



**STUDENT VIOLENCE THREAT RISK ASSESSMENT**

**Category:** Health and Safety

**Effective:** January 2020

**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 (VTRA) protocols ensure that potentially high-risk behaviour is properly assessed and supportive interventions are put in place. VTRA is a means to comprehensively examine the potential and magnitude of threatening behaviour that has the potential to impact 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 VTRA 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 they need to address the issues contributing to their high risk behaviour.

**Procedures**

**FAIR NOTICE**

Prior to VTRA protocol being implemented in ASD-W, all students, staff and parents/guardians will be provided “Fair Notice” that threat and threat making behaviours will not be tolerated. This will be shared 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 Student 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



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understand that no action will be taken against a person who makes a report unless the report is malicious 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 VTRA school team shall ensure that appropriate support is provided to those against whom threats have been made, i.e. recipient(s) of the threat. As necessary, the school principal/designate shall notify all school staff, and parents, 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 ASDW VTRA Decision Tree, VTRA training manual and VTRA report form. 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 any others potentially impacted (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).



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**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 506 (453-5333). In these cases, a threat is unfolding, and the matter is one of immediate police intervention and protective site-specific response; not stage 1 VTRA. 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 LEVEL OF CONCERN**

If the threat is assessed to be a high level of concern (the individual is at high or imminent risk for violence, an immediate intervention is required to prevent an act of violence from occurring) the school principal/designate shall immediately follow VTRA protocol.

**SUSPENSION**

Should VTRA findings and intervention plan support suspension being for more than five (5) consecutive days, permission must be obtained from the Director of Schools (DOS), 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**

Multi-disciplinary VTRA team will meet to review the data specific to the incident, determine and implement immediate risk reducing interventions, and develop a supportive intervention plan.

**SPECIALIZED RISK EVALUATION**

When VTRA findings indicate further assessment of confirmed risk enhancers is required for the purpose of intervention planning, trained and qualified professionals may complete a specialized risk evaluation.

**VTRA DOCUMENTATION AND STORAGE**

The principal shall be responsible for submitting to the district VTRA Lead(s) an electronic copy of the completed VTRA documentation. The district-Lead will ensure that this documentation is kept on file.

**COMMUNICATION/MEDIA**

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



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**Reference**

- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development [Policy 703: Positive Learning and Working Environment](#)
- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development [Policy 705: School & School District Crisis Planning](#)
- [ASDW Policy 705-1: Communication in a Crisis Situation](#)
- [ASDW Policy 703-8: Guidelines & Procedures for Student Discipline – Out of School Suspension](#)
- North American Center for Threat Assessment & Trauma Response (2018). *Violence Threat Risk Assessment, Level One Training Guide, 5<sup>th</sup> ed.*
- North American Center for Threat Assessment & Trauma Response (2018). *Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) PROTOCOL, A Community Based Approach, 10<sup>th</sup> ed.*
- North American Center for Threat Assessment & Trauma Response (2018). *Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA), Stage One and Stage Two Reference Guide & Report Forms, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.*