

**Background:**

Virginia Code requires that all school divisions establish threat assessment teams. These teams are to include people with counseling, instruction, school administration and law enforcement expertise. Members of the team will assist in training students and staff regarding threatening behavior and will assist in identifying members of the school community to whom threatening behavior should be reported.

**Guidelines:**

Each PCPS school shall create a building based Threat Assessment Team which will inform students and staff of threatening behaviors and to whom they should be reported. The building based team will consist of the following:

- Principal
- Assistant principal
- Guidance counselor
- School psychologist and/or school social worker

Other school staff may serve on the team and/or be consulted during the threat assessment process, as appropriate, and as determined by the principal. (Note: A law enforcement officer appointed by the Chief of the Poquoson Police Department will join the team if it appears the threat may be a high or imminent. Additionally, as a Threat Assessment Team member who is appropriately designated as a school official, the law enforcement member, may *not* disclose PII (Personally Identifiable Information) from education records to anyone without consent or unless one of the exceptions to consent under FERPA, such as the health or safety emergency exception, applies. (Note: See Guide for Developing High Quality Emergency Operations Plans [http://rems.ed.gov/docs/REMS\\_K-12\\_Guide\\_508.pdf](http://rems.ed.gov/docs/REMS_K-12_Guide_508.pdf))

Additionally, a division-level Threat Assessment Team will be in place to oversee and provide support for school assessment teams. The team shall include the following:

- Superintendent
- Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Support Services
- Director of Student Services
- Chief of Poquoson Police

It should be noted that the division-level assessment team may consult with Colonial Behavioral Health when necessary.

Threats will be classified in the following manner:

Low risk threat person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence and any underlying issues can be resolved easily.

Moderate risk person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence at this time but exhibits behaviors that indicate a continuing intent to harm and potential for future violence.

High risk person/situation appears to pose a threat of violence, exhibiting behaviors that indicate both a continuing intent to harm and efforts to acquire the capacity to carry out the plan.

Imminent threat person/situation appears to pose a clear and immediate threat of serious violence toward others that requires containment and action to protect identified target(s).

If a student or staff member witnesses threatening or aberrant behavior, it should be reported to one of the members of the team who should notify the principal immediately. If a student is a threat to self the school counselor should be notified immediately. PCPS Threat to Self-Procedures will be followed by the counselor. Upon completion of the Threat to Self-Assessment Form, the school counselor will trigger the school assessment team procedures as outlined in this Regulation.

The principal of the school will immediately follow the *PCPS Student Threat Assessment Guidelines and Procedures*. Appropriate steps should be followed and the *PCPS Student Threat Assessment and Response Report* should be completed and submitted to the Director of Student Services within three school days of the initial threat. PCPS Threat Assessment and Response Summary Form will be followed by the Threat Assessment Team.

The school administrator should be able to investigate and resolve most low risk threats in consultation with members of the threat assessment team with minimal direct involvement by the full team. If it cannot be determined with a reasonable degree of confidence that the threat is low risk, then a more in-depth investigation is to be undertaken by the threat assessment team to determine the nature and degree of any safety concerns and to develop strategies to reduce risk. If a threat is determined to be high or imminent the principal must notify the superintendent or designee.

An imminent threat exists when the person/situation appears to pose a clear and immediate threat of serious violence toward others. Such threats require immediate containment and action to protect identified target(s) and referral to law enforcement.

Each school's Threat Assessment Team shall report data as required by the Department of Criminal Justice Services.

**Legal References:** Virginia Code § 22.1-79.4

**Date Issued:** August 21, 2013

**Date Reissued:** November 5, 2013; April 21, 2015

**Approved:** Jennifer B. Parish, Ed.D., Superintendent