



UNITED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT AGENDA ACTION ITEM

TOPIC: Approval of the 2020-2021 Behavioral Threat Assessment (BTA) Plan

SUBMITTED BY: Gloria S. Rendon **OF:** Deputy Superintendent

APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL TO SCHOOL BOARD: _____

DATE ASSIGNED FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION: July 21, 2020

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the UISD Board of Trustees approve the 2020-2021 Behavioral Threat Assessment (BTA) Plan

RATIONALE:

BUDGETARY INFORMATION:

POLICY REFERENCE & COMPLIANCE:



WE WANT TO TALK TO YOU

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Behavioral Threat Assessment (BTA)

Executive Summary

July 21, 2020



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Introduction

Responding to an active shooter event or knowing what to do if an intruder enters the building are skills teachers and administrators unfortunately need to practice and perfect. However, we know that educators are most interested in being preventive and proactive, not just reactive. After an event occurs in a school, educators, parents, and community members want to know how it could have been prevented.

Behavioral Threat Assessment (BTA) and management (oftentimes referred to as threat assessment) provides an evidence-based approach toward identifying students or other individuals who pose a threat, intervening with appropriate resources, and ultimately improving the safety and well-being of the individual of concern, the situation, and the school.

<https://locker.txssc.txstate.edu/f40474bcbab5f025bb1570f1bfb9f06/Model-Policies-and-Procedures-to-Establish-and-Train-on-Threat-Assessment.pdf>

Legal Requirements and Guidelines

With the passing of Senate Bill 11 during the 86th Texas Legislative Session in 2019, Section 115 has now been added to Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code to address threat assessment in public school districts.

The board of trustees of each school district is now required to establish a threat assessment team to serve at each campus of the district. Further, the board must adopt policies and procedures for the teams that are consistent with the model policies and procedures developed by the Texas School Safety Center (TxSSC). These policies and procedures require each team to complete training provided by the TxSSC or a regional education service center (ESC) and report specific information regarding the team's activities to the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

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Legal Requirements and Guidelines (cont'd)

The superintendent of the district must ensure that the members appointed to each team have expertise in counseling, behavior management, mental health and substance use, classroom instruction, special education, school administration, school safety and security, emergency management, and law enforcement. Each established team is required to conduct threat assessments that include assessing and reporting individuals who make threats of violence or exhibit harmful, threatening, or violent behavior and gather and analyze data to determine the level of risk and appropriate interventions.

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What is & What is NOT Threat Assessment?

Threat Assessment IS:

- A fact-based, investigative approach to determine how likely a person is to carry out a threat of violence. (Safe School Initiative Study, 2002);
- A means to identify, assess, and manage individuals who are at risk for violence against themselves or others;
- A way to identify someone who has the potential for violence in many forms - self-harm, assault, risk taking behaviors, suicide, substance abuse, and other aggressive or dangerous behaviors.

Threat Assessment IS NOT:

- A simple checklist of warning signs or red flags used to remove a student from school.
- A means to label a student as a troublemaker and enact consequences.
- A means to find "the next school shooter".

BTA is a Systemic Process

- **Identify** the person or situation whose behavior has raised some concern about potential violence.
- **Inquire/Ask Questions** & Gather additional relevant information about the person and situation.
 - Note: The focus of threat assessment is to understand the situation and how best to mitigate safety concerns. It is not the same as a criminal or disciplinary investigative process.
- **Assess** the person and situation based on the totality of the information that is reasonably available, to determine whether the person or situation poses a threat of violence or harm to others and/or self.
- **Manage** the threat by implementing an intervention, supervision, and/or monitoring plan to prevent harm where possible and to reduce/mitigate impact of the situation.

What is the Goal of BTA?

- The primary goal of the threat assessment and management process is to determine if a person of concern poses a threat of violence – whether to others, to themselves, or possibly to both self and others. In cases where the team’s assessment is that the person of concern **does** pose a threat of violence, the goal of the threat assessment and management process at that point is to implement a strategy to reduce the threat that is posed.

Who is the BTA Team at United ISD?

- District Level Team: Multidisciplinary personnel.
- Campus Level Team:
 - School Administrators
 - Librarian
 - Nurse
 - Counselor
 - School Resource Officer
 - District Level Team Member

BTA = Safe and Supportive School Program

- When performing a Behavioral Threat Assessment **11 Investigative Themes** are used to better understand the threat and the origin of the person who made it.

This to respond and mitigate to essentially prevent.

- Motive
- Communication
- Inappropriate Interests
- Planning
- Capacity
- Desperation/Despair
- Protective Factors
- Violence
- Consistency
- Concerned Others
- Stressors

Management

- When performing a Behavioral Threat Assessment, **11 Investigative Themes** are used to better understand the threat and the social and emotional background of the person who made it. This to respond and mitigate to essentially prevent a threat before it happens or prevent future threats.
- Levels of Management
 - **Priority 4 (Minimal to No Threat)**
 - **Priority 3 (Moderate)**
 - **Priority 2 (High)**
 - **Priority 1 (Imminent)**

BTA Data Collection Information 20-21 SY

- At the local level, the District uses NaviGate Prepared software to create, monitor, manage and report cases to TEA.
- SB 11 requires public schools to conduct behavioral threat assessment and collect relevant data on its efficacy. TEA, in conjunction with Texas School Safety Center (TxSSC), will be providing support and guidance to help public schools implement behavioral threat assessment beginning in the 2020-2021 school year.

Training

- Through the summer BTA Teams were given the opportunity to participate in training by the Texas State School Safety Center.

Plan Approval

The Texas School Safety Center (TxSSC) has worked with the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) in recommending a school board policy [FFB (LEGAL) & (LOCAL)] for Threat Assessment. School Boards must adopt LOCAL policies. LEGAL policies are required by law.

The board of trustees of each school district shall establish a threat assessment and safe and supportive school team to serve at each campus of the district.
[TEC 37.115(c)]

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