STUDENT VIOLENCE THREAT RISK ASSESSMENT

SUBJECT: Student Threat Assessment

CATEGORY: Health and Safety

AUTHORITY: Superintendent, Principal

POLICY #:

ADOPTED:

**POLICY STATEMENT**

Anglophone School District West and the District Education Council are committed to the safety and well-being of all students, staff and others. Violence Threat Risk Assessment protocols ensure that potentially high-risk behaviour is properly assessed and supportive interventions are put in place. Threat assessment is a means to comprehensively examine the potential and magnitude of threatening behaviour that would impact on the safety/health of individuals within the school. To this end, ASD-W shall establish a protocol for responding to student threats/threat related behaviour. All threatening behaviour will be taken seriously and assessed.

A threat is defined as an expressed intention to harm someone or something. Examples of threats may include, but are not limited to: verbal threats, physical gestures, notes on walls, email messages or any other means used to communicate intention to harm.

**PURPOSE**

The primary purpose of the threat assessment is to determine and identify the level of concern, decrease the risk posed, prevent injury to self and others, and assist the student to receive the help he or she needs to address the issues contributing to the high risk student behaviour.

**PROCEDURES**

**FAIR NOTICE**

Prior to any violence threat risk assessment protocol being implemented in ASD-W, all students, staff and parents/guardians will be provided with information about the protocol and procedures so that “Fair Notice” is given that threat and threat making behaviours will not be tolerated. This will be sent home with every student at the beginning of each year, and throughout the year when a new student arrives, and will take the form of a letter, email or published in the school agenda.

Each school is to publicize and review the violence threat risk assessment policy with all staff, students and parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year and with new students entering throughout the school year.

**DUTY TO REPORT**

Any person in the school having knowledge of high-risk student behaviour or having reasonable grounds to believe there is a potential for high risk behaviour shall immediately report the information to the school principal. Students should be taught to report worrisome behaviour to ensure the well-being of all. It is also important for all to understand that no action will be taken against a person who makes a report unless the report is maliciously and without reasonable grounds. In cases where a report is made maliciously, the reporter shall be dealt with accordingly.

**DUTY TO RESPOND**

A school (Principal or designate) shall respond to all threat/threat-related behaviours. When needed, Administration is expected to secure the school environment by detaining students involved in a threatening or violent situation, notifying parents/guardians, implementing the school discipline policy as appropriate to the situation or by taking any other action deemed necessary to ensure student and staff safety.

**DUTY TO INFORM – RECIPIENTS OF THREATS AND OTHERS**

The Violence Threat Risk Assessment School Team shall ensure that appropriate support is provided to those against whom threats have been made, i.e. recipient(s) of the threat. The school principal/designate shall notify all school staff, and parents if necessary, within a reasonable time period, when the protocol has been activated as a result of threat/threat-related behaviours.

**STUDENTS REQUIRING SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

Multidisciplinary teams will consider maturation issues, accountability, and cognitive skills when assessing threat related behaviour of students under the age of twelve and/or students with exceptionalities. The school principal/designate shall always be consulted and shall provide disciplinary responses and/or ensure interventions and precautionary measures as deemed appropriate, according to the level of threat/threat-related behaviours. The school principal/designate shall determine the necessity for law enforcement to be involved.

**RESPONDING TO THE THREAT**

The response to the threat/threat-related behaviour(s) shall be guided according to the level of concern (low, medium, high, immediate as per *Keeping Our Schools Safe Protocol,* pages 7 and 8). The school principal/designate shall ensure interventions and precautionary measures as deemed appropriate, according to the level of threat, the context of the threat/threat-related behaviour(s) and actions needed to resolve the threat/threat-related behaviour(s) are put in place. Upon receiving a report of threat/threat related-behaviour(s), the school principal/designate shall take immediate precautions to ensure the safety of all, including the recipient(s) of the threat and other potential victims (i.e. witnesses). The principal/designate shall also provide immediate supervision of the student(s) to a level consistent to the nature and seriousness of the threat/threat-related behaviour(s).

**IMMEDIATE RISK SITUATION**

Immediate risk situation is a threat that places the school population in imminent danger, such that evacuation or lockdown is required. The school principal/designate shall call 9-911 (land phone) or 911 (cell phone) immediately and the ASD-W Emergency Line (453-5333). The school principal/designate shall take steps to ensure the safety of all those in the school by activating established procedures for school evacuation or lockdown.

**HIGH RISK SITUATION**

If the threat is assessed to be a high risk threat (the threat or situation of concern appears to pose serious danger to themselves or the safety of others), the school principal/designate shall immediately initiate the protocol for the response by contacting the appropriate agency. In cases where it is believed a Criminal Code violation has occurred, the Police Officer/Crown has the final decision as to whether or not an arrest will be made.

The school principal/designate shall activate a Violence Threat Risk Assessment School Team to conduct as assessment and determine follow-up recommendations. An email stating that VTRA Protocol has been activated shall be sent to the Coordinator of Guidance and the Coordinator of ESS. When the Threat Assessment Protocol is activated, a designated team member will notify parents/guardians. Whenever possible, parents/guardians should be an integral part of the risk assessment process. All relevant information will be documented using the Anglophone School District West Threat Assessment Protocol Report Form. Completed assessments are sent to ESS Coordinator for filing.

**SUSPENSION**

Recommended suspensions for more than five (5) consecutive days, due to threat assessment findings, must be obtained from the Senior Education Officer (SEO), as per *Student Discipline – Out of School Suspensions.* Provision will be made as appropriate when students are suspended to ensure safety, well-being and educational development.

**INTERVENTION PLANNING**

School Violence Threat Risk Assessment teams will meet to review the information regarding the incident, determine and implement immediate risk reducing interventions, and create long-term supportive plans. The principal may ask for a member of the District Team to be involved through the Coordinator of Guidance and Positive Learning.

**RISK-NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

Upon review of the Violence Threat Risk Assessment Report, the District Education Support Services Team may determine that a more comprehensive assessment of the student’s needs is required outside of the school team. If deemed necessary, a School Psychologist will complete the risk-needs assessment.

**THREAT ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION AND STORAGE**

The principal shall be responsible for submitting to the Coordinator of Education Support Services an electronic copy of the completed documentation. The Coordinator will ensure that this documentation is kept on file for access by the Office of the Superintendent.

**COMMUNICATION/MEDIA**

All media contacts will be redirected to the Office of the Superintendent.

**REFERENCES**

* Department of Education Policy 703: Positive Learning Environment
* Department of Education Policy 705: Crisis Planning
* Department of Education Procedures – Keeping Our Schools Safe: Protocol for Violence Prevention and Crisis Response in New Brunswick Schools
* Cameron, J. Kevin. *Community Protocol for Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) and Intervention* – 9th ed, 2011. Lethbridge, AB.
* Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response. *Violence Threat/Risk Assessment VTRA Stage 1 Report Form –* 2nd ed. 2011