

**THREAT ASSESSMENT**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

The central question in a Threat Assessment inquiry is whether a student *poses* a threat, not whether a student *made* a threat. The process is a first step toward identifying and assessing risk posed by students for targeted violence in schools and is not for use with suicide threats.

Incident was reported or observed by (Name): \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Participating staff (name and role) who know and interact with student (minimum of 3):

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_ 6) \_\_\_\_\_

**Key questions:**

- 1) What are the student’s motives or targets in the situation being reviewed?
- 2) Are there communications suggesting an intent to attack? (media posts, writings, etc.)
- 3) Are there plans for attack-related behaviors?
- 4) Is there high interest in school attacks, weapons, mass shootings/violence?
- 5) Does the student have the ability to carry out an act of targeted violence?
- 6) Does the student have access to weapons through family or friends?
- 7) Is the student experiencing isolation, hopelessness, desperation, and/or despair?

- 8) Has the student experienced a loss of status or other important relationships? Are there indications of suicidal ideation?
- 9) Does the student, or their peer group, see violence as a common or acceptable way to solve problems?
- 10) Are there trusting relationships with responsible adults on campus or in the community?
- 11) Are those who know the student concerned about his/her potential for violence?
- 12) Is the information based upon facts, rather than characteristics or traits?
- 13) What circumstances, events, or triggers would increase the likelihood of an attack?
- 14) What circumstances, events, or triggers would decrease the likelihood of an attack?
- 15) Is there a history of behavioral, drug or alcohol, or developmental issues?

The responsible administrator will indicate one of the following decisions. This decision is based on input from those participating in the threat assessment, as well as school records, electronic and written information, interviews with the student, student’s friends, parents, potential targets, and consultation with other administrators.

\_\_\_\_\_ **A high risk threat exists** (See Page 5: #13 Possible Interventions to Consider.)

\_\_\_\_\_ **A medium risk threat exists.** (See Page 5: #13 Possible Interventions to Consider.)

\_\_\_\_\_ **No identifiable threat or low risk threat.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Additional information is needed.** (Reconvene team once there is new information.)

Responsible Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- The parent/guardian has been notified that assessment is being done.
- The parent/guardian has been interviewed and contributed to this assessment.

**Attach any related documents, emails, webpages, etc. that may provide information on threat.**

## **THREAT ASSESSMENT – RESOURCE INFORMATION**

*(Includes indicators from the Salem-Keizer Threat Assessment)*

1. **Motives, Targets, Threats, and Actions:** Identify location of threat and/or acted out behavior and describe details of your concerns. Threatened or Acted Out behaviors may include: scratching, biting, hitting, fighting, hitting with an object, forceful punch, rape, strangle, stab, shoot, bomb, and kill.

Examine if there are indications of a specific target or a focus of aggressive or violence toward a particular person, group, or student body. If the situation is absent a known target, it is likely a situation revolving around reactive aggression, used as a means to bully, intimidate, or confront and defend interests and wants.

Motives tend to revolve around a need to establish or re-establish control as well as revenge for lost love, humiliation, and to prove bravery after making a threat or taking a dare. If the situation is absent motive, then it may be a situation of reactive aggression and should be eliminated as motive in the review process.

Examine if there has been an event, or will be an upcoming event, that might serve as justification for a violent act.

2. **Communications:** Threats can be made through verbal communication, art, email, writings, Internet use, social media, and other forms of communication. Threats can be indirect warnings or even casual references to possible harmful events or previously occurring violent events.

Is there a strong connection between communicated or implied threats and any accompanying behavior? If threats are made, but lack attack-related behaviors, motives, or a specific target(s), then risk decreases. Many threats that lack attack-related behavior are likely to be means of communicating dissatisfaction or anger, attention seeking, releasing stress, or an affectation of strength or power (bravado).

3. **Plans:** Threatening communication becomes more concerning with behavior that suggests intent to follow through with a targeted attack. Many threats are not stated directly, but are indicated by vague references combined with behavior. Attack related behavior may be, but not limited to, the following:
  - **A plan (complex or simple)** to carry out a targeted act of violence against a specific individual, group, or student body. There is often a sequence of actions necessary for success and almost always a motive. The more detailed the plan, the greater the risk.
  - **Acquisition, attempt, or plan to obtain a weapon(s)** from family, friends, neighbors, or steal from vendors or clubs. Homemade weapons may also be part of the plan.
  - **Rehearsal** or simulation is often necessary before a targeted event can be carried out. This may be indicated through art, fantasy games, writing or film projects, the use of movies or Internet sites with themes and sequences of targeted violence, and through

first-person shooter video games, etc. The use of such games or movies as entertainment is only considered attack-related behavior when used as rehearsal.

- **Scheduling an attack** may be clear and detailed or flexible, awaiting a triggering event (teasing, rejection, loss) that further justifies the violence as a solution.
  - **Does the person have the capacity/ability to plan and carry out an act of targeted violence?** Students often make exaggerated or complex threats, but are unable to organize and implement due to overall ability and functioning.
4. **Are there indications of a focused or unusual interest in acts of violence, previous school/community attacks or attackers, weaponry or anti-social characters, notorious criminals, murderers, or gangs (historical or fictional)?** What may be inappropriate to some, may still be within the normal range, given the individual's age, developmental level, or cultural background. The question is if the interest is a curiosity or an admiration for role-models who justify violence as problem solving.
  5. **Does the student have the ability to carry out an act of targeted violence, or are beliefs or ideas irrational, or a feature of a mental health disorder (paranoid, obsessive, a feature of a disability)?** Threatening talk is a feature of mental illness such as Psychosis, Tourette's syndrome, or Autism. It is often exaggerated, implausible, and usually disconnected from attack-related behavior, specific targeting, and clear motive. However, if the threat is accompanied by attack-related behavior and targeting, risk increases just as it would with threats that from those without identified mental health issues.
  6. **Are there indications of a weapon(s) choice/availability?** If weapons are being considered but not immediately available within the home, are they available through relatives, friends or other means?
  7. **Isolation, hopelessness, and other indications of overwhelming or desperate situations (real or perceived)?** As students lose hope of resolving stressful or overwhelming situations through acceptable social or coping skills, they are more likely to engage desperate last-ditch efforts to take control or end their suffering through an act that may result in their own death. The risk escalates if the self-destructive behavior is the last part of a plan to do harm and carry out revenge or justice. It is important to note that the point of this question is to examine the perception of the person or party you are concerned with, not necessarily what has been observed by staff, parents, students or the community.
  8. **Are there indications of suicidal ideation?** Is there a history of suicidal ideas, attempts, gestures, references, and/or intent? The wish to die, be killed, or die by suicide, combined with a threat to harm others, increases risk, especially if the self-destructive behavior is the last part of a plan to harm others and carry out revenge or justice.
  9. **Does the student see violence as a common or acceptable way to solve problems?** Is there a history of violence in the student's past, current behavior, among peers, or family and community?

10. **Are there trusting relationships with responsible adults on campus or in the community?** The greater and healthier the connection with teachers, coaches, parents, administrators, church leaders, etc. then the less chance there is of a student wanting to disappoint or hurt them. If a student (or a group of students) lacks connections to pro-social adults and is also marginalized within the student population, then intervention and connection are strongly indicated.
  
11. **Are those who know the student concerned about his/her potential for violence?** When asked, what do the student’s peers, family, or others acquainted with the student know about the student’s interest in violence, or anger towards others that may be a motivation.
  
12. **Is the information based upon facts, rather than characteristics or traits?** Are decisions based on observed information rather than rumors, group fear, or stereotypes? Were any responses based on assumptions rather than actual observations and factual information regarding behavior? Are there concerning behaviors that could be appropriate within the student’s culture?
  
13. **Intervention Matrix** – The following list of potential interventions is not conclusive. It is meant to promote discussion and a starting point in developing a management plan.

<b>Interventions/ Steps to Consider</b>
Emergency Expulsion
Contact Law Enforcement (911)
Contact Superintendent/Designee
Take steps to notify/protect potential victim(s)
Alert staff/teachers on a need to know basis
Review educational plan/schedule/placement
Review transportation
Refer/require counseling or assessment
Increase direct supervision
Initiate a suicide risk assessment