training must take place for all stakeholders (students, teachers, support staff (including bus drivers, cafeteria staff, building engineers/custodial, front office staff), coaches, mentors, parents, community members) so they know how and when to report threats. Confidential reporting procedures (see Step 2) must be easily accessible and monitored so concerns can be responded to quickly. Again, the effectiveness of the BTAM process relies greatly on the information coming forth.

The BTAM team needs high-quality training that focuses on the knowledge and skills needed to effectively implement the pre-K–12 BTAM process with fidelity. When selecting high-quality training, it is important to ensure the BTAM model is validated and uses a multidisciplinary approach (e.g., Secret Service/National Threat Assessment Center Model being discussed in this guide). The model must be standardized yet flexible to meet varying resources. At minimum, administrators, school mental health professionals (school psychologists, counselors, social workers), and SROs should all be trained, preferably together in teams. The training should focus on protocols and processes of systematic implementation, biases that can impact decision making, and integrate case studies. Thus, a good BTAM process mitigates biases and assumptions from occurring and requires a thorough analysis of the variables, context, and behaviors before making any determination. Lastly, ongoing coaching and supports should be provided, as implementation of the process and learning how to effectively assess BTAM cases of concern takes time and experience. Systems should also be developed to support new members joining the team each year.

In summary, an effective BTAM process integrates the above-mentioned best practice guidelines. However, learning about best practices is just a first step. Knowing how to implement BTAM effectively, and with fidelity, is critical to saving lives, enhancing school safety, and ensuring legal and ethical guidelines are followed.

DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION SHARING

BTAM Records

Except for imminent risk to safety, there is little legal guidance on the development, storage, and retention of threat assessment records. Thus, each district should obtain guidance from their own legal counsel regarding the management of threat assessment records.

Decisions on record keeping are important as maintaining records establishes a legal and behavioral

justification for intervention. Case law has supported that if a school had foreseeability (even the slightest inclination there was a safety concern), the school is obligated to act upon the concern; otherwise claims of negligence could be made. Thus, it is critical for BTAM teams to document the actions taken to support their good faith efforts to identify, inquire/investigate, assess, and manage threatening situations.

Teams are also encouraged to retain BTAM records as long as allowed under relevant laws or regulations. Retention of such records can be important as individuals may pose an ongoing threat after leaving school, graduating, or losing employment. At minimum, school-level BTAM teams need to establish a confidential record-keeping system. Ideally, school-level BTAM teams should provide a copy of the completed BTAM protocol to a district-level coordinator/administrator. This allows for accountability that the process is being done with fidelity, creates a back-up record in case the record needs to be referenced in the future, and also allows for the gathering of statistics to inform strategic investment of future needed BTAM resources.

Last, it is important for documentation to be recorded fairly, objectively, reasonably, and timely (Table 9).

TABLE 9. FORT: Recording of Documentation

<u>F</u>air	Seek to understand situations and give individuals an opportunity to be heard and understood
<u>O</u>bjective	Seek information based on facts and observations of the case, not on speculation or bias
<u>R</u>easonable	Engage in responses that are effective and appropriate to the level of concern
<u>T</u>imely	Quickly and responsively addresses reports of threatening behavior

Source: Deisinger and Randazzo, SIGMA Threat Management Associates (2017)

In many cases, the threat assessment record could be considered an educational record, thus FERPA guidelines must be followed. In addition, caregivers/parents may request a copy of the threat assessment record. Thus, be sure to follow the guidelines above and also ensure the documentation is a summary of the findings and the data to support those findings. Specific sources or identifying/confidential information of others are not to be included in the threat assessment record. Identification of sources could put their own safety at risk and others will be hesitant to report safety concern if they know they can be identified. Be cautious of just redacting names in a report as the individual could still be identified through other contextual cues even if their name is redacted.

Centralized Database

More districts are developing and maintaining a centralized database to record completed threat assessments. It is important the threat assessment record documents the thoroughness of the threat assessment, the multi-disciplinary team members involved, and a summary of the data that supports the team conclusions. While written records may be developed, many districts are now investing in electronic platforms. There are many companies that have electronic platforms available for a fee, but BTAM team input should be elicited to ensure the platform meets the school/district needs and the company is reputable. A database system allows for accessibility at a later date and follow-up on specific individuals that have previously been assessed. In addition, many of the electronic platforms also come with the ability to gather incident-tracking data (to better inform prevalence and outcome data). Regardless of preference, all these records should be stored in a secure, centralized location that is accessible to members of the team but restricts unauthorized persons from having access.

Due to the sensitivity of information contained in threat assessment records, districts also need to ensure records are encrypted. If cloud storage is being used, it is important to ensure the district owns the student records (and not an off-site storage company) and that the records are encrypted. Thus, consultation with technology professionals is often warranted as districts establish record keeping protocols.

Information Sharing

“School officials with a legitimate educational interest” may access Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protected education records (see chart below for those records considered “educational records”). Schools determine the criteria for who is considered a “school official with a legitimate educational interest;” this generally includes teachers, counselors, school administrators, and other school staff. Members of a threat assessment team who are not school employees may be designated as school officials if they are:

- under the direct control of the school with respect to the maintenance and use of personally identifiable information (PII) from educational records;
- are subject to the requirements of 34 CFR § 99.33(a) governing the use and re-disclosure of PII from educational records; and
- otherwise meet the school’s criteria for being school officials with legitimate educational interest.
 - For example, an SRO/law enforcement officer employed by the city police department, or a community mental health professional employed by the community mental health agency that serve on a school’s threat assessment team could not disclose, without consent, PII from a student’s educational records unless the situation met the health or safety emergency exception.

When there is a safety concern, schools must balance safety with student privacy interests. FERPA contains a “health or safety emergency exception.” This exception allows for school officials to ***disclose PII from educational records without consent to appropriate parties only when there is an actual, impending, or imminent emergency, such as an articulable and significant threat.***

Schools have discretion to determine the following:

- What constitutes a health and safety emergency?
- “Appropriate parties” – typically these include law enforcement/SRO’s (thus why a Memorandum of Understanding, MOU, is important), first responders, public health officials, trained medical and mental health personnel, and parents (i.e., potential targets).

The information that is disclosed must be related to the specific presenting concern and may be disclosed only to protect the health and/or safety of students or other individuals. Within a reasonable time after a disclosure is made, a notation must be made in the student’s educational record to the articulable and significant threat that formed the basis for the disclosure, and the parties to whom the information was disclosed. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosure but do not need to be proactively informed that records have been disclosed. Other considerations include:

- FERPA exception is temporarily limited to the period of the emergency and does not allow for a blanket release of PII.
- Does not allow for disclosures for those emergencies that *might* occur (thus need to substantiate evidence that supports strong likelihood emergency will occur without disclosure).

- Only covers educational records.
- Must document disclosure in subject's educational records (basis of disclosure and to whom the PII was shared).

The U.S. Department of Education would not find a school in violation of disclosing FERPA protected information under the health and safety exception as long as the school had a rationale based upon information available at the time, for making determination there was a significant and articulable threat to the health and safety of the student or other individuals. It is also important to note that FERPA does not cover personal knowledge or observations, thus professionals may share their personal observations if asked about a significant safety concern (e.g., a teacher overhears a student making threatening remarks to another student, the teacher is not prohibited from sharing that information with appropriate parties.) However, if a school official learns of information about a student through his or her official role in creating or maintaining an educational record (e.g., suspension), then that information is covered by FERPA and must meet the FERPA exceptions to disclose.

Misinterpretations of FERPA exceptions can hinder efforts to conduct a thorough threat assessment and provide assistance and appropriate interventions. Therefore, it is important for schools to understand when to appropriately utilize the health or safety emergency exception.

TABLE 10. Educational Records Covered Under FERPA

<i>EDUCATIONAL RECORDS</i>	<i>NOT EDUCATIONAL RECORDS</i>
Transcripts	Records that are kept in the sole possession of the maker and used only as personal memory aids
Disciplinary records	Law enforcement unit records
Standardized test results	Grades on peer-graded papers before they are collected and recorded by teacher
Health (including mental health) and family history records	Records created or received by a school after an individual is no longer in attendance and that are not directly related to the individual's attendance at the school
Records on services provided to students under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act IDEA/IDEIA	Employee records that relate exclusively to an individual in that individual's capacity as an employee
Records on services and accommodations provided to students under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of ADA	Information obtained through a school official's personal knowledge or observation and not from a student's educational records

School officials should consult with district legal counsel if clarification is needed. Additional guidance and information can be found below:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Ave. SW Washington, DC 20202-8520 FERPA@ed.gov
<http://rem.s.ed.gov/K12FERPA.aspx> - click on information sharing tab

HIPPA: <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/index.html>

IDEA:

https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2004/privacy/section_2d.asp#:~:text=IDEA%20protects%20the%20privacy%20of,special%20education%20and%20related%20services

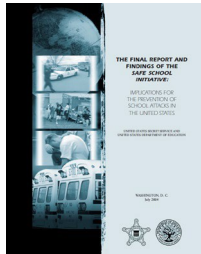
U.S. Department of Education (2019). “School Resource Officers, Law Enforcement Units, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)”

https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource_document/file/SRO_FAQs_2-5-19_0.pdf

Pursuant to **S.C. Code Ann. § 63-19-810(C)** When a child is charged by a law enforcement officer for an offense which would be a misdemeanor or felony if committed by an adult, not including a traffic or wildlife violation over which courts other than the family court have concurrent jurisdiction as provided in Section 63-3-520, the law enforcement officer also shall notify the principal of the school in which the child is enrolled, if any, of the nature of the offense. This information may be used by the principal for monitoring and supervisory purposes but otherwise must be kept confidential by the principal in the same manner required by Section 63-19-2220(E).

In summary, BTAM saves lives, can help prevent disproportionality, and most importantly helps individuals onto a more positive pathway. But it must be done with fidelity following the best practice guidelines provided by the Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center as outlined in this guide.

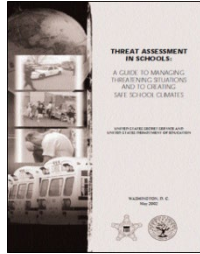
KEY RESOURCES



The Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative:

Implications for the Prevention of School Attacks in the United States (2002)

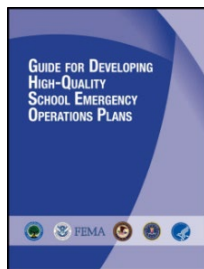
Available at: https://www.secretservice.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/ssi_final_report.pdf



Threat Assessment in Schools:

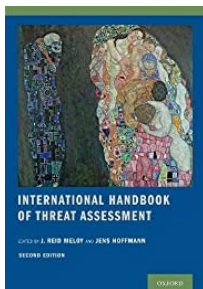
A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates (2002)

Available at: https://www.secretservice.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/ssi_guide.pdf



Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Plans (2013)

Available at: https://rem.s.ed.gov/docs/School_Guide_508C.pdf



International Handbook of Threat Assessment, 2nd Edition (2021)

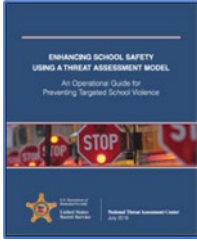
Available (for purchase) at: <https://academic.oup.com/book/30016>



Making Prevention a Reality:

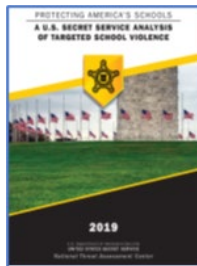
Identifying, Assessing & Managing the Threat of Targeted Attacks (2017)

Available at: <https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/making-prevention-a-reality.pdf/view>



**Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model:
An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence (2018)**

Available at: https://www.secretservice.gov/sites/default/files/reports/2020-10/USSS_NTAC_Enhancing_School_Safety_Guide.pdf



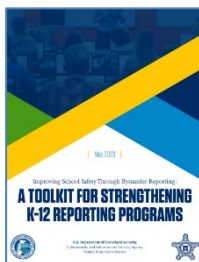
**Protecting America's Schools:
A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence (2019)**

Available at: https://www.secretservice.gov/sites/default/files/reports/2020-10/USSS_NTAC_Enhancing_School_Safety_Guide.pdf



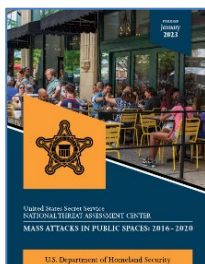
**Averting Targeted School Violence:
A US Secret Service Analysis of Plots Against Schools (2021)**

Available at: <https://www.secretservice.gov/sites/default/files/reports/2021-03/USSS%20Averting%20Targeted%20School%20Violence.2021.03.pdf>



**Improving School Safety Through Bystander Reporting:
A Toolkit for Strengthening K-12 Reporting Programs (2023)**

Available at: https://www.secretservice.gov/sites/default/files/reports/2023-05/cisa-uss-s-k-12-bystander-reporting-toolkit-508_final_0.pdf



Mass Attacks in Public Spaces: 2016-2020 (2023)

Available at: <https://www.secretservice.gov/newsroom/reports/threat-assessments/mass-attacks-public-spaces/details-1>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Colorado School Safety and Resource Center

- <https://colorado.gov/CSSRC>

National Association of School Psychologist – Safety and Crisis Resources

- www.nasponline.org/btam
- www.nasponline.org/btam-sped
- <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis/a-framework-for-safe-and-successful-schools>
- <http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis>
- <http://www.nasponline.org/professional-development/prepare-training-curriculum>
- <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-safety-and-crisis/systems-level-prevention/threat-assessment-at-school>

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

- <https://www.pbis.org/>

Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance Center

- <https://rem.ed.gov/>

South Carolina Department of Education – School Safety Resources

- <https://www.ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/school-safety/>

Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety

- <https://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/virginia-center-school-and-campus-safety>

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APPENDIX A

BUILDING A BTAM PROGRAM: 8-STEP ACTION PLAN

Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) teams are to collectively answer the questions below to further enhance building their BTAM program based on the 8 steps outlined by the U.S. Secret Service/National Threat Assessment Center (2018). The responses below may be used to establish short- and long-term goals.

1. ESTABLISH A MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM

<p>Who currently serves on your BTAM team or who will serve on your BTAM team?</p>	<p>Expertise represented in the following areas:</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Administration</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Behavior Management</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Counseling/Mental Health</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Instruction</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Special Education</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> School Safety/Security</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Management</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Technology</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Administration	<input type="checkbox"/> Behavior Management	<input type="checkbox"/> Counseling/Mental Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Instruction	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Education	<input type="checkbox"/> School Safety/Security	<input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Management	<input type="checkbox"/> Technology	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<input type="checkbox"/> Administration	<input type="checkbox"/> Behavior Management	<input type="checkbox"/> Counseling/Mental Health											
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Instruction	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Education	<input type="checkbox"/> School Safety/Security											
<input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Management	<input type="checkbox"/> Technology											
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:											
<p>How are you training your team members regarding biases?</p>													

2. DEFINE PROHIBITED AND CONCERNING BEHAVIORS

<p>Has your school/district defined prohibited/concerning behaviors to be referred to the BTAM team?</p> <p>What are those behaviors? (See Step 2 in the SCDE BTAM Guide; NTAC, 2018)</p>	
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3. CREATE A CENTRAL REPORTING MECHANISM

What are the various ways (reporting mechanisms) your school community members report concerns?	
If technology is being utilized for reporting, have you verified that it is working?	
How frequently do you verify technology is working and who is assigned to do this task?	

4. DEFINE THRESHOLD FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT INTERVENTION

Are you including carefully selected and well-trained SRO/LEO liaison on the BTAM team?	
How are they being included in the BTAM process?	
What more should/could be done to ensure appropriate SRO/LEO selection and inclusion on BTAM teams?	

5. ESTABLISH THREAT ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

What data sources do BTAM teams have access to and need to consider when conducting a threat assessment?	
--	--

6. DEVELOP RISK MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

What intervention and supports are available at school, within the district, and in the community?

(Consider academic, social-emotional, mental health supports for student and possibly family.)

7. CREATE AND PROMOTE SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATES

What initiatives are being done in your school/district to promote a positive school climate and for ALL to feel accepted?

What is being done to support educators?

8. CONDUCT TRAINING FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS

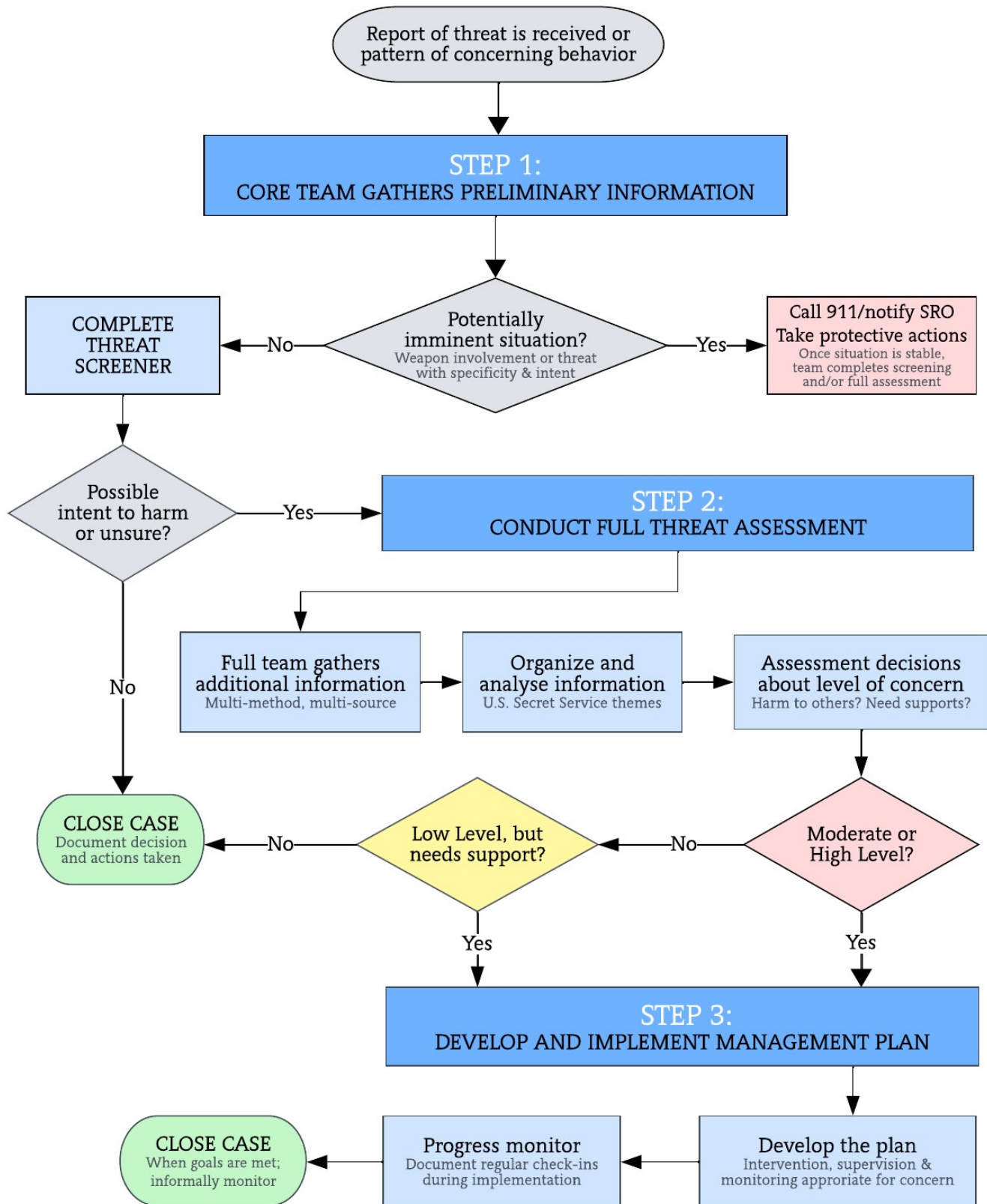
How is awareness training being conducted with students, staff, caregivers, and the community?

What more training needs to be done?

Adapted from: *Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence* (2018). USSS/NTAC.

APPENDIX B

BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT (BTAM) PROCEDURES



APPENDIX C

BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT - SCREENING TOOL

Student:	School:	Today's Date:
DOB:	Identified Gender:	Grade:
Parent/Guardian #1 Name/Phone:	Parent/Guardian #1 Name/Phone:	
Does the student have a disability? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes: <input type="checkbox"/> IEP or <input type="checkbox"/> 504 Plan		Disability:
Date of Incident that Initiated Screening:		Time of Incident:
Description of Incident:		
Core threat assessment team members: *At minimum the screening team includes an administrator and <u>at least one</u> school mental health professional (e.g., school counselor, psychologist, social worker, mental health counselor). If available, consultation with SRO should occur to ensure no community and/or social media concerns. NOTE: weapon involvement or threat with specificity & intent, immediately proceed to full threat assessment with SRO/law enforcement involvement.		

***Core threat assessment team members complete the screening using the information below as a guide before making a decision.**
 The decision must consider age, developmental level, credibility, and history of concerns regarding the student who made the threat. Credibility of the threat is based on student's presentation, whether others feel threatened, and consideration of other information known about this student.

INITIAL QUESTIONS:

1. Is it an emergency or imminent situation? ☐ NO - proceed to #2 ☐ YES - call 911/notify SRO/take protective actions.
2. Is sexual assault/harassment, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence involved? ☐ NO ☐ YES - notify Title IX Coordinator
3. Does the student have a disability with IEP/504 Plan? ☐ NO ☐ YES - engage representative from IEP/504 team

SCREENING DATA SOURCES GATHERED:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interview student of concern | <input type="checkbox"/> Check-in with teachers/staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Interview other student(s) involved |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Check-in with parent | <input type="checkbox"/> Social media/internet | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Records review (cumulative, intervention) | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Check the factor prevalent to guide the team screening decision. <i>Note: Screeners do not capture every variable. The team may recommend conducting a full Threat Assessment if other variables warrant.</i>		
FACTOR	No Intent to Harm No threat made or made a threat but <i>no intent to harm</i> is indicated, may be resolved, or managed through problem-solving process or existing supports	Possible Intent to Harm - Needs Further Assessment Context and meaning indicate student <i>possibly poses a legitimate safety concern</i> ; needs further assessment before determining level of concern and follow-up actions
Type of threat - communications - context	<input type="checkbox"/> Taken out of context (words/actions expressed were taken from song lyrics, video games, movie, or other sources) <input type="checkbox"/> Words/actions were done response to assignment/prompt <input type="checkbox"/> Not able to validate threat/situation even occurred <input type="checkbox"/> Impulsive/not planned but emotion appropriate for situation/event <input type="checkbox"/> Person receiving threat doesn't feel threatened/perceived it as a joke; threat response to specific situation	<input type="checkbox"/> Context supports a possible serious threat. <input type="checkbox"/> Threat with possible intent to harm general or specific target/victim(s): verbal, non-verbal, written, picture, social media <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of forethought/planning of potential targeted violence <input type="checkbox"/> Impulsive/not planned, but severe emotional reaction given situation <input type="checkbox"/> Person on receiving end concerned; threat not perceived as joke <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to determine at this time
Motive/goals - violence acceptable or desirable - stressors	<input type="checkbox"/> No motive of goals or intent to harm expressed <input type="checkbox"/> No indicators of ongoing grievances <input type="checkbox"/> Emotions dissipated with adult intervention <input type="checkbox"/> No evidence of stressors beyond typical day-to-day stress	<input type="checkbox"/> Expressed motivation/grievances/reasons for planned violence <input type="checkbox"/> Sees violence as desirable/acceptable/only way to solve problem <input type="checkbox"/> Emotions did <i>not</i> dissipate with adult intervention <input type="checkbox"/> Pattern of victimization/bullied; sees other solutions as ineffective <input type="checkbox"/> Stressors are evident in school, home and/or community <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to determine at this time
Plan - researching or planning - consistent story	<input type="checkbox"/> No indicators or evidence of a plan/researching plan <input type="checkbox"/> Story/explanation is consistent with actions/data obtained	<input type="checkbox"/> Indicators of a potential plan (e.g., evidence of thought/planning) <input type="checkbox"/> Story inconsistent with actions/data obtained; deceptive; not forthcoming <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to determine at this time
Access to weapons	<input type="checkbox"/> No known access to weapons <input type="checkbox"/> Access to weapons but only under careful supervision of adults, responsible use, no risk factors evident, no plan to harm others	<input type="checkbox"/> Has access to harmful or lethal weapons or is known to be trying to gain access and have risk factors of concern. *Access with warning signs, duty to contact law enforcement/SRO <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to determine at this time

Perceptions - hopeless, despair, desperation	<input type="checkbox"/> Has hope that stressors can be addressed/resolved; wants to live; no expression of disregard/ending life of self or others	<input type="checkbox"/> Has expressed thoughts of hopelessness, helplessness, desperation, suicidal ideation, and/or disregard for life <i>*If suicidal ideation must also complete suicide protocol</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to determine at this time
Developmental factors - emotional and developmental issues - capacity	<input type="checkbox"/> Student lacks developmental understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Disability impairs social communication and ability to recognize consequences of words, statements, or actions <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes consequences of words/actions and responded appropriately to the concern/consequences/problem solving <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks cognitive and/or physical capacity to carry out goal/plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes consequences of words, statements, or actions but lacks appropriate contrition, is indifferent, or does not care <input type="checkbox"/> Has the cognitive and/or physical capacity to carry out stated goal/plan and possible desire and intent is evident <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to determine at this time
Management of concerns - consistency	<input type="checkbox"/> Behavior is consistent with baseline behaviors and may be managed effectively through universal supports or current specialized plan (504, IEP, intervention plan) <input type="checkbox"/> Behavior was rare/isolated occurrence (e.g., typical peer-to-peer conflict);no escalation of other concerning behaviors/stressors <input type="checkbox"/> Willing to engage in efforts to resolve and/or address situation of concern (genuine apology, problem solving)	<input type="checkbox"/> A pattern of concerning behaviors is evident <input type="checkbox"/> Need or possible need for ongoing monitoring and supports <input type="checkbox"/> Supports in place felt to be inadequate to ensure safety at this time <input type="checkbox"/> Unwilling to engage in efforts to resolve and/or address situation of concern; and/or intent to resolve/address situation lacks genuine intent <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to determine at this time
Involvement of caregiver(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Supportive involvement of caregiver(s); willing to collaborate with school; actively monitor behaviors at home	<input type="checkbox"/> Caregiver(s) inconsistently involved, lack of supervision, and/or can be resistive to collaboration with school <input type="checkbox"/> Struggling to manage child's behavior <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to determine at this time
Connectedness - trusting relationships - concerned others	<input type="checkbox"/> Student identifies with prosocial peer group; responsible adult mentor(s) <input type="checkbox"/> No concerns from others about escalating/changing behaviors or violence	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacks connectedness and/or affiliation with prosocial groups and/or responsible adult mentor(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Concerns expressed by others about changes in behavior <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to determine at this time

TEAM DECISION: Based upon known and accessible information, the expressed behavior is determined to indicate:

****If there is not enough information to determine no intent to harm, then must proceed to full threat assessment.****

- ☐ **NO EVIDENCE OF INTENT TO HARM:** No threat made, or no evidence of intent to harm. Emotions dissipated after reflection. The situation was resolved or managed through problem solving, conflict resolution, restorative approach, and/or existing supports.

Rationale for decision (summarize data gathered and reviewed, attach additional information if needed):

Follow Up Steps (check all that apply)	Person Responsible	Date Completed
<input type="checkbox"/> Conference with student and parent(s)/guardian(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Mediation / Restorative conference / Problem-solving process		
<input type="checkbox"/> Schedule IEP review / 504 Plan review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop or revise behavior plan and/or safety plan		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		

- ☐ **POSSIBLE INTENT TO HARM – PROCEED TO FULL THREAT ASSESSMENT:** Need to gather additional information to assess the situation and determine the need for supports. Behaviors expressed a possible continuing intent to harm; expressed emotions and possible desire to harm someone that extends beyond the immediate incident when the threat was made; context and meaning indicate possible safety concern; possible access/trying to gain access to means. **PROCEED TO FULL THREAT ASSESSMENT.**

TEAM MEMBERS ENGAGED IN SCREENING:

Name: _____ Position (Administrator): _____
Name: _____ Position (School Mental Health Professional): _____
Name: _____ Position (SRO/Law Enforcement): _____
Name: _____ Position: _____

APPENDIX D

BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT - CASE WORKSHEET

STUDENT OF CONCERN: _____

DATE: _____

TEAM MEMBER: _____

POSITION: _____

This worksheet is designed for individual team members to help structure their personal notes when gathering information on a case. Each team member should have their own copy of the worksheet to record the findings of their assigned data points. Each team member will then bring their case worksheet to the team discussion and share their findings. The team will summarize relevant information in the final report, collectively answer the assessment questions, and develop a monitoring plan, if warranted. **THIS WORKSHEET IS NOT PART OF THE FINAL DOCUMENTATION**, though individual team members are welcome to keep their worksheet as a memory aid.

Determine Location of Person of Concern and Any Identified Targets

As the team starts to gather information, determine the location (if known) of the person of concern and any identified targets (i.e., anyone who has been named as being the target of the threat). Follow your school/district safety protocols to determine if any of the parties involved should be isolated for safety.

Disability Considerations

Does the student have an IEP or 504 Plan? ☐ No ☐ Yes - ☐ IEP or ☐ 504 Disability:

****If yes, a representative from the special education or 504 team must be engaged in the threat assessment process.*

Gather Information from Multiple Sources

The team leader is to quickly gather the team and assign responsibilities for data collection (“strategic planning”). The team should gather as much information as possible on the person of concern from an array of sources, including teachers, administrators, school staff, external sources, etc. The team leader will then select a time and location for the team to convene to discuss their findings.

Information/Data	Team Member Responsible	Findings/Results
Reporting source <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available		
Student of concern (if can be interviewed safely) <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available		
Parents/family members <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available		Record specifically who was interviewed
Current teachers <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available		Record specifically who was interviewed
Other school personnel (e.g., counselor, support staff, coach) <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available		Record specifically who was interviewed

Students with knowledge of situation/person of concern <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available		Record specifically who was interviewed
Search student, locker, car (according to district policy) <input type="checkbox"/> Conducted <input type="checkbox"/> Not conducted <input type="checkbox"/> Not available		
Internet/email activity <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available		
Social media activity <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available		
Prior threat or suicide assessments <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available		
Educational records <small>(grades, test scores, attendance, transfer records, custody/no contact agreement, grievances/Title IX)</small> <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available		
Prior behavior/discipline actions <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available		
Interventions/MTSS data <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available		
Special Education/504 data <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available		
Outside agencies/records <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed/reviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available		
Law enforcement/records <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed/reviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available		
Other:		

Analyze Information

The investigative questions below are based upon research conducted by the Secret Service/National Threat Assessment Center. The questions are designed to assist the team with organizing and analyzing the information the team has gathered, and to identify information that may still be missing. The responses below, based upon the data points gathered, can be used to answer the assessment questions in the Assessment section of this tool.

1. MOTIVES: What are the student's motive(s) and goals? / What first brought the student to someone's attention?

[Considerations: Expressed strong motivations, reasons, or goals for the planned violence? Grievances, grudges with or without specific intended targets? Situation/circumstances that led to threat still exist? Efforts were successful/unsuccessful to resolve the perceived problem/grievance? Known reasons to act on plan at this time? Possible reasons to act due to recent circumstances? Definite triggers or events that would make student likely to act now?

2. COMMUNICATION: Have there been any communications suggesting ideas, intent, planning or preparation for violence (i.e., signals the student is moving up the pathway toward violence)?

[Considerations: Communicated ideas and/or intent to harm others now or in near future? Told others of plan to harm/kill others? Has anyone been alerted or "warned away?" Consider verbal, non-verbal, electronic, written, pictures, gestures, social media, etc.]

3. INAPPROPRIATE INTEREST: Does the student have inappropriate interests in weapons, school attacks or attackers, mass attacks, or other types of violence? Is there a fixation on an issue or a person?

[Considerations: Shown inappropriate interest in previous attacks, weapons, incidents of mass violence (e.g., internet writings/postings, news accounts, music, etc.). Identifies with previous acts/perpetrators of violence (e.g., rationalizes why their acts of violence were ok]

4. **WEAPONS ACCESS: Is there access to weapons, especially firearms? Is there evidence of manufactured explosives or incendiary devices?** [*Considerations:* Has means/access to guns/weapons? Has made efforts/preparation to get hold of a gun(s)/weapons? Concerns regarding lack of supervision regarding gun accessibility and/or safe storage of weapons?]

5. **STRESSORS: Have there been recent setbacks, losses, or challenges? How is the student coping with stressors?**

[*Considerations:* Experienced a new trauma/stressor and/or perceives current stress as high? Recent death or significant loss of loved one/relationship? Experiencing chronic/ongoing stressors? Bullying/harassment? Substance abuse? Disciplinary actions? Legal concerns?]

6. **EMOTIONAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES: Is the student dealing with mental health issues or developmental disabilities? Is the student's behavior a product of those issues? What resources does the student need?**

[*Considerations:* Significant mental health concern? Disability or developmental level that impacts emotional regulation and/or the ability to think clearly, understand the consequences of concerning behaviors, impact the ability to carry out the plan (e.g., low cognitive ability).

Does the student have a disability? ☐ Yes (answer questions a, b, c below) ☐ No (skip to #7)

- a) Could disability be impacting the person of concern's ability to understand consequences of behavior and/or regulate behavior? ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unsure
- b) Is behavior consistent with typical baseline behavior related to the disability? ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unsure
- c) Is behavior currently being managed/addressed by their 504/IEP plan? ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unsure

**Responses to a, b & c need to be considered when making the assessment and also with management planning. Special Education/504 protocols and procedures must be followed if manifestation determination review (MDR) is to be conducted and/or changes need to be made to the IEP/504 plan.*

7. DESPERATION OR DESPAIR: Is the subject experiencing hopelessness, desperation, and/or despair?

[*Considerations:* Does not feel situation can be improved. Expressed thoughts of hurting self (e.g., suicidal ideation)? Sees no reason to live? If so, also complete suicide protocol.

8. VIOLENCE AS AN OPTION: Does the subject see violence as an acceptable, desirable – or the only – way to solve a problem or settle a grievance? Are they willing to consider other alternatives?

[*Considerations:* Environment explicitly or implicitly supports/endorse violence as acceptable way to solve problems? Others have encouraged student to engage in violence? Sees violence as the only way to address situation and/or to escape the stressors?]

9. CONCERNED OTHERS: Are other people concerned about the subject's potential for violence?

[*Considerations:* Staff, students, parents, others expressed concern regarding behaviors and/or fearful for own safety? Observed evidence of intent to carry out plan?]

10. CAPACITY TO CARRY OUT THE ATTACK: Is the student's thinking and behavior organized enough to plan and execute an attack (e.g., Means, Method, Opportunity, Proximity)? Does the student have the resources?

[*Considerations:* Cognitive and physical capacity to carry out act of violence? Capable of planning and executing plan. Able to gain access?

11. PLANNING: Has the student engaged in planning or attack-related behaviors?

[*Considerations:* Plan is specific in regard to time and location? Plan viable, organized, and/or detailed? Thoughts of how to get around security measures? Preparatory steps taken to carry out plan? Practiced with a weapon?]

12. CONSISTENCY: Are the subject’s conversation and “story” consistent with his or her actions? If not, why?

[*Considerations:* Student being truthful? Forthcoming? Taking responsibility? Inconsistencies in student of concern report/perceptions vs behavior observed? Inconsistencies in student of concern’s behaviors/reports with other reports/observations?]

13. PROTECTIVE FACTORS: Are there positive and prosocial influences in the student’s life? Does the subject have a positive, trusting, sustained relationship with at least one responsible person?

[*Considerations:* Trusting relationship with at least one responsible adult? Family support system? Supportive, prosocial peers? Empathy towards others? Sense of purpose/looking to future? Views homicide and/or suicide as a taboo? Previous interventions have been mostly effective? When distressed student seeks help? Identifies prosocial ways to cope with emotions? Ability to self-monitor or self-restrain? Supportive agencies involved providing help to student/family?]

Other Information for Team Consideration:

Possible Interventions for Team Consideration:

APPENDIX E

BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT PLAN - FULL PROTOCOL

Student:	DOB:	Date:
Grade:	District/School:	
Does the student have an identified educational disability under IDEA or Section 504? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes <input type="checkbox"/> IEP or <input type="checkbox"/> 504 Identified Disability: _____ Case Manager: _____		
Parent/Guardian #1: Phone: _____ Email: _____	Parent/Guardian #2: Phone: _____ Email: _____	
BTAM Team Lead:		

This school-based behavioral threat assessment was requested after receiving a report of concerning behaviors, which are documented and summarized below. The specific assessment question was whether this student poses any threat of violence to students, teachers, staff, or to the school generally. In addition, a central purpose of behavioral threat assessment and management (BTAM) is to identify potential supports needed by the student.

Please note that a threat assessment does not predict future violence nor is it a foolproof method of assessing an individual's or group's risk of harm to others. A threat assessment is also not a checklist that can be quantified. It is designed to assist in the inquiry of potential danger (identify circumstances and factors that may increase risk for potential youth aggression, and to assist schools and caregivers in development of a proactive and supportive intervention and management plan. Furthermore, as circumstances change, so too does risk potential; therefore, if you are reviewing this report at a date after assessment completion, be mindful of supervision, intervention, and the passage of time on potentially increasing and/or decreasing risk. This assessment is based upon the information made available to and gathered by the BTAM team as of the date of this report. If additional information becomes available, and/or if new concerns emerge, the appraisal of any threat posed, as well as recommendations made, may need to be modified and/or updated.

Incident that Initiated Assessment

Was a BTAM Threat Screening Completed? ☐ Yes (please attach) ☐ No, team proceeded directly to full assessment

Date of Incident:		Day of Week:	<input type="checkbox"/> Monday	<input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday	<input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday	<input type="checkbox"/> Thursday	Time:	<input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM
			<input type="checkbox"/> Friday	<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday	<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday			
Location:	<input type="checkbox"/> School Property <input type="checkbox"/> In School Building <input type="checkbox"/> On School Grounds <input type="checkbox"/> School Bus <input type="checkbox"/> School Sponsored Activity <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____							
Address:						City/State:		
Threat Type:	<input type="checkbox"/> Assault [<input type="checkbox"/> Physical <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual] <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal Threat <input type="checkbox"/> Aggression <input type="checkbox"/> Stalking <input type="checkbox"/> Suicidal/Self-Harm <input type="checkbox"/> Bomb threat <input type="checkbox"/> Unusual Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism <input type="checkbox"/> Disruptive <input type="checkbox"/> Harassment <input type="checkbox"/> Suspicious Behavior <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____							
Mode:	<input type="checkbox"/> In Person <input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Text <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Letter <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media <input type="checkbox"/> Internet <input type="checkbox"/> Other : _____							<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple Modes
Target(s) injured	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown		Target(s) require medical attention? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown					
Weapon involved:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown		Type of Weapon: <input type="checkbox"/> Firearm <input type="checkbox"/> Rifle/Shotgun <input type="checkbox"/> Pistol <input type="checkbox"/> Bladed <input type="checkbox"/> Bomb <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____					
Details of the incident or threat. Where threats were communicated, quote where possible, use quotation marks to indicate direct quotes. Attach original communications if available. <div style="height: 100px; border: 1px solid black;"></div>								

Team Members Involved in Assessment

At minimum team <u>must</u> include administration, at least one school mental health professional (school counselor or psychologist, MSW, LPC), and law enforcement (mandatory if a weapon involved/suspected to be involved), and additional threat assessment team member(s) as appropriate based on concern. Record who served on the team below.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Administrator:	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher(s):
<input type="checkbox"/> MH Professional:	<input type="checkbox"/> IEP/504 Case Manager:
<input type="checkbox"/> MH Professional:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<input type="checkbox"/> School Resource Officer:	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

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Information Reviewed

The threat assessment reported herein is based on the following information available to the team:

DATA GATHERED:	Findings	Summary of Significant Findings:
Information from reporting source	<input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable* <input type="checkbox"/> Not available* <small>* If not available/applicable, explain</small>	
Interview with student of concern	<input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable* <input type="checkbox"/> Not available* <small>* If not available/applicable, explain</small>	
Interview with parent(s)/other family members	<input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable* <input type="checkbox"/> Not available* <small>* If not available/applicable, explain</small>	
Interviews with teachers, other school personnel with relevant information	<input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available	
Interviews with other students with relevant information	<input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available	
Additional interviews	<input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Not available	
Searches (car, backpack, locker...)	<input type="checkbox"/> Checked <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Significant	
Internet/email activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Checked <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Significant	

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CONFIDENTIAL

Social media activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Checked <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Significant	
Prior threat or suicide assessments	<input type="checkbox"/> Checked <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Significant	
Educational records (grades, test scores, attendance, transfer records, custody/no contact agreement, grievances/Title IX)	<input type="checkbox"/> Checked <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Significant	
Previous behavior/disciplinary actions	<input type="checkbox"/> Checked <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Significant	
Intervention/MTSS data	<input type="checkbox"/> Checked <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Significant	
Special Education/Section 504 data	<input type="checkbox"/> Checked <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Significant	
Outside agency information/records	<input type="checkbox"/> Checked <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Significant	
Law enforcement information/records	<input type="checkbox"/> Checked <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Significant	
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Checked <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Significant	

Other Comments. Describe any limitations to accessing data.

Analysis and Assessment - Key Investigative Questions

The behavioral threat assessment was conducted by following the process described in the school threat assessment guide published by the U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education (Vossekuil et al., 2002; NTAC 2018, 2019, 2021). These current best practices in school threat assessment emphasize the importance of gathering information from multiple sources (as outlined in the Information Reviewed section), as well as analyzing that information by answering key investigative questions/themes and the assessment questions. The questions and the responses for this assessment are listed below:

- 1. MOTIVES: What are the subject's motive(s) and goals? / What first brought the student to someone's attention?** [*Considerations:* Expressed strong motivations, reasons, or goals for the planned violence? Grievances, grudges with or without specific intended targets? Situation/circumstances that led to threat still exist? Efforts were successful/unsuccessful to resolve the perceived problem/grievance? Known reasons to act on plan at this time? Possible reasons to act due to recent circumstances? Definite triggers or events that would make student likely to act now?

- 2. COMMUNICATION: Have there been any communications suggesting ideas, intent, planning or preparation for violence (i.e., signals the student is moving up the pathway toward violence)?** [*Considerations:* Communicated ideas and/or intent to harm others now or in near future? Told others of plan to harm/kill others? Has anyone been alerted or "warned away?" Consider verbal, non-verbal, electronic, written, pictures, gestures, social media, etc.]

- 3. INAPPROPRIATE INTEREST: Does the student have inappropriate interests in weapons, school attacks or attackers, mass attacks, or other types of violence? Is there a fixation on an issue or a person?**

[*Considerations:* Shown inappropriate interest in previous attacks, weapons, incidents of mass violence (e.g., internet writings/postings, news accounts, music, etc.). Identifies with previous acts/perpetrators of violence (e.g., rationalizes why their acts of violence were ok)]

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- 4. WEAPONS ACCESS: Is there access to weapons, especially firearms? Is there evidence of manufactured explosives or incendiary devices?** [*Considerations:* Has means/access to guns/weapons? Has made efforts/preparation to get hold of a gun(s)/weapons? Concerns regarding lack of supervision regarding gun accessibility and/or safe storage of weapons?]

- 5. STRESSORS: What circumstances might affect the likelihood of an escalation to violent behavior?** [*Considerations:* Experienced a new trauma/stressor and/or perceives current stress as high? Experiencing chronic/ongoing stressors? Bullying/harassment? History of substance abuse? Disciplinary history and/or current disciplinary actions? Legal concerns?]

- 6. EMOTIONAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES: Is the student dealing with mental health issues or developmental disabilities? Is the student's behavior a product of those issues? What resources does the student need?** [*Considerations:* Significant mental health concern? Disability or developmental level that impacts emotional regulation and/or the ability to think clearly, understand the consequences of concerning behaviors, impact the ability to carry out the plan (e.g., low cognitive ability).

Presenting Behavior: ☐ Cooperative ☐ Withdrawn ☐ Avoidant ☐ Defensive ☐ Hostile ☐ Varied ☐ Other:

Presenting Affect: ☐ Calm ☐ Elated ☐ Depressed/Despondent ☐ Irritable ☐ Enraged ☐ Labile ☐ Other:

Does the student have a disability? ☐ Yes (answer questions a, b, c below) ☐ No (skip to #7)

a) Could disability be impacting ability to understand consequences and/or regulate behavior? ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unsure

b) Is behavior consistent with typical baseline behavior related to the disability? ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unsure

c) Is behavior currently being managed/addressed by their 504/IEP plan? ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unsure

**Responses to a, b & c need to be considered when making the assessment and also with management planning. Special Education/504 protocols and procedures must be followed if manifestation determination review (MDR) is to be conducted and/or changes need to be made to the IEP/504 plan.*

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7. DESPERATION OR DESPAIR: Is the subject experiencing hopelessness, desperation, and/or despair?

[*Considerations:* Does not feel situation can be improved. Expressed thoughts of hurting self (e.g., suicidal ideation)? Sees no reason to live? If so, also complete suicide protocol.

8. VIOLENCE AS AN OPTION: Does the subject see violence as an acceptable, desirable – or the only – way to solve a problem or settle a grievance? Are they willing to consider other alternatives?

[*Considerations:* Environment explicitly or implicitly supports/endorse violence as acceptable way to solve problems? Others have encouraged student to engage in violence? Sees violence as the only way to address situation and/or to escape the stressors?]

9. CONCERNED OTHERS: Are other people concerned about the subject's potential for violence?

[*Considerations:* Staff, students, parents, others expressed concern regarding behaviors and/or fearful for own safety? Observed evidence of intent to carry out plan?]

10. CAPACITY TO CARRY OUT THE ATTACK: Is the student's thinking and behavior organized enough to plan and execute an attack (e.g., Means, Method, Opportunity, Proximity)? Does the student have the resources?

[*Considerations:* Cognitive and physical capacity to carry out act of violence? Capable of planning and executing plan. Able to gain access?

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- 11. PLANNING: Has the student engaged in planning or attack-related behaviors?** [*Considerations:* Plan is specific in regard to time and location? Plan viable, organized, and/or detailed? Thoughts of how to get around security measures? Preparatory steps taken to carry out plan? Practiced with a weapon?]

- 12. CONSISTENCY: Are the subject's conversation and "story" consistent with his or her actions? If not, why?** [*Considerations:* Student being truthful? Forthcoming? Taking responsibility? Inconsistencies in student of concern report/perceptions vs behavior observed? Inconsistencies in student of concern's behaviors/reports with other reports/observations?]

- 13. PROTECTIVE FACTORS: Are there positive and prosocial influences in the student's life? Does the subject have a positive, trusting, sustained relationship with at least one responsible person?** [*Considerations:* Trusting relationship with at least one responsible adult? Family support system? Supportive, prosocial peers? Empathy towards others? Sense of purpose/looking to future? Views homicide and/or suicide as a taboo? Previous interventions have been mostly effective? When distressed student seeks help? Identifies prosocial ways to cope with emotions? Ability to self-monitor or self-restrain? Supportive agencies involved providing help to student/family?]

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/INFORMATION:

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Assessment Questions

Current best practices in school threat assessment recommend answering the following assessment questions to determine whether a person of concern poses a threat of school violence:

Assessment Question 1

Does the person of concern pose a threat of violence to others? (The person of concern appears to be on a pathway to violence or is otherwise preparing to engage in violence) ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unsure

Does the person of concern pose a threat of violence to self? ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unsure

**If yes or unsure, a suicide safety assessment must also be conducted, and appropriate documentation completed.*

Rationale [summarize 13 themes, pathway behaviors, reactive vs targeted violence, risk factors and warning signs]:

☐ **YES – If the team determined the student poses a threat of violence to others, do all of the items below:**

- Develop and implement a case management plan and refer student/family to needed resources [complete next section of report]
- Monitor implementation of management plan, re-assess, and update management plan as needed
- Document all efforts, including referral and monitoring
- Skip Assessment Question 2 (do not answer)

☐ **NO - Go to Assessment Question 2**

Assessment Question 2

Does the student need additional interventions, and on-going supports and engagement for a period of time to mitigate risk, decrease stressors, and/or build protective factors?

☐ **YES – If “YES,” do all of the items below:**

- Develop and implement a management/intervention plan and refer student/family to needed resources [complete next section of report]
- Monitor to ensure management/intervention plan is implemented and track student progress
- Document all efforts, including referral and monitoring

☐ **NO - Document completed assessment; Close the case**

Assessment Results

Level of Concern: Check the appropriate level of concern below

Note: This determination is based upon the data gathered at this moment in time. It is NOT predicting violence but helping to identify how intensive and directive the intervention and supports need to be.

☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** The decisions made below regarding level of concern and the need for a management plan were a team decision involving at least the three core members of the threat assessment team.

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☐ **LOW LEVEL: Risk to target(s), students, staff, and school safety is minimal.**

- Threat is vague, indirect, inconsistent, implausible
- Information contained within the threat lacks detail or realism; no “true” threat; student lacks developmental understanding
- Available information suggests the person is unlikely to carry out the threat or become violent at this time
- No identified grievances; thought was in passing to a specific circumstance, remorseful
- Supports available and accessible

☐ **MODERATE LEVEL: Threat could be carried out but supports available and student willing to access them.**

- Threat is plausible but lacks specifics.
- No clear indication that the student has taken preparatory steps, although there may be ambiguous or inconclusive references pointing to that possibility.
- Some grievances but does not view the situation as hopeless.
- Moderate or lingering concerns about a student’s potential to act violently but willing to access supports. Open to help.
- Has at least some protective factors present
- If supports can be established, good likelihood risk can be mitigated.

☐ **HIGH LEVEL: The threat or situation of concern appears to pose a serious danger to the safety of others. Immediate containment is not needed or other agencies are not able to take student into custody/emergency mental health care but immediate safety planning is necessary and constant supervision is needed.**

- Threat is specific and plausible. There is an identified target or strong indication of target(s).
- Information suggests concrete steps have been taken to act on the threat and has means (e.g., acquired or practiced with weapon, has victim under surveillance).
- Information suggests a strong concern about a student’s potential to act violently.
- Strong grievance; intent on violence as only solution.
- Minimal to no supports; resistive to problem solving/interventions.

☐ **IMMINENT: Clear and imminent safety risk. NEEDS IMMEDIATE CONTAINMENT via law enforcement intervention and/or mental health hold/hospitalization. Has means, method, and desire to execute plan in short-term if no containment.**

- ☐ **Based upon the assessment results, a formal case management plan IS NOT deemed necessary. Below is a summary of how the situation was resolved and referrals that were made, if appropriate.**

Follow Up Steps (check all that apply)	Person Responsible	Date Completed
<input type="checkbox"/> Conference with student and parent(s)/guardian(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Mediation/Restorative conference/Problem-solving process		
<input type="checkbox"/> Schedule IEP review / 504 Plan review		
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop or revise behavior plan and/or safety plan		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:		

Additional Notes:

- ☐ **Based upon the assessment results, a formal case management plan IS deemed necessary. Utilize the Management Plan to outline the interventions and monitoring measures that will be engaged.**

BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT - FULL PROTOCOL
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Management Plan

Student: _____ **DOB:** _____ **Date of Plan:** _____

MONITORING ☐ Strategies are not necessary to implement given findings of assessment.

<input type="checkbox"/> Check-in, check-out <input type="checkbox"/> Backpack search <input type="checkbox"/> Locker search <input type="checkbox"/> Clothing search <input type="checkbox"/> Social media monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Adult/increased monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Late arrival/early dismissal <input type="checkbox"/> Adult escorts from class-to-class <input type="checkbox"/> Modify daily schedule (reduce unsupervised time; travel card) <input type="checkbox"/> Restrictions:	<input type="checkbox"/> On-going progress monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Safety contract <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor attendance <input type="checkbox"/> No contact agreement <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing collaboration between school and parent/guardian <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/guardian will provide increased supervision <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor for precipitating events (e.g., anniversaries, losses, perceived injustice, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Home visits (home-school connectedness, weapons check, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Ankle monitor <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing collaboration with agency supports, probation/juvenile diversion, mental health professionals <i>Specify:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Detained, incarcerated, under intensive Supervision. <i>Specify:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
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RELATIONSHIP BUILDING ☐ Strategies are not necessary to implement given findings of assessment.

<input type="checkbox"/> Establish system for student to seek support proactively from an adult <input type="checkbox"/> Peer mentor <input type="checkbox"/> Adult mentor <input type="checkbox"/> Provide feedback and monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Peer supports	<input type="checkbox"/> Increase engagement in school activities <input type="checkbox"/> Increase engagement in community activities <input type="checkbox"/> Engage in leadership activities <input type="checkbox"/> Decrease isolation <input type="checkbox"/> De-escalation training for staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Monitor reactions to grievances, precipitating events and provide supports <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
--	---	--

SKILL DEVELOPMENT/RESILENCY BUILDING ☐ Strategies not necessary to implement given findings of assessment.

<input type="checkbox"/> Academic supports <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict resolution <input type="checkbox"/> Anger management <input type="checkbox"/> Social skills group <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in activities/ clubs	<input type="checkbox"/> Identify triggers and (self) initiate time-out <input type="checkbox"/> Supports from behavior specialist <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct functional behavioral assessment (FBA)/develop behavioral intervention plan (BIP)	<input type="checkbox"/> Family supports/resources <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling – in school <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling – outside of school <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
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DISCIPLINE ☐ Strategies are not necessary to implement given findings of assessment.

<input type="checkbox"/> Letter of apology <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict resolution <input type="checkbox"/> Warning <input type="checkbox"/> Removing privileges <input type="checkbox"/> Identify triggers/"cool down" location <input type="checkbox"/> Behavior contract <input type="checkbox"/> No-contact order	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent Meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Detention <input type="checkbox"/> Suspension <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative to Suspension <input type="checkbox"/> Habitually Disruptive Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative placement <input type="checkbox"/> Expulsion	<input type="checkbox"/> Ticketed by law enforcement <input type="checkbox"/> Charges filed by law enforcement <input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement Diversion Program <input type="checkbox"/> Court issues protective orders <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
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ADDITIONAL INTERVENTIONS ☐ Strategies are not necessary to implement given findings of assessment.

<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention team referral <i>Specify:</i> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Revise IEP/504 Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Change in transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Change in class schedule	<input type="checkbox"/> Change in school day schedule (e.g., delayed start, reduced day) <input type="checkbox"/> Change of placement to access more intensive services <input type="checkbox"/> Drug/alcohol intervention	<input type="checkbox"/> Special education assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation – psychiatric/psychological <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
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BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT - FULL PROTOCOL
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REFERRALS MADE TO OUTSIDE AGENCIES/PROVIDERS

- ☐ Agency/provider name: _____
- ☐ Agency/provider name: _____
- ☐ McKinney-Vento/foster care referral
- ☐ Social service referral

Additional Notes:

Denote the specific responsibilities of professionals, parents, and other caregivers to ensure the intervention and management plan is implemented.

Who Needs to be Involved? (Specify Specific Individuals)	What Needs to Be Done	Timeline for Implementation
Administrator(s):		
School MH Professional: Position:		
Support Staff:		
Teacher(s):		
Coaches/Advisor:		
Family:		
SRO/Law enforcement:		
External agencies:		
Other:		
Other:		

Primary School Contact: _____ **Secondary School Contact:** _____

School professionals who will meet regularly with the student and collaborate with caregivers(s) to monitor the effectiveness of the *Management Plan*.

Plan will be distributed to (list personnel on a need-to-know basis only): _____

How will implementation/student progress be monitored? _____

Date of follow-up meeting to review progress: _____

Reentry Meeting: ☐ Not Required ☐ Required - Date: _____

Documentation from reentry/follow-up meetings should be attached to this form and maintained with the other threat assessment records.

Additional Comments:

Team Member Signatures:

Administrator

SRO/Law Enforcement (if involvement warranted)

School Mental Health Professional

Other:

Other:

Other:

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Parent Notification and Agreement

STUDENT: _____

SCHOOL: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN: _____

DATE: _____

The threat assessment results regarding the student noted above, have been discussed with the parent/guardian. In an effort to keep all students safe, and to support their child, the parent/guardian has been advised of the following (check those that apply):

- ☐ I have been advised that my child has expressed a potential threat.
- ☐ The threat assessment process, assessment outcomes, and the Management Plan have been explained to me/us.
- ☐ Interventions/supports/referrals were discussed and recommended.
- ☐ I have been advised of home safety and the need for supervision.
- ☐ I have been given a provider list of available community supports.
- ☐ I have been advised to seek an evaluation for my child:
 - ☐ Immediately ☐ Within 24 hours ☐ Other:

Type of evaluation and rationale:

- ☐ I understand the district is not financially responsible for community-based evaluation or treatment but is simply alerting me as they would for any imminent health need.
 - ☐ I understand that upon further concerns, additional action may be taken by the school or law enforcement.
 - ☐ School staff ☐ Request or ☐ Require a re-entry meeting for my student to facilitate their return to school
- Rationale:*

☐ Other:

AGREEMENT: (Note: interventions necessary to help ensure safety in the school environment may be implemented regardless of parental agreement)

- ☐ I agree to follow the recommendations of the Threat Assessment Team understanding that fulfilling those recommendations comes at my expense, unless otherwise identified on the Management Plan.
- ☐ I accept the recommendations of the Threat Assessment Team with the following exceptions:
- ☐ I do not agree to follow the recommendations of the Threat Assessment Team.

SIGNATURES:

Parent/Guardian Date

Parent/Guardian Date

Student (if appropriate) Date

BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT - FULL PROTOCOL
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Reentry or Follow-Up Meeting

Student: _____ **DOB:** _____ **Grade:** _____

School: _____ **Date of Threat Assessment:** _____

Date of Meeting: _____ ☐ Reentry Meeting ☐ Follow-up Meeting to Assess Progress

Attendees (name/position):

Discussion Notes:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Next Steps:

- ☐ Implement/continue to implement *Intervention and Management Plan*
- ☐ Adjust the *Intervention and Management Plan*, and continue to implement (attach revised plan):
- ☐ Discontinue *Intervention and Management Plan* as satisfactory progress has been made. Student will continue to be supported through other means (e.g., informal monitoring, 504/IEP, counseling services), as appropriate.

Date of Follow-Up to Review Progress (if applicable): _____

Team Member Signatures:

