

 Anglophone South School District	POLICY NO. ASD-S 740
CRISIS AND VIOLENT THREAT RESPONSE	

Category	Health and Safety		
Subject	Crisis and Violent Threat Response		
Adopted	June 2024	Revised	
Policies Used / Referenced			

1.0 Purpose

A crisis event is a negative, uncontrolled, and unpredictable incident that is likely to cause distress within a school community and disruption to the school day. Unlike an emergency, which requires immediate action in response to danger, management of a crisis event typically involves handling the aftermath of an adverse, tragic, or traumatic situation. In an emergency (e.g. evacuation, lock down, medical emergency) refer to your *School Comprehensive Safety Plan – Guidelines and Procedures*.

Examples of events requiring crisis response in their aftermaths are:

- The death of a student or staff member
- A serious accident involving students or staff
- An accident/tragedy/missing person in the school community
- A physical attack or violent threat against staff or student(s) or the school
- An abuse of trust or criminal act against a student or staff member that has become widely known by the school community
- Serious damage to the school building through fire, flood, vandalism *etc.*

2.0 District Crisis Response Team

Crisis events are unpredictable and planning a response for every scenario is not possible. In the event of a crisis, members of District leadership and Education Support Services will establish a District Crisis Response Team to provide immediate support, direction, and resources for school leadership.

In consultation with school administration, the District Crisis Response Team will determine the required level of response. Depending on the crisis event, it may be handled at the school level with or without district support, or the District may take the lead on the response. See *Appendix A* for levels of crisis response.

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Depending on the crisis event, the District Crisis Response Team may:

- Assist the Principal in the development and implementation of a crisis response plan
- Help staff through the initial shock of a crisis event and authorize or provide coverage
- Arrange support services, such as additional guidance, NBTA Counsellors, and Child & Youth, or suggest appropriate resources
- Help schools identify vulnerable individuals who may require additional supports (Appendix F)
- Support the re-establishment of school routines
- Support schools in ensuring that one critical incident does not lead to further crisis due to reactions in the school community
- Ensure school community is reassured that the incident is being competently addressed and managed by the school
- Handle media relations and communications
- Provide resource material and suggestions for follow-up classroom activities
- Authorize any ceremonies, memorials, or tributes

The District Crisis Response Team is, as required:

Superintendent
Directors of Schools
Director of Finance and Administration
Director of Communications
Director of Human Resources
Director of Education Support Services
School Counselling Coordinator

3.0 Procedure

DEATH OR SERIOUS INJURY OF STAFF OR STUDENT



In the event of an emergency, call 911 and ensure everyone's safety. See *School Comprehensive Safety Plan – Guidelines and Procedures*.

Immediately Following Notification of Crisis Event

3.1. Collect and verify the facts

- (i) If school administration is notified of a death or serious injury by the individual's immediate family:

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- Clearly establish the wishes of the family concerning information sharing. It is important to get all the necessary information at this time to avoid disturbing the family at a later time. See *Appendix D* for information to collect.
- (ii) If school administration has heard this information from a third party (this includes law enforcement, medical professionals, or the news media):
 - Verify the information with the individual's family and establish consent to share this information. Assign one individual to liaise with the family.
 - It is important to get all the necessary information at this time to avoid disturbing the family at a later time. See *Appendix D* for information on reaching out to the individual or family impacted.



There is no “right-to-know”. Without consent from the individual involved or their immediate family, we cannot share information, including with staff. We may share “need-to-know” information with relevant core leadership, reminding them to maintain confidentiality.

3.2. Notify District Crisis Response Team

- (i) Notify your Director of Schools, or the Director of Education Support Services in their absence.
- (ii) Notify your relevant core leadership and remind them to maintain confidentiality.

3.3. Response Plan

- (i) The Director of Schools will notify other members of the District Crisis Response Team.
- (ii) The Director of Education Support Services will initiate the appropriate response protocol, as per *Appendix B*.
- (iii) The Director of Communications will advise on appropriate communication measures, including notifications or announcements.
- (iv) The District Crisis Response Team will advise and guide school administration on next steps.

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VIOLENT THREAT TO SCHOOL



If the threat is imminent, the Principal will:

- (i) Follow emergency procedures, call 911 and ensure everyone's safety. See *School Comprehensive Safety Plan – Guidelines and Procedures*.
- (ii) Notify your Director of Schools, or the Director of Education Support Services in their absence.
- (iii) The Director of Schools will notify other members of the District Crisis Response Team.
- (iv) The Director of Education Support Services will initiate the appropriate response protocol, as per *Appendix B*.
- (v) The Director of Finance and Administration will initiate appropriate EMO measures and notifies Department of Education.
- (vi) The Director of Communications will advise on appropriate communication measures, including notifications or announcements.

If the threat is not imminent, the Principal will:

- (i) Capture the threat.

If the threat is:	
Verbal	Immediately document all details including specificity of language.
Written	Handle with care and immediately put in a folder to preserve evidence. Screen shot social media posts, texts, online messages. Photograph graffiti.
Email	Do not delete.
In person	Proceed using procedures for responding to violent incidents.

- (ii) Implement Immediate Risk Reducing measures as appropriate, per VTRA Protocol.
- (iii) Consult School Counselling Coordinator, or Director of Education Support Services in their absence, who will assess if VTRA is required.
- (iv) If a VTRA is warranted:
 - Gather data and schedule VTRA meeting
 - Notify Director of Schools
- (v) School Counselling Coordinator will provide support to the VTRA process as needed

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by liaising with VTRA partners and providing lead support to the school.

- (vi) School Counselling Coordinator will review VTRA intervention plan after the VTRA meeting and will be available to consult on interventions and supports.

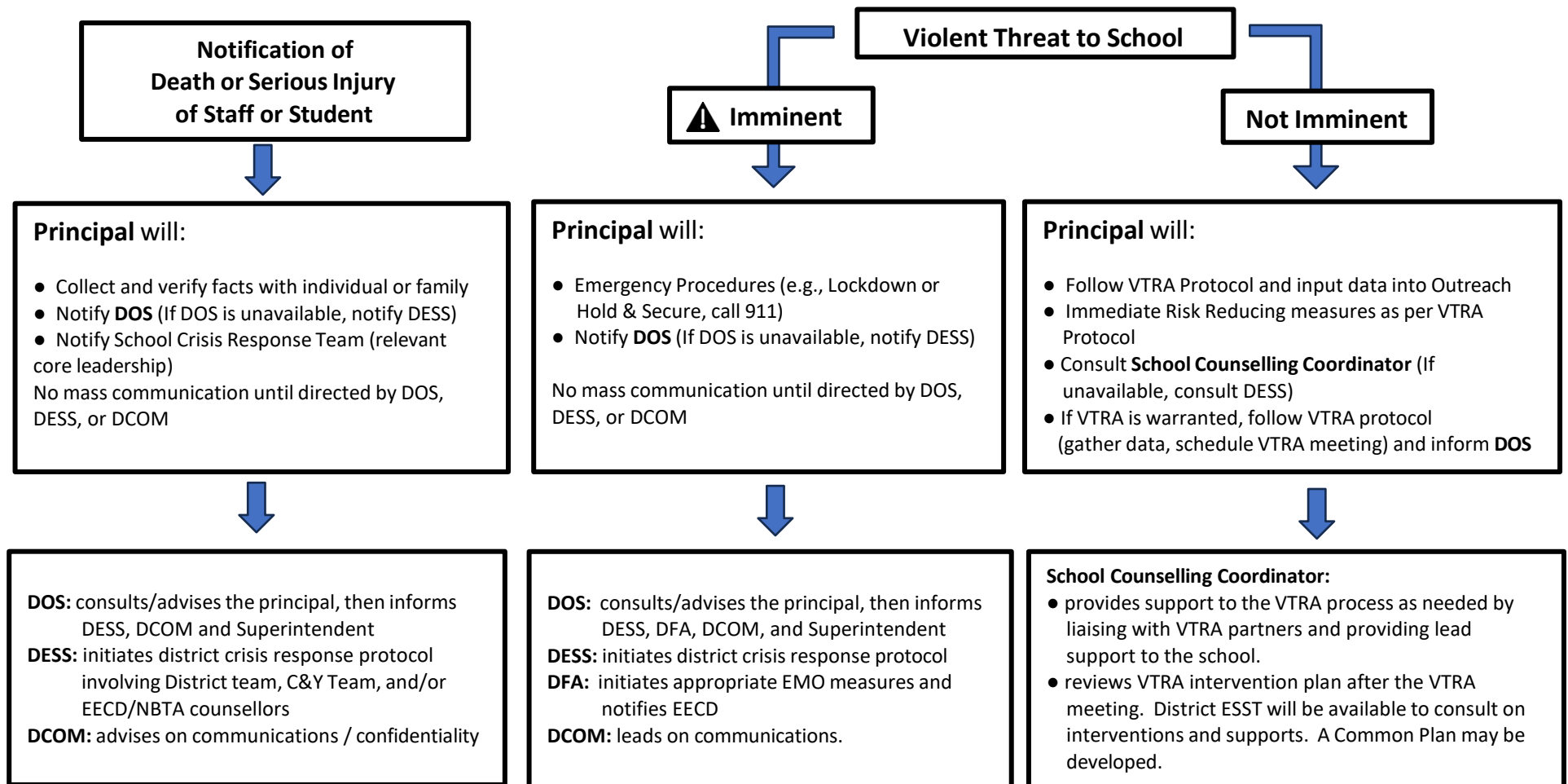
OTHER CRISIS EVENTS - UNSPECIFIED

In the event of any other crisis event, school administration must:

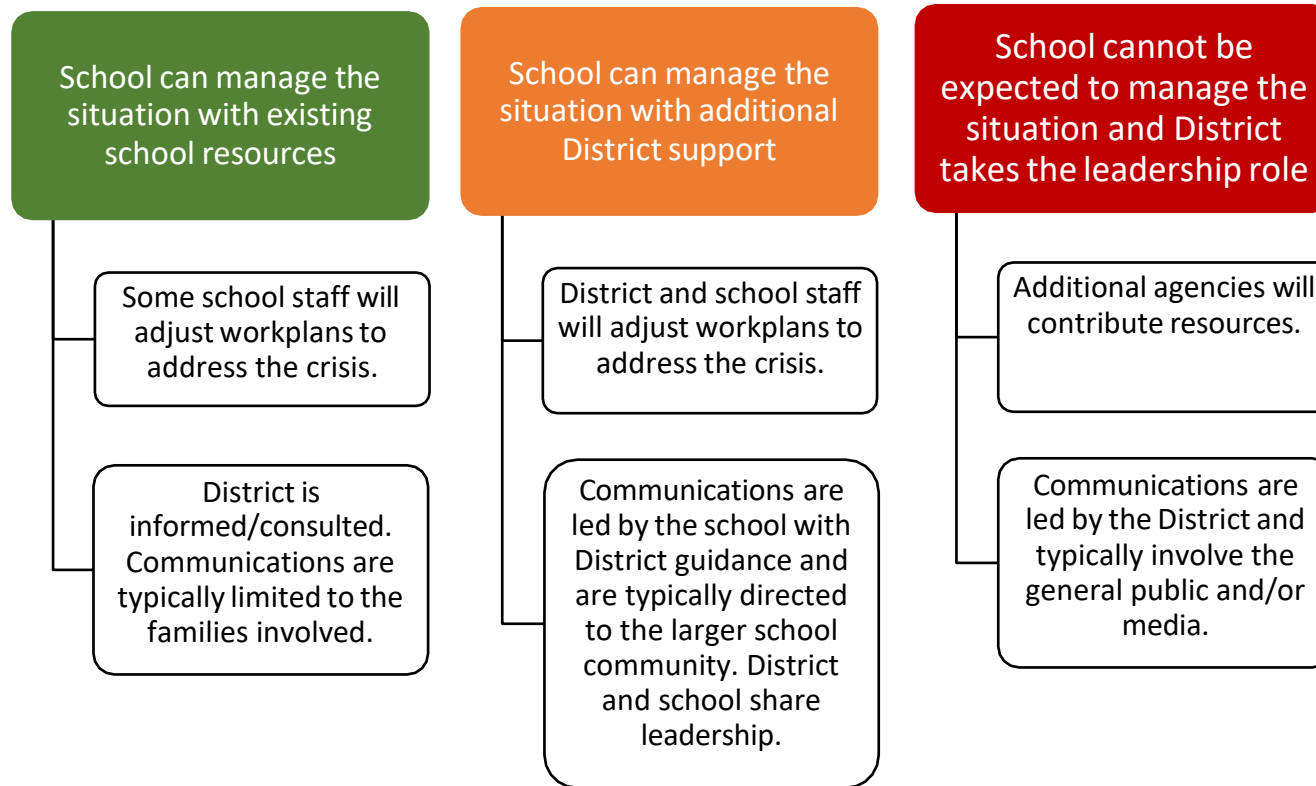
- (i) inform their Director of Schools, who will engage the District Crisis Response Team to provide support and direction on any further action.

Appendix A - Crisis Flowchart for Principals/Vice Principals

! In the event of an emergency, call 911 and ensure everyone's safety. Refer to *School Comprehensive Safety Plan – Guidelines & Procedures*



Appendix B – Levels of Crisis Response



Crisis Response Variables

No Response Required	Minimized Response	Maximized Response
Students, families, and staff do not perceive situation as dangerous or threatening	Predictable/Gradual onset	Unpredictable/sudden onset
	Non-Assaultive injury and/or threat	Violent injury or threat
Highlighting the event would create risk of causing unnecessary fear or anxiety	Non-fatal trauma to another	Fatal trauma to another
	Brief crisis duration	Long crisis duration
So few affected by the incident that support staff can assist the affected staff and students individually	Low crisis intensity	High crisis intensity
	Few individuals involved	Many individuals involved
	Routines unaffected	Routines suspended
	No public discourse	Broad public discourse

Appendix C - Communications

Communication about a crisis event can have a major impact on the emotional responses of the whole school community, including those most closely involved, on the reputation of the school and District, and on the narrative that follows. The Director of Communications will provide direction on any communication of a crisis event to ensure best practices are followed and that a family's or individual's right to privacy is respected.

Best practices in communicating during a crisis event always aim to lower anxiety of the audience and may include:

- Providing a plan for communicating to staff, students, and the greater community, including determining who may be impacted
- Providing a script to teachers to read to students, to ensure consistency in messaging and appropriate language
- Sharing information in small group or class settings and not over the PA or in an assembly
- Identifying individuals who are most impacted and communicating with additional sensitivity and support
- Carefully wording the content of the message to ensure appropriate amount of detail is included or excluded
- Informing families what next steps are or what supports are in place, and what, when, and how further information will be shared going forward
- Ensuring the deceased is removed from School Messenger before sending any school-wide communications (Appendix F)
- Working with the media to disseminate important information, clarify misinformation, and dispel rumors
- Ensuring the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* is respected

Appendix D - Information Gathering from the Individual or Family Involved

Communicating with the Individual or Family Involved

1. Establish one person to liaise with the family or individual affected. This may be the person who was first notified, the Principal, or a specific staff member the individual or family has a close relationship with.
2. If the family or individual is unable to speak at the time of this contact, let them know you will call back within a day to discuss their wishes for your involvement.
3. It is important to gather as much information as possible, while ensuring the utmost sensitivity, to avoid additional disruptions. Families may not have answers to all your questions or may not be able to have a conversation at the first contact, but you can let them know it is information you may need to follow up on.
4. These are challenging conversations, and it is difficult to know what to say. Expression of condolences and support is always appropriate.
5. Remain sensitive to ethnic, cultural, and religious considerations. If you are uncertain about what is appropriate, the District Crisis Response Team can provide support.
6. Assure the family that their wishes will be respected.

Information to confirm:

7. Ask what information – if any – they are comfortable with you sharing. This includes:
 - Individual's name or grade
 - Who may be informed (staff, the student population, school community, or media if applicable)
 - The nature of the crisis event (*e.g.* death, accident)
Note, details of death are always kept to bare minimum (*e.g.* “died unexpectedly”, “died following an illness”). We do not disclose if death is mental health related.

Crisis and Violent Threat Response Appendix

Explain the 'Why' - that we typically share information in the process of promoting guidance supports and for the purpose of lowering anxiety by acknowledging the event as transparently as appropriate.

- If the family does not want any information shared, the school may still acknowledge the event without naming individuals or details, for the purpose of promoting guidance support.

8. Ask if there are certain people in the school community who may be more affected than others (*e.g.* group of friends, teams, siblings).
9. Determine if other schools may be involved (*i.e.*, siblings, close connections at previous school, family who are staff, or in the case of a staff member, if they have children in the District) in order to extend support .
10. Determine the family's wishes regarding visits, visitation, services, or funerals with respect to attendance or sharing of information.
11. Determine the family's wishes regarding personal property at the school.

APPENDIX E: Identifying High Risk Students

This criterion can help assess who may be greater impacted and in need of additional attention, resources, or sensitivity.

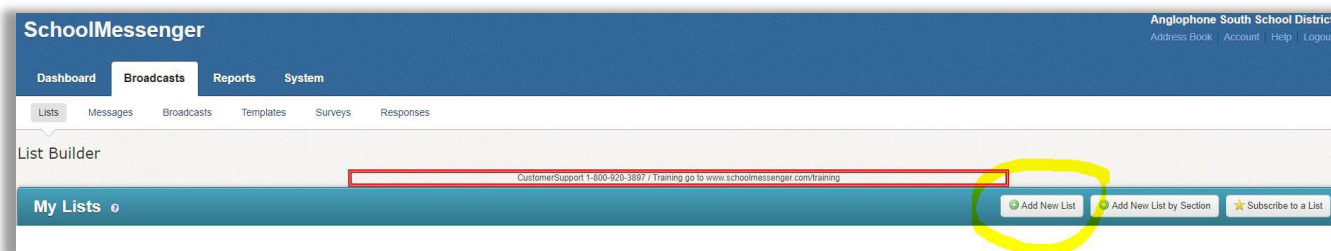
- Family members, especially siblings
- Close Friends
- Partners/ former partners
- Teammates / Extracurricular peers (school or community)
- Classmates (including those from previous school)
- Students with a significant emotional tie with the deceased – positive or negative. This would include any student who was involved in an adversarial relationship with the deceased
- Anyone who may have witnessed or been present at the time of the crisis event
- Students with active mental health concerns (suicidal ideation, severe depressions, anxiety)
- Students with substance abuse concerns
- Students that have experienced a recent loss such as the death of a family member or friend
- Students with known trauma
- Leaders or over-responsible students who may blame themselves for “not seeing the signs” or not knowing what to do
- Any student your school ESST identifies may be at risk or vulnerable

APPENDIX F – Removing a Student from School Messenger

To Exclude a Student from School Messenger, you must use a School List.

To Create a List

1. Broadcast Tab > Add New List (on the far right)



2. Name your list
3. Under Field, select your school and click Add

A screenshot of the 'List Builder' form. The 'List Name' field is set to 'Test List'. The 'Description' field is empty. The 'Total' count is 0. Below this is a section titled 'LIST CONTENT - USE RULES TO SELECT YOUR CONTACT RECORDS'. Under 'List Rules', there is a table with columns 'Field', 'Criteria', and 'Value'. The 'Field' is set to 'School'. The 'Criteria' is 'is'. The 'Value' is 'Apohaqui Elementary School'. There is an 'Add' button next to the value field.

You will now see your total change from 0 to the number of students at your school and your school will show as Rule #1.

4. Under Target Recipients, select **Both**.
5. To **REMOVE** a student from this list, click on **Preview** at the top beside the number of students.
6. Find the student(s) and **uncheck** him/her and select **Done**.
7. You will now see that student is now listed under the **LIST ADD/SKIP** section.
8. Click **Done**.

A screenshot of the 'List Builder' form after adding the school. The 'List Name' is 'Test List'. The 'Description' is empty. The 'Total' count is now 99. The 'LIST CONTENT - USE RULES TO SELECT YOUR CONTACT RECORDS' section shows 'List Rules' with a green checkmark. Below this, there is a table with columns 'Rule #1', 'Field', 'Criteria', and 'Value'. The 'Rule #1' is 'School', the 'Criteria' is 'is', and the 'Value' is 'Apohaqui Elementary School'. There are 'Edit' and 'Delete' buttons next to the rule.

Crisis and Violent Threat Response Appendix

To Remove a contact from a Pre Existing List

1. Select your List
2. Follow steps from 5-8 above

To Send a Message To a List

1. Click on New Broadcast
2. Recipients > Add Message Recipients > **Saved Recipients Lists** > Choose your list
3. Continue the message as you normally would.