School Threat Assessment Decision Tree Step 1. Evaluate the threat. Obtain a detailed account of the threat, usually by interviewing the person who made No Not a threat. Might the threat, the intended victim, and other witnesses. Write the exact content of the be an expression of anger that merits threat and key observations by each party. Consider the circumstances in which the threat was made and the student's intentions. Is there communication of intent to attention. harm someone or behavior suggesting intent to harm? Yes Case resolved as Step 2. Attempt to resolve the threat as transient. transient; discipline Is the threat an expression of humor, rhetoric, anger, or frustration that can be easily Yes student, when resolved so that there is no intent to harm? Does the person retract the threat or appropriate and/or offer an explanation and/or apology that indicates no future intent to harm anyone? add services as needed. No Step 3. Respond to a substantive threat. For all substantive threats: a. Take precautions to protect potential victims. b. Warn intended victim and parents. Serious Case resolved as serious substantive c. Look for ways to resolve conflict. d. Discipline student, when appropriate. threat; add services as needed. Serious means a threat to hit, fight, or beat up whereas very serious means a threat to kill, rape, or cause very serious injury with a weapon. **Very Serious** Step 4. Conduct a safety evaluation for a very serious substantive threat. In addition to a-d above, the student may be briefly placed elsewhere or suspended pending completion of the following: e. Screen student for mental health services and counseling; refer as needed. f. Law enforcement investigation for evidence of planning and preparation, criminal activity. g. Develop safety plan that reduces risk and addresses student needs. Planshould include review of Individual Educational Plan if already receiving special education services and further assessment if possible disability. Step 5. Implement and monitor the safety plan. Document the plan. Maintain contact with the student. Monitor whether plan is working and revise as needed.

The School Threat Assessment Decision Tree created by Dewey G. Cornell, Ph.D., University of Virginia and the Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG).