

## Operational Services

### Administrative Procedure - Threat Assessment Team (TAT) <sup>1</sup>

This procedure implements Threat Assessment Teams (TATs). TAT members are professional educators, mental health professionals, law enforcement professionals, and professionals from other disciplines as necessary who are trained in behavioral threat assessment. 105 ILCS 128/45(a).

TATs function at the Building level, taking direction from the District-level School Violence Prevention Team. They identify, inquire, assess, and manage a range of threats that may be posed to the school community. Threats may be posed from a broad range of individuals affecting the District environment, including: <sup>2</sup>

- Students: current and former (and potentially prospective)
- Employees: current and former (and potentially prospective)
- Parents/guardians or other family members of students
- Persons who are (or have been) in relationships with staff or students
- Contractors, vendors, or other visitors
- Persons unaffiliated with the District

Customize this procedure to each TAT's building-specific needs, and use it in conjunction with administrative procedure 4:190-AP1, *Targeted School Violence Prevention Program*, and exhibits 4:190-AP2, E1, *Principles of Threat Assessment*; 4:190-AP2, E2, *Threat Assessment Documentation*; 4:190-AP2, E3, *Threat Assessment Key Areas and Questions; Examples*; 4:190-AP2, E4, *Responding to Types of Threats*; and 4:190-AP2, E5, *Threat Assessment Case Management Strategies*. This procedure contains five sections as follows:

1. Glossary of Terms
2. TAT Formation, Development, and Responsibilities
3. Assessing and Classifying Threats
4. Responding to and Managing Threats
5. Reporting Threats to Outside Agencies

#### Glossary of Terms

**Pose a Threat** – To pose a threat means an individual has, or is in the process of obtaining, the intent and capability to cause harm to self or others through planning and preparation.

**Protective Factors** – Characteristics or resources that make it less likely that an individual will engage in violence.

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The footnotes should be removed before the material is used.

<sup>1</sup> Required by 105 ILCS 128/45, amended by P.A.s ~~102-791~~, 103-175, ~~and~~ 103-780, ~~and~~ 104-407. School districts had to implement a threat assessment procedure by 12-21-19 and establish a threat assessment team by 2-19-20. Id.

Adapted from *Threat Assessment in Virginia Public Schools: Model Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines*, Fifth Edition (July 2023), Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety, Virginia Dept. of Criminal Justice Services, at: [www.dcjs.virginia.gov/sites/dcjs.virginia.gov/files/k-12\\_threat\\_assessment\\_management\\_mppg\\_mpd.pdf](http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/sites/dcjs.virginia.gov/files/k-12_threat_assessment_management_mppg_mpd.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> See *Threat Assessment in Virginia Public Schools: Model Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines*, p. 2.

**Risk Factors** – Characteristics that make it more likely that an individual may engage in violence. Risk factors are usually stable over time.

**Subject of Concern (Subject)** – An individual who has been identified to pose a threat of violence or serious harm to self/others.

**Target** – An individual who is the intended target of the threat posed by the subject of concern.

**Threat** – A concerning communication or behavior that indicates that an individual may pose a danger to the safety of school staff or students through acts of violence or other behavior that could cause harm to self or others. The threat may be expressed/communicated behaviorally, orally, visually, in writing, electronically, or through any other means; it is considered a threat regardless of whether it is observed by or communicated directly to the target of the threat or observed by or communicated to a third party, and regardless of whether the target of the threat is aware of the threat.

**Threat Assessment** – A systemic, fact-based process emphasizing an appraisal of observed (or reasonably observable) behaviors to identify potentially disruptive, dangerous, or violent situations, to assess them, and to manage/address them.

**Threat Assessment Team (TAT)** – A multidisciplinary Building-level team led by the Building Principal to perform specific threat assessments that must include at least one law enforcement official as well as cross-disciplinary representatives of the District who are most directly familiar with the mental and behavioral health needs of students and staff. Such cross-disciplinary representatives may include the following individuals employed by the District or a special education cooperative that serves the District and who are available to serve: an administrator, a teacher, a school counselor, a school psychologist, and a school social worker.<sup>3</sup>

**TAT Triage Team** – Consists of at least two members of the TAT designated by the Building Principal to triage reported cases of concerning, aberrant, or threatening behavior and/or communication. Considers the nature and level of concern of cases to determine if existing resources and mechanisms are sufficient to address concerns, or whether the full TAT should further assess and manage the situation, and initiates any crisis responses as appropriate.

#### **Types of Threats –**

**Routine/No Known Concern:** Subject/situation does not indicate a threat of violence or harm to self or others, or need for assistance or intervention. No impact on others, environmental factors, or precipitants that need TAT intervention. Close the case.

**Low Level:** Subject/situation does not indicate a threat of violence or harm to self or others; would or may benefit from intervention or assistance with concerns. Target, environmental/systemic, or precipitating events may be present at low levels. May involve some ongoing assessment management with passive monitoring and/or periodic active monitoring, and referrals as appropriate. Close the case if no team interventions or monitoring are indicated.

**Moderate Level:** Subject/situation does not pose a threat of serious violence or harm though risk cannot be ruled-out. Subject may be developing the capability for harm and is engaging in aberrant or concerning behaviors that indicate a need for assistance/intervention. Targets/others are likely

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<sup>3</sup> 105 ILCS 128/45(a), amended by P.A. 103-780. Districts that are unable to establish a threat assessment team with school district staff and resources may use a regional behavioral threat assessment and intervention team that includes mental health professionals, a representative from the Ill. Law Enforcement Alarm System, a safety education officer from the Ill. State Police, and local law enforcement representatives. Id.

concerned and impacted. Environmental/systemic or precipitating factors may be present. Consider law enforcement/security notification as appropriate. Requires ongoing assessment and management plan, active monitoring, and referrals as appropriate.

**High Level:** Subject/situation poses, or is rapidly developing the capability for, a threat of serious violence or harm to self or others; or is in urgent need of hospitalization or treatment. Targets/others are impacted. Typically involves environmental/systemic factors and consideration for precipitating events. Requires immediate notification of school administration and law enforcement, subject containment, target protection and safety plan, activation of crisis response protocols as appropriate, ongoing assessment and management plan, active monitoring, and referrals as appropriate.

**Imminent:** Subject/situation poses an imminent threat of serious violence or harm to self/others and has or may reasonably have significant impact on others. Requires immediate law enforcement and school administration notification, subject containment, target protection and safety planning, implementation of crisis response and notification protocols, ongoing assessment and management plan, and active monitoring.

**Warning Signs** – Characteristics or behaviors that are associated with a current or escalating risk of violence. These tend to be dynamic, acute, and often associated with new stresses, events, losses, or failures.

TAT Formation, Development, and Responsibilities

Following are tasks to integrate TATs into the District’s Targeted School Violence Prevention Plan.

Actor	Action
Superintendent or designee	<p>Ensures TATs are trained in threat assessment by a threat assessment expert.<sup>4</sup> Free statewide training is available through the Ill. School and Campus Safety Program, at: <a href="https://ready.illinois.gov/plan/schools.html">https://ready.illinois.gov/plan/schools.html</a>.</p> <p>Prior to the start of each school year, files this procedure and a list identifying the members of all TATs with: (1) a local law enforcement agency, and (2) the Regional Office of Education or Intermediate Service Center, as applicable. 105 ILCS 128/45(b), amended by P.A.s-<del>102-791</del> and 103-175. Informs the Board that this filing was completed.</p>

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<sup>4</sup> Many threat assessment publications outline that the best practice is for the entire TAT, as a team, to attend in-person threat assessment training by a threat assessment expert.

<p>Building Principal</p>	<p>Leads TAT.</p> <p>Selects TAT members, including at least one law enforcement official as well as cross-disciplinary representatives of the District who are most directly familiar with the mental and behavioral health needs of students and staff. Such cross-disciplinary representatives may include the following individuals employed by the District or a special education cooperative that serves the District and who are available to serve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An administrator;</li> <li>A teacher;</li> <li>A school counselor;</li> <li>A school psychologist;</li> <li>A school social worker; and</li> <li>Other District employees and/or community resource persons (as members or consultants as determined by the TAT).</li> </ul> <p>When resources allow, selects designated back-up for each core TAT member, from the same or similar areas of expertise, to fulfill their duties in the event of their absence or inability.</p> <p>Designates a TAT Triage Team.</p> <p>Ensures that any reporting mechanisms used by the school community are kept up to date, work consistently, and are checked on a regular and timely basis.</p> <p>Establishes an intake and triage process for reports regarding concerning, aberrant, or threatening behavior and/or communication.</p> <p>When a report is received, activates the TAT and uses this administrative procedure 4:190-AP2, <i>Threat Assessment Team (TAT)</i>.</p>
<p>TAT</p>	<p>Receives education and seeks training resources, including but not limited to exhibits 4:190-AP2, E1, <i>Principles of Threat Assessment</i>; 4:190-AP2, E2, <i>Threat Assessment Documentation</i>; 4:190-AP2, E3, <i>Threat Assessment Key Areas and Questions; Examples</i>; 4:190-AP2, E4, <i>Responding to Types of Threats</i>; and 4:190-AP2, E5, <i>Threat Assessment Case Management Strategies</i>.</p> <p>Receives initial and periodic refresher threat assessment training by a threat assessment expert.</p> <p>Commits to work collaboratively with each other, with other school staff, and (as appropriate) with community resources to support the purposes of the TAT and the safety of the school, its students, and its staff.</p> <p>Actively, lawfully, and ethically communicates with each other, District administrators, and other school staff who have a need to know</p>

	<p>particular information to support the safety of the school, its students, and its staff.</p> <p>Trains staff, students, parents/guardians, and other members of the school community to recognize and report possible threats by conducting presentations, broadly disseminating relevant information, and ensuring access to consultation from the TAT.</p> <p>Identifies and trains members of the school community who can take reports of possible threats.</p> <p>Effectively implements Board policy 4:190, <i>Targeted School Violence Prevention Program</i>.</p>
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Assessing and Classifying Threats

When a threat is reported, the Building Principal and TAT assess and classify the threat using the criteria and process outlined below.

Actor	Action
Building Principal and/or TAT Triage Team	<p>When a potential threat report is received, initiates the following intake and triage process.</p> <p><u>Intake</u></p> <p>Obtains basic information about the potential threat, including but not limited to:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Initial Report of Concern: Date/time reported, date/time reviewed, person receiving report.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Reporting Party: Name, affiliation, contact information, relationship to subject of concern.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Incident/Nature of Concern: Date/time occurred, location, nature of threat/concern, weapons involved/threatened, details about concerns, and any relevant background information.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Subject of Concern: Name, affiliation, contact information, relationship to reporting party or target(s).</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Identified/Identifiable Target(s): Name, affiliation, contact information, relationship to report party or subject.</p> <p>Determines if an imminent threat exists. An imminent threat is indicated by such factors as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Subject intends imminent and/or serious harm to self/others; or</li> <li>2. Subject lacks inhibitions for using violence.</li> </ol> <p>If an imminent threat exists, initiates School Emergency Operations and Crisis Response Plan (SEOCR) and notifies law enforcement in accordance with administrative procedure 4:170-AP1, <i>Comprehensive Safety and Security Plan, Part G, School Emergency Operations and Crisis Response Plan (SEOCR)</i>.</p>

Actor	Action
Building Principal and/or TAT Triage Team	<p data-bbox="667 254 1349 317">If no imminent threat exists, or once an imminent threat is contained, proceeds to triage.</p> <p data-bbox="620 338 699 369"><u>Triage</u></p> <p data-bbox="620 386 1419 449">Triage threat to determine if the full TAT must be involved. Triage may include, as necessary and appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="667 470 1370 533">Reviewing the reported concerning, aberrant, or threatening behavior and/or communication.</li> <li data-bbox="667 554 1365 617">Reviewing school and other records for any prior history or interventions with the individual(s) involved.</li> <li data-bbox="667 638 1463 932">Conducting timely and thorough interviews of the person(s) who reported the threat, the recipient(s) or target(s) of the threat, other witnesses who have knowledge of the threat, and where reasonable, the individual(s) who allegedly engaged in the threatening behavior or communication. The purpose of the interviews is to gain a holistic understanding of the situation, determine the nature and level of the concerns, identify areas where more information may be needed, and inform appropriate strategies or interventions to address any concerns identified.</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="620 953 1149 984">Determines if the full TAT must be involved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="667 1005 1427 1131">To determine that the full TAT does not need to be involved, all TAT Triage Team members must concur that there is no identifiable threat/concern, or that there is a low level of concern regarding issues that are being adequately addressed.</li> <li data-bbox="667 1152 1435 1184">If the full TAT must be involved, convenes it as soon as possible.</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="620 1205 1395 1268">Documents intake and triage using exhibit 4:190-AP2, E2, <i>Threat Assessment Documentation</i>.</p>

Actor	Action
TAT	<p>Conducts a comprehensive and holistic assessment of the threat using the STEP framework set forth in exhibit 4:190-AP2, E1, <i>Principles of Threat Assessment</i>. See exhibit 4:190-AP2, E3, <i>Threat Assessment Key Areas and Questions; Examples</i>, for key questions to ask the person(s) who reported the threat, the threat recipient(s)/target(s), other witnesses, and the subject to assess the threat.</p> <p>Once the assessment is complete, classifies the threat as one of the following: Routine/No Known Concern, Low Level, Moderate Level, High Level, or Imminent.</p> <p>Documents the threat assessment and classification using exhibit 4:190-AP2, E2, <i>Threat Assessment Documentation</i>, and ensures that TAT documentation follows the acronym FORT:<sup>5</sup></p> <p><b>F</b>      <b>Fair</b> – sought to understand situations and give individuals an opportunity to be heard and understood;</p> <p><b>O</b>      <b>Objective</b> – sought information based on facts and observations of the case and not speculation or bias;</p> <p><b>R</b>      <b>Reasonable</b> – engaged in responses that were effective and proportionate to the situation; and</p> <p><b>T</b>      <b>Timely</b> – quickly and responsively addressed reports of threatening behavior.</p>
Building Principal	<p>Where the TAT classifies the threat as a Moderate, High, or Imminent level of concern and the threat requires further intervention to prevent violence or serious harm, notifies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of any student who is the target/recipient of a threat; and</li> <li>2. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of any student who engaged in threatening behaviors.</li> </ol>

Responding to and Managing Threats

Actor	Action
TAT	<p>Identifies appropriate responses to the threat based upon its level. See exhibit 4:190-AP2, E4, <i>Responding to Types of Threats</i>, for examples of responses to each threat level.</p> <p>Develops, implements, and monitors an individualized, fact-based case management plan to intervene with, address, and reduce the threat by:</p>

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<sup>5</sup> Source: © G. Deisinger (1996).

Actor	Action
	<p>Designating a TAT member as case manager to monitor the status of the subject and to notify the TAT of any change in status, response to interventions/referrals, or additional information that would be cause for reassessment and/or changes in interventions strategies;</p> <p>Assisting the subject, and any impacted staff or students, in accessing appropriate school and community-based resources for support and/or further intervention;</p> <p>Appointing one or more TAT members to engage directly with the subject to prevent the subject from becoming isolated; and</p> <p>Using the least intrusive interventions and strategies that are sufficient, fair, and reasonable to address the concerns identified. See exhibit 4:190-AP2, E5, <i>Threat Assessment Case Management Strategies</i>, for interventions and strategies, including those that are subject-based, target-based, and environmental/systems-based.</p> <p>Documents this process and any case updates using exhibit 4:190-AP2, E2, <i>Threat Assessment Documentation</i>.</p> <p>Submits updates to the Building Principal regularly, e.g., at least every 30 days, until the case is resolved and the subject no longer poses a threat to the school, its students, or its staff.</p> <p>Maintains documentation in accordance with Board policy, State records laws, and administrative procedures.</p>

**Reporting Threats to Outside Agencies**

The following is the process to notify the Local Law Enforcement Agency (LLEA) and/or the Ill. State Police (ISP) about certain types of threats. See also administrative procedure 4:170-API, *Comprehensive Safety and Security Plan, Part J, Required Notices*.

Actor	Action
Superintendent or designee	<p>Immediately notifies the LLEA upon receiving a report from any school personnel regarding a verified incident involving:</p> <p>Batteries committed against teachers, teacher personnel, administrative personnel, or educational support personnel. 105 ILCS 5/10-21.7, <a href="#">amended by P.A. 102-894</a>.</p> <p>A firearm in a school or on school-owned or leased property. 105 ILCS 5/10-27.1A(c), amended by P.A.s 103-34, 103-609, and 103-780.</p> <p>Drugs in a school or on school-owned or leased property, including any conveyance owned, leased, or used by the school for the transport of students or school personnel. 105 ILCS 5/10-27.1B(b), amended by P.A.s 103-609 and 103-780; 105 ILCS 127/).</p>

Actor	Action
	<p>Reports all of the above incidents to ISBE through its web-based School Incident Reporting System (SIRS) as they occur during the year but no later than July 31 for the preceding school year.<sup>6</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-27.1A, amended by P.A.s 103-34, 103-609 (first to pass both houses), and 103-780 (second to pass both houses and controlling); 105 ILCS 5/10-27.1B, amended by P.A.s 103-609 (first to pass both houses) and 103-780 (second to pass both houses and controlling); and 105 ILCS 5/10-21.7.</p>
Building Principal	<p>Reports to the LLEA threats to the safety and welfare of students and teachers by illegal use of drugs and alcohol, by illegal use or possession of weapons, or by illegal gang activity. 105 ILCS 5/10-21.4a.</p> <p>Reports other threats to the LLEA as necessary and appropriate.</p> <p><b>Immediately</b> notifies the LLEA upon receiving a report <u>of a threat of gun violence on school grounds or of that any person has been observed in possession of a firearm on school grounds possessing a firearm</u> (other than a law enforcement official engaged in the conduct of his or her official duties). <u>105 ILCS 5/10-27.1A, amended by P.A. 104-174.</u></p> <p><u>If the report pertains to a threat of firearm violence made by a student, the Building Principal or designee must attempt to notify the student's parent/guardian as soon as possible and must further attempt to contact the parent/guardian to ensure that the student does not have access to a firearm.</u></p> <p>If the person found to be in possession of a firearm on school grounds is a student, the Building Principal or designee shall also immediately notify the student's parent/guardian. 105 ILCS 5/10-24.7.71A(b).</p> <p>Reports directly to <del>the</del> ISP within 24 hours of a determination that a student or other person poses a clear and present danger to himself, herself, or others. 430 ILCS 66/105 and 405 ILCS 5/6-103.3, <u>amended by P.A. 104-270</u>; 20 Ill.Admin.Code §1230.120(b). <u>The Building Principal must also notify the Superintendent or designee whenever he or she makes a clear and present danger report to ISP.</u><sup>7</sup> See exhibit 3:60-E, <i>Event Reporting and Notice Requirements for Building Principals Concerning School Safety and Security</i>, for further information.</p>

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<sup>6</sup> See fn 6 in sample administrative procedure 4:170-AP1, *Comprehensive Safety and Security Plan*.

<sup>7</sup> Optional and suggested here as a best practice. This aligns with sample exhibit 3:60-E, *Event Reporting and Notice Requirements for Building Principals Concerning School Safety and Security*.