

2018-2019

North East Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol



August 2022



Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol: A Multi-Disciplinary Partnership Committed to:

- Early intervention
- Violence prevention
- High-risk assessments
- Interventions and supports; and
- Creating and maintaining internal processes and practices consistent to the model.

Our shared goal is safer schools and communities

*This Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol (CTASP)
reflects the work of J. Kevin Cameron,
Executive Director of the North American Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response,
the Yukon Threat Assessment Program (Y - TAP) and,
the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative.*

Appreciation is expressed to the following school boards for sharing their expertise and resources in the development of this document:

- **Sun West School Division**
- **Living Sky School Division**

Original Signing Date: *December 17, 2018*

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Please note: this protocol is posted at www.nesd.ca

All VTRA forms will be completed in OurSTUDENTS

Rationale

Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol: A Collaborative Response to Assessing Violence Potential

The North East School Division and their community partners are committed to making our schools and communities safe.

Schools will respond to student behaviours that may pose a potential risk for violence to students, staff and members of the community. The goal in supporting intervention measures is to strive to prevent and reduce school violence and to promote the safety of all members of our community.

This protocol supports collaborative planning among community partners to reduce violence and reflects safe, caring and restorative approaches. It fosters timely sharing of information about students who pose a risk for violence towards themselves or others. The protocol promotes the development of supportive and preventive plans.

The strength of this school division, post-secondary and community partnership lies in the multidisciplinary composition of the **Community Threat Assessment Team (CTAT)**. The CTAT members will strive to:

- Share and review relevant student information
- Share the details of the threatening situation or evidence promptly
- Collaborate effectively
- Make use of a broad range of expertise

This collaborative process will respect the individual's rights to privacy and the safety of all, to the fullest extent possible.

Community Partners

The Schools are the lead team members in the *Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol*. Community partners include the following agencies and organizations:

Government of Saskatchewan:

Ministry of Justice, Corrections and Policing
Ministry of Social Services, Child and Family Services

Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Detachments:

Nipawin, Melfort, Tisdale, Carrot River and Hudson Bay

Saskatchewan Health Authority

Mental Health and Addiction Services

Cumberland Regional College

Additional community partners will be invited to join as training occurs. This will allow the protocol to expand and reflect a comprehensive community commitment to early intervention measures and responses to behaviour that pose a potential threat to students, staff, and members of our community.

Vision

Violence prevention in our schools, post-secondary campuses and neighbourhoods is a community responsibility. All community partners work together to promote and maintain safety, and to strive to prevent violence.

Statement of Principles

All partners will undertake to follow the protocol. We have a shared obligation to take active steps to reduce violence in our schools and community.

The partners agree to work together for the common goals of reducing violence, managing threats of violence, and promoting individual, school and community safety. We will do so by proactively sharing information, advice, and supports that reduce violence.

As partners, we will work together for the benefit of children, youth, and their parents/caregivers by:

Building working relationships based on mutual respect and trust;

- Working in ways that promote safe, caring and restorative school environments and practices;
- Involving children, youth and their families in planning for services and supports;
- Recognizing that each child and youth has unique strengths and needs that should be considered when developing an appropriate support plan;
- Realizing that working together successfully is a process of learning, listening, and understanding one another; and
- Being patient, trusting and working together to help children and youth become happy, healthy, active, involved, and caring members of the community.

The overriding goal is **risk reduction and violence prevention**. We are committed to promoting the safety of students, staff, parents/caregivers, and the school/campus community. We will work together to ensure that schools/campuses or other buildings/properties are safe places to learn, work and live.

This protocol is designed to facilitate communication so that when a VTRA is activated, appropriate community partners and school division may communicate relevant student information.

As part of the protocol design, the school division and community partners will commit to ongoing staff development in threat assessment training and program review.

Key Approaches in Risk/Threat Assessment

1. Sharing of Relevant Information

The sharing of information is carried out by any of the team members, on a proactive basis, to avert or minimize imminent danger that affects the health and safety of any person. (See [Sharing Information](#), page 12.) Information is shared on a confidential basis and is to be used solely for the purposes of the assessment or for actions directly related to or flowing from the assessment.

2. Investigative Mind-Set

This is central to the successful application of the risk/threat assessment process. Threat assessment requires thoughtful probing, viewing information with professional objectivity, and paying attention to key points about pre-attack behaviours. Personnel who carry out risk/threat assessment must strive to be both accurate and fair.

Components of an investigative mind-set include:

- Open probing questions;
- Healthy skepticism;
- Attention to pre-attack behaviours;
- Verification of facts, actions corroborated;
- Common sense; and
- Ensuring that information makes sense.

When determining if a threat maker actually poses a risk to the person/target, consideration should be given to the following:

- Is the threat plausible?
- Is the threat an emotionally charged threat?
- What are the precipitating factors?

3. Unauthored Threats: Duty and Intervention

Unauthored threats are typically threats to commit a violent act against an individual(s), specific group, or site (i.e. the school). They may be found written on bathroom walls or stalls, spray painted on the side of schools, posted on the Internet or in letters left in a conspicuous place (teacher's desk) etc.

In the field of school-based child and adolescent violence threat/risk assessment, the lack of ownership (authorship) of the threat generally denotes a lack of commitment. Nevertheless, there are steps that should be followed to:

- a) Assess the unauthored threat;
- b) Attempt to identify the threat maker; and
- c) Avoid or minimize the crisis/trauma response.

Violence Threat Assessment teams should consider the following in determining the initial level of risk based on the current data (i.e. the language of threat):

Language of Commitment

- Amount of detail (location where the violence is to occur, target(s), date and time the violence is to occur, justifications, etc.);
- Threatened to do what with what ("kill", "murder", "ruin your lives", "shank", "shoot", etc.);
- Method of delivery of the threat (who found/received the threat, when did he/she receive it, where did he/she receive it, who else did he/she tell and who else knows about it?); and
- Is the threat clear, direct, plausible, and consistent?

Identifying the Threat Maker

In many cases the author is never found but steps that can be taken to identify the author(s) are:

- Handwriting analysis;
- Analysis of social media use;
- Word usage (phrases and expressions that may be unique to a particular person or group of people [street gang, club, sport team, etc.]); and
- Spelling (unique errors or modifications).

Contra-indicators:

Some authors will switch gender and try to lead the reader to believe they are a boy (or girl) when they are not or pretend to be someone else as a setup. Some individuals who write unauthored “hit lists” embed their names in the list of identified targets.

Depending on the severity of the threat, some or all staff members may be asked to assist in analyzing the unauthorized threat.

Depending on the severity of the threat, some students may be asked to give their opinion regarding the origin and authorship of threat.

4. Building Capacity

Threat Assessment Teams (TAT) in each school and community partners will receive violence threat risk assessment training. Along with Level 1 and Level 2 VTRA training, the school divisions and community partners may provide additional training opportunities to support the work of the Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol.

5. Program Review

This protocol will be reviewed annually by the Community Threat Assessment and Support Advisory Group which is comprised of representatives from the school division and community partners.

6. Contact List

The chair or designate of the CTAT will maintain an up-to-date contact list of the lead team members and will distribute a copy of the list to all community partners.

Threat Assessment Response

When a student engages in behaviours or makes threatening comments or gestures that may result in injury to self and others in our community, the School Threat Assessment Team (School TAT) or Community Threat Assessment and Support Team (Community TAT) will respond in the manner identified in *Appendix A – Responding to Student Threat Making Behaviour: A School Staff Guide* or *Appendix B – Responding to Student Threat Making Behaviour: A Protocol Partner Guide*.

This *Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol* is based on The North American Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response’s model of Violence Threat/Risk Assessment (VTRA). The VTRA follows a three-step process:

- Stage 1 Data collection and immediate risk reducing interventions;

- Stage 2 Comprehensive multidisciplinary risk evaluation; and
- Stage 3 Multidisciplinary intervention.

The VTRA is the combination of early Secret Service research around school-based threat assessment and general violence risk assessment. The work reflects scientific research conducted by a number of disciplines including medical and mental health professionals, law enforcement, and specialists in the field of threat management.

The three stages of the VTRA combine all appropriate threat assessment concepts and risk assessment factors. This protocol allows for a comprehensive determination of violence risk posed and the identification of appropriate interventions. It prevents under-reaction by professionals who may use general violence risk assessment tools as the unilateral measure to determine risk of violence of a young person. The three stage approach promotes understanding that some individuals may not pose a risk for general violence, yet may be moving rapidly on a pathway of violence toward a particular target they consider justifiable.

During data collection, and risk reducing interventions, VTRA team members should ensure attention to fluidity. Fluidity is the understanding that individuals may move between threats to harm others and a threat to harm themselves. Fluidity is an important consideration because the first hypothesis of VTRA is that a threat is a cry for help.

Activation of the School and Community Threat Assessment Teams

To facilitate timely activation of the School Threat Assessment Team (School TAT) or Community Threat Assessment Team (Community TAT), each community partner will identify its lead TAT member(s), and provide contact information to the North East School Division's Superintendent with VTRA responsibilities

School Violence-Threat Assessment Team (School TAT)

The School TAT will consist of principal, vice-principal, school counselor, teacher and an assigned RCMP member. The School TAT participants should have received threat assessment training and will respond after the immediate threat to student/staff safety has been contained. The School team will assess whether a risk to student/staff safety still exists and develop an intervention plan to support student(s) involved, the greater student body, staff and the community. The Superintendent or designate will be consulted and will participate in the threat assessment process as required.

Stage 1 Data collection and immediate risk reducing interventions are performed by the school-based team (School Threat Assessment Team or TAT), which must, **at minimum**, include the school principal or vice principal, school counsellor, and the assigned RCMP member. The initial data collection is completed in a timely and efficient manner. It focuses on gathering case specific data using the *Threat Assessment Report Form* (See Appendix C).

Community Threat Assessment Team (Community TAT)

When a School TAT has determined that a student poses a **medium or high level of concern** to student/staff safety, the principal will call the Superintendent or designate to request that the Community TAT be activated.

The Community TAT will consist of the School team members as well as designated Division Office staff and appropriate Community Partners. When the Community TAT has been activated, the respective RCMP detachment will be consulted.

When a community partner agency identifies the need to activate the Community TAT, they will notify the chair of CTAT. Community TAT members will, at all times, take any actions necessary to facilitate immediate safety, without delay, regardless of the involvement or availability of other Community TAT members.

Stage 2 Comprehensive multidisciplinary risk evaluation is focused on further data collection beyond the initial data set obtained by the Stage 1 School TAT. The Stage 2 Community Threat Assessment Team (Community TAT) may involve some or all of the following: additional police-based resources, psychology, psychiatry, mental health, child protection, young offender worker, and others.

At Stage 2, the Community TAT members work in collaboration with the Stage 1 School TAT to conduct the formal risk assessment and evaluation (See Appendix D). Stage 2 includes the use of formal, structured professional instruments, concepts, tests, and measures by the appropriate community agency(ies).

Stage 3 Multidisciplinary intervention is the formal meeting of the Stage 1 School TAT and Stage 2 Community TAT members following a formal threat/risk assessment. The purpose of Stage 3 is to develop and implement a comprehensive, multidisciplinary intervention and management strategy (See Appendix G).

Roles

School principal or designate

The school principal or designate will:

- Be the School TAT leader;
- Call and coordinate the School TAT and inform the Superintendent of Student Services;
- Complete Stage I: Data collection and immediate risk reducing intervention within hours;
- Complete Stage I Threat Assessment Form (see Appendix C) within 24 hours;
- Contact the Superintendent with responsibility for VTRA to discuss possible activation of the Community TAT;
- Follow up and coordinate intervention plans developed by the team;
- Notify Superintendent or designate once the plan has been developed via the email function in OurSTUDENTS.

Counselling Consultant and other staff involved at the Principal's request

The school staff will:

- Assist in data gathering as assigned by the principal;
- Assist the principal with Threat Assessment Report Form (See Appendix C) and Risk Assessment Report Form (See Appendix D)
- Be available for consultation on general issues regarding threat assessment procedures relating to mental health;

- Assist in developing plans or other interventions (i.e., behaviour plans, safety plans), and in facilitating access to programs or resources to reduce the risk of violence and respond to the student's educational needs; and
- Help families access support that is required.

Division Office staff

Division Office staff will:

- Be designated by the Superintendent with responsibility for VTRA as members of the Community TAT;
- Contact Community TAT members to facilitate consultations, and conduct interviews as required, except in criminal investigations;
- Assist when asked in completing the Threat Assessment Report Form (See Appendix C) and Risk Assessment Report Form (See Appendix D)
- Follow up with School TAT on the implementation of recommended intervention plans (See Appendix G).

Community Partner Staff

The community partner staff will:

- Have an appropriate staff member participate in the Community TAT;

The community partner staff may:

- Participate in completion of the Risk Assessment Report Form (See Appendix D);
- Participate in a review of School TAT findings; and
- Participate in developing any recommended intervention plans (See Appendix G)

RCMP Officers

The RCMP Officer will:

- Be involved in School TATs or Community TATs;

The RCMP Officer may:

- Investigate and determine whether a crime has been committed, and if charges are appropriate or warranted;
- Conduct a police investigation;
- Generate a police occurrence report; and
- Interview the threat maker and witnesses when a criminal offence has occurred.

In most cases, the student behaviour that activates the Community TAT will be observed in, or affect, the school. Therefore, whenever possible, Community TAT meetings will occur on North East School Division premises. The lead Community TAT member will be the Superintendent with responsibility for VTRA or designate. Other senior divisional personnel and school administration, may also be part of the Community TAT.

Trauma Response: After a threat or an act of violence has occurred, school division Tragic Events Response Team and community partner staff may be called upon to plan or provide post trauma counselling and interventions for students and staff.

Sharing Information

The general intent of access to information and protection of privacy legislation is to regulate the collection storage, use and disclosure of personal information. (Note: When the term “personal information” is used in this document, this includes personal health information.) **Wherever possible and reasonable, consent to disclose personal information should be obtained.** Valid consent does not exist unless the individual knows what he/she is consenting to, and understands the consequences of the intended disclosure. The individual must be made aware that he/she can withdraw consent at any time by giving written or verbal notice. The North East School Division and community partners are committed to the sharing of relevant information to the extent authorized by law.

The presumption is that all information shared by partners about individual students and families is personal information and should be treated with a high level of confidentiality. Once sharing of information has occurred each partner who receives the information will be responsible for ensuring appropriate storage, use and disclosure of such information in accordance with the laws, regulations, policies and procedures applying to that partner. Each partner will be responsible for the education of their staff in this regard.

It is vital to note, that legislation allows the release of personal information if there is **imminent threat to health and safety**. To make parents/guardians/caregivers and students aware of the protocol to be followed in such cases, the school division will provide a *Fair Notice Letter* at the beginning of every school year. (See Appendix I). This notification will be posted permanently on the NESD as well as each school’s website.

Each partner involved in an assessment will be responsible for determining their own threshold for sharing information with other partners. Each partner will be responsible for ensuring compliance with the legislation that applies to them. This may include, but is not limited to the following:

- ***Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (LAFOIP)***
- ***Health Information Protection Act (HIPA)***
- ***Mental Health Services Act***
- ***Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP)***
- ***Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA)***
- ***Child and Family Services Act***

Green Light	Yellow Light	Red Light
Generally speaking, and subject to the guidelines of LAFOIP, relevant personal information CAN be shared under one or more of the following circumstances:	In any of the following circumstances, obtain more information and receive direction from a supervisor:	Information can NEVER be shared under any of the following circumstance:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With written consent ▪ To avert or minimize imminent danger to the health and safety of any person; ▪ To report a child who might need protection under the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i> ▪ By order of the Court; ▪ To support the rehabilitation of a young person under the <i>Youth Criminal Justice Act</i>; ▪ To ensure the safety of students and/or staff under the YCJA; ▪ To cooperate with a police and/or a child protection investigation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where consent is not provided or is refused but where there may be a health or safety issue for any individual or group(s); ▪ When asked about a report of criminal activity given to the police; ▪ When asked to share YCJA information from records, where there is a demand or request to produce information for a legal proceeding; ▪ When a professional code of ethics may limit disclosure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is a legislative requirement barring disclosure; ▪ No consent is given and there is no need to know nor overriding health/ safety concerns; ▪ Consent is given but there is no need to know nor overriding health/safety concerns.
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When to Share Information

Documentation

The Threat Assessment Report Form (See Appendix C), *Risk Assessment Report Form* (See Appendix D), and *Intervention Plan Form* (See Appendix G) are completed within OurSTUDENTS by the school principal and serves as the official written record of the school/community meeting called to discuss student behaviour and to determine follow up plans or interventions. The written report and/or information from the meeting may be shared with others at the discretion of the Superintendent responsible for VTRA when it is deemed to be in the best interests of the student or others. All VTRA documentation is housed in OurSTUDENTS. However, there may be additional documentation from community agencies that must be securely stored as per legislative requirements.

If the plan requires further action outside of the school, the appropriate organization may receive a copy of the original report. In such instances, it is essential that all organizations make reasonable efforts to ensure that their protocols for the sharing, storage and retention of this information and this report are consistent with the following principles:

- At the minimum, partner organizations should ensure their personnel follow all requirements of any privacy legislation which may pertain to their agency;
- Information written and reported must be kept confidential and is intended to be shared with others on a “need to know” basis only;
- Information is shared only for the purpose for which it was created; and
- The written report is stored securely and retained only for the length of time required for the purpose for which it was created.

Organizations must ensure that policies and/or procedures are in place to protect the confidentiality of all information received by the organization and its employees through the assessment process. Organizations should take steps to ensure that all employees involved in the assessment process have a clear understanding of the requirements for confidentiality and of the consequences for

breaches of confidentiality. There should be appropriate enforcement by the organization of their policies and procedures regarding confidentiality.

Requests to amend information or requests for access to information made by parents, students, or third parties will be addressed in accordance with the legislation applying to the agency to which the request is made.

Community Agency Reports of Information of Students Posing Significant Risk of Harm

If a community partner believes they have knowledge of worrisome behaviour of a student which could pose a risk of harm to the public or others, they are advised to directly contact the school principal.

Upon receipt of this information and further investigation, the principal may determine to take this information further than the school or to address the matter internally. If the behaviour is deemed to be of a medium or high risk, the principal will immediately call the Superintendent responsible for VTRA. Following this review, a decision will be made whether to initiate the *Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol*.

If the agency does not have knowledge of the student's home school, contact may be made directly with the Superintendent with responsibility for VTRA to share the information and to determine the appropriate course of action.

External Communication

Safe schools operate as open systems and promote the appropriate sharing of information. To keep school communities safe and caring, staff, parents/guardians/caregivers, students and community members must report all threat related behaviours to the school principal/vice principal.

As part of the threat assessment process, the North East School Division will consult with appropriate community partners to coordinate any public messages via the media.

VTRA Reminders

Threat Assessment Trumps Suspension

In most cases, unless the individual of concern already poses an imminent or obvious safety concern (i.e.: currently brandishing a weapon), the Stage 1 team is activated and Stage 1 Report Form data is collected within reason before suspension is even considered.

A poorly timed "out of school suspension" is high risk as this period is often viewed by the high risk student as the "last straw". It is in this stage that many threat makers decide to finalize a plan to terrorize their school or attack a specific target (this can include homicidal or suicidal acts).

The suspension does not cause the violence to occur but may create the necessary context for the high risk student who is already struggling with suicidal and/or homicidal ideation, to take the final step from planning to action.

Unauthored Threats: Assessment and Intervention

Unauthored threats are typically threats to commit a violent act against an individual, specific group or site (i.e.: the school). They may be found written on bathroom walls or stalls, spray painted on the side of schools, posted on the internet, letters left in a conspicuous place (teacher's desk), etc. The lack of ownership (authorship) of the threat generally denotes a lack of commitment. Nevertheless, there are steps that should be followed:

- 1) Assess the unauthored threat.
- 2) Attempt to identify the threat maker.
- 3) Avoid or minimize the crisis/trauma response.

Students with Special Needs and VTRA

The multidisciplinary VTRA protocol will not be activated when students with intensive needs engage in threat-making or aggressive behaviors **that are typical to their baseline**. In other words, if their conduct is consistent with their diagnosis and how it has been known to manifest in them, then the VTRA team will not be called upon to conduct an assessment.

However, if the student with intensive needs moves beyond their typical baseline and for the first time engaged in threatening behavior, then the VTRA team would be activated to assist in determining why the increase in baseline and if there is a risk to self and others. Once the VTRA team is activated the process of data collection and assessment is not modified other than to ensure appropriate interviewing strategies with the student with intensive needs. Staff members from the school and division level responsible for program planning and service delivery to students with intensive needs will always be consultants to the VTRA team in these cases.

APPENDIX A

Responding to Student Threat Making Behaviour: A School Staff Guide

Any person who is concerned will report behaviours to the school **principal/designate** that may pose a risk or threat to others.

↓	↓	↓
<p>Worrisome Behaviours Include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violent content • Drawings and pictures • Stories/journals • Vague threatening statements • Unusual interest in fire • Significant change in anti-social behaviour • Significant change in baseline behaviour <p>**Does not typically lead to activating the protocol but because it is a 'cry for help' it does involve timely follow-up with the student, his/her teachers, the school counsellor and the student's parents/guardians/caregivers. **</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p>High Risk Behaviours Include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possession of weapon/replica • Bomb threat plan • Verbal/written threat to kill/injure • Internet website threats to kill or injure self/others • Fire setting • Threatens violence • Hate motivated violence targeting a particular student/group <p>**Activate protocol when safe to do so. Complete Stage 1. **</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Principal informed and decision made to activate the protocol.</p>	<p>Immediate Threat-<u>Call 911</u> Include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weapon in possession that poses serious threat to others • Plan for serious assault • Homicidal/suicidal behaviour that threatens safety • Fire setting resulting in harm <p>**Activate protocol when safe to do so. Complete Stage 1. **</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Principal informed and decision made to activate the protocol.</p>
Principal informed	Stage 1 – Data collection immediate risk reducing intervention is completed within hours. School TAT – administrators, counsellor, RCMP	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Divisions activate protocol following their internal guidelines. <p>If activated by the TAT, Superintendent with responsibility for VTRA, proceed to Stage 2</p>	
	Stage 2: Comprehensive multidisciplinary risk evaluation completed as soon as possible. Community Threat Assessment Support Team (Superintendent, RCMP, Community Partners)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct interviews as required. • Meet with appropriate protocol partners and complete Threat Assessment Report Form. <p>If activated by the Superintendent with the responsibility for VTRA, proceed to stage 3.</p>	
	Stage 3: Multidisciplinary intervention CTAST – School TAT, Superintendent, RCMP and Community Partners	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with expanded Community TAT. • Community TAT develops, implements and monitors a comprehensive multidisciplinary intervention plan and modifies it as appropriate. 	

Appendix B

Responding to Student Threat Making Behaviour: A Protocol Partner Guide

Note: When a community partner determines the need to activate the Community TAT, that person will notify his/her designated lead team member who will follow the procedure outlined below

All protocol partners will report behaviours that may pose a risk or threat to others.



<p>Worrisome Behaviours Include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violent content • Drawings and pictures • Stories/journals • Vague threatening statements • Unusual interest in fire • Significant change in anti-social behaviour • Significant change in baseline behaviour <p>**Does not typically lead to activating the protocol but because it is a 'cry for help' it does involve timely follow-up with the student, his/her teachers, the school counsellor and the student's parents/guardians/caregivers.**</p>	<p>High Risk Behaviours Include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possession of weapon/replica • Bomb threat plan • Verbal/written threat to kill/injure • Internet website threats to kill or injure self/others • Fire setting • Threatens violence • Hate motivated violence targeting a particular student/group <p>**Activate protocol when safe to do so. Complete Stage 1.**</p>	<p>Immediate Threat Call 911 Include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weapon in possession that poses serious threat to others • Plan for serious assault • Homicidal/suicidal behaviour that threatens safety • Fire setting resulting in harm <p>**Activate protocol when safe to do so. Complete Stage 1.**</p>
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Principal informed if known. If unknown, contact Superintendent with responsibility for *Safe and Caring Schools*.



School Threat Assessment Team (TAT)	Community Threat Assessment and Support Team	Community Threat Assessment and Support Team
<p>Stage 1 Data collection and immediate risk reducing interventions are performed by the School Threat Assessment Team (TAT) The initial data collection is often accomplished in one to two hours. It focuses on gathering case specific data using the Threat Assessment Report Form (see Appendix F).</p>	<p>Stage 2 Comprehensive multidisciplinary risk evaluation is focused on further data collection beyond the initial data set obtained by the Stage 1 School TAT. The Stage 2 Community Threat Assessment and Support Team (Community TAST) may involve some or all of the following: additional police-based resources, psychology, psychiatry, mental health, child protection, young offender worker, and others. At Stage 2, the Community TAST members work in collaboration with the Stage 1 School TAT to conduct the formal risk assessment and evaluation. Stage 2 includes the use of formal, structured professional instruments, concepts, tests, and measures by the appropriate Threat Assessment Unit.</p>	<p>Stage 3 Multidisciplinary intervention is the formal meeting of the Stage 1 School TAT and Stage 2 Community TAST members following a formal threat/risk assessment. The purpose of Stage 3 is to develop and implement a comprehensive, multidisciplinary intervention and management strategy.</p>

Appendix C - Threat Assessment Report Form

(To be completed in OurSTUDENTS)

AS PER VTRA IMMEDIATE RESPONSE GUIDE, ENSURE ALL RISK REDUCING INTERVENTIONS HAVE BEEN ATTENDED TO BEFORE COMPLETING THREAT ASSESSMENT

For affirmative responses, please provide evidence and/or applicable details.

1. How did the threat come to your attention?
2. Who was/were the target(s)?
3. What was the specific language of the threat?
4. Was it clear, direct, and plausible?
5. Was there a weapon brandished, or gestures made?
6. What was learned from Initial Data Collection of threat maker:
7. Where did the incident happen and when?
8. Who was present and under what circumstances did the incident occur?
9. What was the motivation or perceived cause of the incident?
10. What was the response of the target (if present) at the time of the incident? Did he or she add to or detract from the justification process?
11. What was the response of others who were present? Did they add or detract from the justification process?
12. Additional Information worth noting:

BEHAVIOUR ASSESSMENT: Based on investigation, and in consultation with Superintendent of Student Services or Coordinator of Integrated Services, assess threat maker behavior:

() Worrisome Behaviour

ACTION: Within OurSTUDENTS complete Student Background and submit Rtl referral for creation of Success Plan. **Work ends in VTRA Form if checked.**

() High Risk Behaviour

ACTION: Move to Risk Assessment ([Links to Risk Assessment](#))

Appendix D - Risk Assessment Report Form

(To be completed in OurSTUDENTS)

*** FOLLOWING THE RISK ASSESSMENT, A COPY OF THE VTRA ASSESSMENT NOTIFICATION MUST BE PLACED IN STUDENT CUM FOLDER***

Date:

For affirmative responses, please provide evidence and/or applicable details.

1. Do the actions in question represent a change in baseline?
2. Chronological history of violence?
3. Evidence of fluidity (*harm to self/harm to others*)?
4. Recent changes to family dynamics?
5. Presence of Adverse Childhood Experiences?
6. Evidence of peer dynamics that may be conducive to violence?
7. Evidence of empty vessel indicators (*always alone, despondent, face covered, etc...*)?
8. Evidence of threat maker's inordinate knowledge/fascination with threats or harm to others?
9. Outside agency involvement? Please provide list of those involved.
- 10. Using VTRA Risk Evaluation criteria, and in consultation with Superintendent of Student Services or Coordinator of Integrated Services, determine level of risk posed by student?**

Low to Medium Risk

Explanation:

Medium to High Risk

Explanation:

Appendix E – VTRA Risk Evaluation

VTRA Team members are to collate data and discuss all relevant information regarding the student. As a team, ask the questions:

- **“To what extent does the student pose a threat to school/student safety?”**
- **“Does the student pose a threat to himself/herself or someone outside the school (i.e. family)?”**

➤ **Low Level of Concern**

Risk to the target(s), students, staff, and school safety is minimal.

- Threat is vague and indirect.
- Categorization of low risk does not imply “no risk” but indicates *the individual* is at little risk for violence.
- Information contained within the threat is inconsistent, implausible, or lacks detail; threat lacks realism.
- Available information suggests that the person is unlikely to carry out the threat or become violent.
- Within the general range for typical baseline behaviour for the student in question.
- Monitoring of the matter may be appropriate.

➤ **Medium Level of Concern**

The threat could be carried out, although it may not appear entirely realistic. Violent action is possible.

- Threat is more plausible and concrete than a low level threat. Wording in the threat and information gathered suggests that some thought has been given to how the threat will be carried out (e.g., possible place and time).
- No clear indication that the student of concern has taken preparatory steps (e.g., weapon, seeking), although there may be an ambiguous or inconclusive reference pointing to that possibility. There may be a specific statement seeking to convey that the threat is not empty: “I’m serious!”
- A moderate or lingering concern about the student’s potential to act violently.
- Increase in baseline behaviour.
- Categorization of risk indicates *the individual* is at an elevated risk for violence, and those measures currently in place or further measures, including monitoring, are required in an effort to manage the individual’s future risk.

➤ **High Level of Concern**

The threat or situation of concern appears to pose an imminent and serious danger to the safety of others.

- Threat is specific and *plausible*. There is an identified target. Student has the *capacity* to act on the threat.
- Information suggests concrete steps have been taken toward acting on threat. For example, information indicates that the student has acquired or practiced with a weapon or has had a victim under surveillance.
- Information suggests strong concern about the student’s potential to act violently.
- Significant increase in baseline behaviour.
- Categorization of risk indicates the individual is at a high or imminent risk for violence.
- Immediate intervention is required to prevent an act of violence from occurring.

*Sources for the above categorizations represent the work of the FBI, Durham Regional Police Service, Ontario Provincial Police Threat Assessment Unit, and the Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response.

Appendix F – VTRA Notification Form

VIOLENCE THREAT RISK ASSESSMENT (VTRA) ASSESSMENT NOTIFICATION

(to be copied on yellow paper and placed in the student’s cumulative folder)

Student’s Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

School: _____

Date of Incident: _____

A formal threat/risk assessment was completed
on: _____

Please contact _____ at

_____ for further information.
(school name and phone #)

Signature of Principal

Date

Appendix G – Intervention Plan Form

(To be completed in OurSTUDENTS)

Date:

For students deemed High Risk, ensure pertinent outside agencies are part of Intervention Plan

1. **Case Manager** (*Must be Administrator*):
2. **Disciplinary Action Taken (if any)**:
3. **Daily Risk Reducing Interventions** (*Check-in/check-out, back-pack check, Late arrival/early dismissal, etc.*):
4. **Adult Strategies/Responsibilities** (*Relationship, avoid power struggles, soft tone, etc ...*):
5. **Student Strategies/Responsibilities** (*music, body break, drumming, etc ...*):
6. **Student Services Supports**:
7. **Outside Agency Supports and Responsibilities** (*For Medium to High Risk only*):

Update and Next Steps:

Case Closed: Yes/No

Appendix H – Definitions

Community Threat Assessment Categorizations

- **Low level of concern:** Risk to the target(s), students, staff and school safety appears minimal.
- **Medium level of concern:** The threat could be carried out, although it may not appear realistic. Violent action is possible.
- **High level of concern:** The threat or situation of concern appears to pose an imminent and serious danger to the safety of others.

High risk behaviours

High risk behaviours express intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. High risk behaviours include but are not limited to: possession of weapon/replica, bomb threat plan, verbal/written or Internet threats to kill/injure self or others, fire setting, threatening violence and hate motivated violence.

Note: *Do not be deceived when traditional risk behaviours do not exist. There is no profile or checklist for the high risk student. Some students who actually pose a threat display very few traits of the traditional high risk student. Identify when homicidal and suicidal domains exist together. This is critical to the development of a response to the incident, including the creation of a student support plan.*

Immediate Threat

In the case of immediate threat, staff will **CALL 911** and take the appropriate emergency response measures. The principal will contact the Superintendent with responsibility for VTRA who will contact the Director of Education.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment is typically a lengthier process that involves a number of standardized tests and measures that go beyond the scope of the school-based multidisciplinary Threat Assessment Team (TAT) assessment. After the “initial level of risk” is assessed and “immediate risk reducing intervention” has occurred, a further risk assessment may be required. Therefore, risk assessment is the process of determining if a student of concern may pose a further risk to some known or unknown target(s) at some unknown period in time. The student may be evidencing increasing violent ideation or behaviours that suggest that the frequency or intensity of his/her violence or violence potential may be escalating. Unlike the immediate intervention, the risk assessment is meant to be a more comprehensive evaluation of all risk reducing and risk enhancing factors affecting the student’s functioning and to use that data to guide longer term intervention and treatment goals.

Threat

A threat is any expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. Threats may be spoken, written, drawn, symbolic, posted on the internet (MSN, Facebook, etc.) or made by gesture only. Threats may be direct, indirect, conditional or veiled.

Threat Assessment

Threat assessment is the process of determining if a threat maker (someone who utters, writes, emails, etc., a threat to kill a target or targets) actually poses a risk to the target(s) being threatened. Although many students, and others, engage in threat-making behaviour, research indicates that few actually pose a risk to harm the target being threatened. Multidisciplinary Threat Assessment Teams (TATs) engage in a data collection process, through semi-structured interviews, to determine “initial levels of risk” that may be posed and plan necessary risk-reducing interventions. Although a student of concern may be assessed as low risk, there may be data that indicates a more comprehensive risk assessment is required.

Worrisome Behaviour

Worrisome behaviour is defined as those behaviours that cause concern and may indicate that a student is moving toward a greater risk of violent behaviour. (The majority of behaviours from pre-kindergarten to grade 12 fall into this category.) Worrisome behaviours include but are not limited to violent content in drawings and stories/journals, making vague threatening statements, unusual interest in fire, significant change in anti-social behaviour and significant change in baseline behaviour. Worrisome behaviours may be an early warning sign of the development of more serious high risk behaviours. All worrisome behaviours should be addressed in a timely manner. These situations may involve activation of the School TAT and consultation with division staff.

Violence

Violence is a continuing process of thoughts and behaviours that is dependent on the interaction between **a person** who is inclined to violence; **a stimulus** that causes the violence; and **a setting** that allows for violence or does nothing to prevent a violent act from occurring. Violence is dynamic and multidimensional. It is a process that is developed over time.

Appendix I – Sample Fair Notice Letter



Box 6000, 402 Main St.
Melfort, SK S0E 1A0

Phone: (306) 752-5741
Fax: (306) 752-1933

Toll Free: 1-888-752-5741
Website: www.nesd.ca

September 2, 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians/Caregivers:

It is with great pleasure that I am able to announce that the North East School Division has collaborated with community partners across the northeast to develop the “Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol.” This protocol allows community partners to share information and use their expertise to implement the appropriate supports for students and their families. Furthermore, North East schools have established School Threat Assessment Teams including the administrator(s), school counsellor and RCMP to work with the Protocol.

The purpose of a threat assessment is to determine how best to support high-risk students so that their behaviour does not become hurtful or destructive. These actions have been undertaken to help fulfill our Board expectations to provide a safe, respectful learning environment within our schools. The North East School Division is committed to ensuring that students, staff, school visitors and community members feel safe. Collaboration with families and community partners is viewed as critical to attain our goal.

For more information on the Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol, please visit our website at www.nesd.ca. Information and a brochure that outlines the steps for the protocol can be found under “Safe and Caring Schools.” If you have questions about the process, please contact your school principal.

We look forward to working with you and our community partners to provide safe and caring schools.

Sincerely,

Stacy Lair

Director of Education

North East School Division

Appendix F

Original Protocol Signing Members

Date: December 17, 2018

The North East School Division and community partners are committed to making our schools safe for students, staff, volunteers and visitors through participation in the Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol.

North East School Division	Saskatchewan Health Authority
Ministry of Social Services	Ministry of Justice
RCMP Representative	Cumberland Regional College