

Document Status: Draft Update - New

4:190 Targeted School Violence Prevention Program

New/Unpublished Section

Threats and acts of targeted school violence harm the District's environment and school community, diminishing students' ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. [PRESSPlus1](#) Providing students and staff with access to a safe and secure District environment is an important Board goal. While it is not possible for the District to completely eliminate threats in its environment, a Targeted School Violence Prevention Program (Program) using the collective efforts of local school officials, staff, students, families, and the community helps the District reduce these risks to its environment.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement the Program. [PRESSPlus2](#) The Program oversees the maintenance of a District environment that is conducive to learning and working by identifying, assessing, classifying, responding to, and managing threats and acts of targeted school violence. The Program shall be part of the District's Comprehensive Safety and Security Plan, required by Board policy 4:170, *Safety*, and shall:

1. Establish a District-level School Violence Prevention Team to: (a) develop a District-level Targeted School Violence Prevention Plan, and (b) oversee the District's Building-level Threat Assessment Team(s). [PRESSPlus3](#)
2. Establish Building-level Threat Assessment Team(s) to assess and intervene with individuals whose behavior may pose a threat to safety. This team may serve one or more schools.
3. Comply with State and federal law and align with Board policies.

The Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act protects the District from liability. The Program does not: (1) replace the care of a physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches or a licensed medical practitioner or professional trained in violence prevention, assessments and counseling services, (2) extend beyond available resources within the District, (3) extend beyond the school day and/or school-sponsored events, or (4) guarantee or ensure the safety of students, District staff, or visitors. [PRESSPlus4](#)

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, 5/10-21.7, 5/10-27.1A, 5/10-27.1B, 5/24-24, and 5/27-23.7.

105 ILCS 128/, School Safety Drill Act.

745 ILCS 10/, Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act.

29 Ill.Admin.Code Part 1500.

CROSS REF.: 2:240 (Board Policy Development), 4:170 (Safety), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:230 (Maintaining Student Discipline), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 7:140 (Search and Seizure), 6:270 (Guidance and Counseling Program), 7:150 (Agency and Police Interviews), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:250 (Student Support Services), 7:290 (Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention), 7:340 (Student Records), 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property), 8:100 (Relations with Other Organizations and Agencies)

PRESSPlus Comments

PRESSPlus 1. This policy is optional. It contains items from *Threat Assessment in Virginia Public Schools: Model Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines*, Second Edition (August 2016), Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety, Virginia Dept. of Criminal Justice Services, at: www.dcjs.virginia.gov/sites/dcjs.virginia.gov/files/publications/law-enforcement/threat-assessment-model-policies-procedures-and-guidelinespdf.pdf. *Threat Assessment in Virginia Public Schools* is based upon a synthesis of established research and recognized standards of practice regarding threat assessment and management in school and workplace settings, including *Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates*, a 2002 publication of the U.S. Secret Service and the U.S. Dept. of Education, at: www.secretservice.gov/data/protection/ntac/ssi_guide.pdf.

Boards are authorized to adopt a policy on targeted school violence prevention programs even though State and federal law provide little guidance. Adopting a policy that addresses targeted school violence prevention provides (a) a way for boards to monitor that it is being done, and (b) an opportunity for each board and the superintendent to examine all current policies, collective bargaining agreements, and administrative procedures on this subject.

Before adoption of this policy, each board may want to have a conversation with the superintendent to determine whether local
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conditions and resources and current practices will support full implementation of this policy and its accompanying administrative procedures. Its goals and program will be most effective when they reflect local conditions and circumstances. Please see the Issue 100 PRESS Update Memo for more information and for a complete listing of the accompanying sample procedures and exhibits for this policy. **Issue 100, February/March 2019**

PRESSPlus 2. Ensuring school safety begins with establishing a comprehensive targeted school violence prevention program, which “includes forming a multidisciplinary threat assessment team, establishing central reporting mechanisms, identifying behaviors of concern, defining the threshold for law enforcement intervention, identifying risk management strategies, promoting safe school climates, and providing training to stakeholders.” *Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence*, published by the U.S. Secret Service, at: www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/18_0711_USSS_NTAC-Enhancing-School-Safety-Guide.pdf. **Issue 100, February/March 2019**

PRESSPlus 3. The establishment of threat assessment teams in K-12 public schools is Recommendation #1 of the *Recommendations of the Illinois Terrorism Task Force School Safety Working Group*, presented to the Office of the Governor on 4-5-18, at: www.iasb.com/safety/. Illinois higher education institutions have required threat assessment teams since the passage of the Campus Security Enhancement Act of 2008 (110 ILCS 12/20(b)(2), eff. 1-1-09) in response to the shootings that took place at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University on 4-16-07 and Northern Illinois University on 2-14-08. **Issue 100, February/March 2019**

PRESSPlus 4. **Consult the board attorney for guidance concerning liability in this area.** Except for cases of willful and wanton conduct, the Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act (TIA) likely protects districts from liability for failure to properly identify and/or respond to a student’s behavior that results in injury or suicide. See 745 ILCS 10/3-108 and *Grant v. Board of Trustees of Valley View School Dist. No. 365-U*, 286 Ill.App.3d 642 (3rd Dist. 1997). Every situation is fact specific, and the issues require careful evaluation. A disclaimer, such as the one presented here, may not be sufficient. A district may take several actions, after discussion with its board attorney, to minimize liability, such as adding limiting phrases and ensuring other policies are followed.

In addition to the TIA, school officials and districts may also be entitled to qualified immunity in civil rights lawsuits that seek to hold them liable for a suicide. For further discussion, see f/n 13 in policy 7:290, *Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention*. **Issue 100, February/March 2019**