

**BURLINGTON TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS  
BEHAVIORAL THREAT  
ASSESSMENT TEAM (BTAM)  
GUIDELINES**



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## Executive Summary

Prior to the legislation dated August 1, 2022, [N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.4](#), requiring all public schools in New Jersey to establish a Threat Assessment Teams the Burlington Township School District adopted procedures. The state of New Jersey has adopted the Secret Service NTAC model. The Burlington Township School District had established Threat Assessments and Crisis Response for various situations. These include Suicidal Ideation Assessment and Response, Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB), Various Emergency situations and responses, all of which are covered in other guidelines, policies and material. This document is dedicated to the District's Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM).

The NTAC model established 8 steps for districts to develop their threat assessment process and 8 additional steps to manage cases. Burlington Township Schools has followed these steps and intertwined the widely used CSTAG (comprehensive school threat assessment guidelines) model to provide an actionable process.

Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management is part of a comprehensive approach to provide a safe and secure school environment that has been established. Specifically, BTAM was established to help identify those students whose behavior may be of concern, assess the potential risk of violence associated with those behaviors, develop strategies to address those risks, deliver interventions to disrupt the potential pathway to violence and document and monitor cases. The NTAC model helps schools develop a process for identifying and managing threats. The CSTAG model allows schools to identify those situations that are transient in nature and not threatening and provides actionable steps in the determination of serious and very serious threats. Utilizing the CSTAG model within the framework of the NTAC will allow Burlington Township to incorporate the 8 steps and 13 themes of NTAC with the determination criteria of CSTAG. To help inform the process and intervention implementation, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) PREPaRE model is referenced in this document and in the District practices.

This comprehensive approach is vital to ensuring that those team members who are already tasked with many other duties are able to focus on their threat assessment work in the most efficient and effective ways possible.

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## NTAC Model 8 Step Process

The US Secret Service recommends 8 steps to assist schools in developing a process for the school to manage threats. The NJDOE has provided [this guidance](#) which is used throughout this document.

### STEP 1 - Develop a multidisciplinary team

Meet regularly with team members (see section below)

### STEP 2 - Define prohibited and concerning behaviors

These are noted in each school's code of conduct

Establish other behaviors for screening and intervention

Define a relatively low threshold for intervention to avoid missing persons in distress

*Note: See CSTAG model on transient threats which is used to help eliminate situations which do not need to be addressed as concerning or prohibited.*

### STEP 3 - Create a central reporting mechanism

Anonymous reporting (see section below)

Provide training and guidance to encourage reporting

Ensure availability to respond

Utilize an initial report to collect the threat or concerning behavior

*Note: The District uses the aSAP! Module of Hibster to house cases of concerning behaviors. Transient concerns are housed within the Student Information System (Powerschool). As cases arise, multiple transient threats may become of concern and the team may choose to treat the subsequent matters as threats to be monitored and managed. Both aSAP! And Powerschool will be checked by the team to review for similar notifications.*

### STEP 4 - Define threshold for law enforcement involvement

NTAC believes most reports can be handled by the school based team which includes school administration, law enforcement, mental health and other members when appropriate.

*Note: The District has a Memorandum of Agreement with Law Enforcement as required by the state of New Jersey. This memorandum specifically details those instances which require law enforcement intervention. The District also maintains positive and productive working relationships with the School Resource Officers (SRO) housed within the District who are sworn law enforcement officers. Additionally, the District has defined in the section below, those instances in which law enforcement must be notified.*

### STEP 5 - Establish threat assessment procedures (see next section)

Decide how to document cases (*District uses aSAP!*)

Create procedures to screen reports, gather information, make assessments and determine interventions. Develop forms to organize information (*District uses aSAP!*). See sections below.

### STEP 6 - Develop risk management options

Identify available internal and external resources to support students and create an individualized management plan.

Support potential targets

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Establish points of contact

STEP 7 - Assess current school climate

HIB law requires review of school climate and organizes a safety team

Enhance current school climate

Strengthen students' connectedness

Empower students to come forward

Identify co and extracurricular activities for students to participate

STEP 8 - Conduct training for all stakeholders

BTAM team member training coordinated

Awareness training for students, staff and families on different types of behavior

The District notes that not all behaviors and situations can be predicted and the need to review incidents is an important part of the threat assessment. In order to help further define some of the actions needed by the BTAM teams the District has also adopted the CSTAG model. The two models complement each other and provide for a strong basis of decision making while not overwhelming the team members or over identifying persons of concern.

Schools are unlike other entities which have adopted the NTAC model, schools are required to support all students. Therefore, the District continues this guidance by including the CSTAG model as described below.

## NJ Guidance Threat Assessment and Management Process

The guidance from the NJDOE includes 8 steps for threat assessment and management (TAMP). These are described below and notes specific to the District are included.

STEP 1 (TAMP) - Receive a report or concern

The team should collect initial information about the situation and person of concern

*Note: (The District first employs the CSTAG model to identify possible transient threats and allows the administrator to handle those matters as part of their administrative duties. If the administrator believes the situation needs a TAM review then the team or team members are included. Administrators are reminded to use caution to not clear a case without considering if the person's actions are of concern.*

STEP 2 (TAMP) - Screen the case

Screen for imminency and involve law enforcement as needed

If not imminent, determine if a full assessment is needed

*Note: Harassment Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) specialists and Affirmative Action Officers (AAO) may need to be notified based on the allegations. Each investigation will continue and run concurrently to ensure all required reviews are completed. Investigative notes may be shared among the individual teams.*

STEP 3 (TAMP) - Gather information from multiple sources

STEP 4 (TAMP) - Organize and analyze (use the 13 questions as outlined by NTAC)

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The District also utilizes the following tools to assist in gathering information about the student of concern and the overall situation.

Appendix A - Administrative Threat Screener

[Appendix C](#) - Special Education and 504 Students Checklist - use this to help guide assessments of students with known or suspected disabilities.

Note: *The District uses questionnaires to assist assessment concerns and the information collected within aSAP!*

STEP 5 (TAMP) - Make the assessment of harm to others or self and intervention needed

STEP 6 (TAMP) - Develop and implement a case management plan/intervention plan

Plan to reduce risk

Consider if special education referral is warranted

Consider if mental health examination referral is warranted

STEP 7 (TAMP) - Reassess and monitor case

Monitor and reassess using the questionnaires as needed

STEP 8 (TAMP) - Document and close the case

When the team has determined there is no longer the need to maintain the management plan the case can be closed.

Document future check in dates

House files confidentially

Note: *(The District houses cases within the aSAP! software) cases are closed when the student is transferred from the District but not when moved to an out of district placement.*

## NTAC 13 Themes

These 13 themes regarding a person of concern have been identified by the Secret Service to assist in STEP 5 (TAMP) to assist in assessing the situation regarding potential harm to self and others.

- 1 - motivation
  - 2 - concerning communications
  - 3 - inappropriate interests
  - 4 - access to weapons
  - 5 - stressors
  - 6 - emotional and development issues
  - 7 - desperation or hopelessness
  - 8 - perception of violence as an option
  - 9 - concerned others
  - 10 - capacity to attack
  - 11 - planning to attack
  - 12 - consistency between statements and actions
  - 13 - protective factors
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## NTAC Definitions of Behavior

The Secret Service has developed definitions to assist in categorizing behaviors of a person of concern. These categories are based on what may or may not be normal for the individual or for most individuals. Definitions below were taken from the NJDOE guidelines:

- *Aberrant behavior is defined as atypical behaviors that cause concern for those involved and can be actions, statements, responses which are unusual and could lead to violence or reasonably perceived as threatening.*
- *Concerning behavior is defined as observable behavior which could elicit concern and may include interest in violent topics, conflict, substance abuse, etc. These behaviors may be prohibited behaviors. Not all individuals displaying concerning behaviors are a threat to themselves or others.*
- *Targeted Violence is defined as a premeditated act of violence against a specific target or targets.*

It should also be noted that sometimes an individual may exhibit reactive aggression in which they react to a provocation, perceived threat or frustration and are immediate and impulsive.

## CSTAG Model

The Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guide model takes into consideration the specific challenges schools face in behavioral threat assessment management which is different from organizations facing adult threat management. According to Cornell (2020), Schools face the following unique challenges, student aggression and bullying in schools are common, student threats are often an expression of anger rather than an intent to harm, and most importantly, schools have an obligation to support *all* students. Therefore the District has included concepts from the CSTAG model into the overarching state required NTAC model to ensure that our team members do not become overwhelmed and thereby less effective and that students needing support are able to be identified. Care and caution will be exercised by the administration to include members of the team to discuss potential non-threat situations whenever possible. This will include ensuring that if other concerning behaviors are noted beyond those needing threat management that they are referred to the proper staff member to address. In addition, this model aligns with the District's work on school climate and culture, student belonging and education for students in self-awareness, acceptance of others and conflict resolution.

Research indicates that schools which utilize CSTAG have lower rates of short and long term suspension than those schools that do not use CSTAG (Jackson & Viljoen, 2024).

After step 1 of the model which establishes a team, each of the other 4 steps provides a basis for the determination of whether the situation is a threat or not a threat *at this time* or whether the situation *needs to be managed*. If the situation is determined to be a threat or needs to be managed, the steps then involve determining the level of threat, as defined by the model of

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serious threat (hit, fight) or very serious threat (kill, rape, serious bodily injury). These are not exact definitions and circumstances will determine the level of management needed. The overall decisions will be based on whether the team believes there is a need for a management plan. The District does not condone the labeling of individuals, instead, the management team will focus on the behaviors and potential supports.

The overall use of CSTAG is to moderate in practice the NTAC model which is used by the District once the determination that a threat assessment should be conducted. The use of the background information in the CSTAG model allows for a better understanding of how some situations are specific to schools and part of the student developmental process. Utilizing the NTAC complimented with the CSTAG model allows for practical application of research based threat assessment and management in a manner that also acknowledges the specific challenges faced in a school setting.

## NASP PREPaRE Model

The National Association of School Psychologists has adopted the PREPaRE model as an approach to school crisis management. This model seeks to prevent, identify and manage crises.

- P - Prevent injury (physical and psychological)
- R - Reaffirm health and well being of the student(s)
- E - Evaluate and monitor stress reactions and determine the need for intervention
- PaR - Provide and Respond to mental health needs
- E - Examine

## What Behavioral Threat Assessment is and is not

Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) is required by law in New Jersey to help identify those students who may be on a pathway toward violent behavior. BTAM works to identify persons of concern, gather information, assess the person and situation and manage the situation. Threat assessments are fact-based and deductive in nature. The management is in the form of actions which focus on mitigating the risks, providing appropriate interventions and future monitoring of the risk.

Behavioral Threat Assessment:

- Is NOT profiling
  - Is NOT adversarial
  - Is NOT the same as the disciplinary (code of conduct) process
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- Is NOT the same as a functional behavioral assessment
- Is NOT the same as other risk assessments (such as suicide or situational risks)

*Figure 1 - What is Threat Assessment*



## Team Members

N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.4 established that the BTAM Team should be a multi-disciplinary team and include the following, to the extent possible. The Burlington Township Board of Education will appoint members on an annual basis as required by the Board of Education for each new school year. This corresponds to NTAC step 1 and is an essential component of the CSTAG model as well.

### BTSD BTAM Team Members

The Burlington Township Board of Education will appoint members to the District level and School level teams annually. These teams will consult with additional staff members or consultants as the need arises.

#### District Level BTAM Team Members

School Safety Specialist as recognized by the Board of Education  
 Superintendent or Central Office Administrator designated by the Superintendent  
 Assistant Superintendent for Special Education  
 Director of Guidance  
 HIB District Coordinator

School Psychologist  
Social Worker  
School Counselor  
Student Assistance Coordinator  
Teaching Staff Member  
School Resource Officer

## School Level BTAM Team Members

Principal and Vice-Principals  
Member(s) of the District Level Team  
School Safety Specialist  
School Counselor  
School Psychologist  
School Resource Officer

Team members will act as a group to establish the protocols, assess the potential risks, develop the strategies to mitigate the risks, deliver interventions and document and monitor cases. Team members are expected to ensure confidentiality of the information received or reviewed and utilize the information only for the purposes of ensuring safety and security of the schools or district. Team members are required complete training under the supervision of the School Safety Specialist or NJDOE Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning (OSPEP), or other credible sources approved by the BTAM team lead or superintendent which will include threat assessment identification, tracking and prevention. In addition, as per N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.4, the team members will also engage in training to ensure that disparate impacts on students based on their race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, religious beliefs, homelessness status, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status does not occur. These will include training on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), childhood trauma, cultural competency and implicit bias.

Team members will immediately consult with the appropriate Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) team members or 504 team members if the student in question has an IEP or 504 plan as per N.J.A.C. 6A:14 to determine if the behavior is a manifestation of a known disability or condition. If the student has a known or suspected disability, the team will use [Appendix C - IEP/504 Considerations Checklist](#).

## Roles and Responsibilities - Administrators

School administrators have been informally handling threat assessments as part of their role as disciplinarian and school leader. As described later, most reported potential threats can be classified as transient. The school administrators should be the first to address all reported situations of concern. In their role as administrators, the reported situation should be reviewed to determine the urgency associated with the matter. In the case that the situation may be

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imminent, the administrator should immediately contact the School Resource Officer as well as the Superintendent and School Safety Specialist and implement appropriate safety protocols. If the threat does not seem imminent, then the threat should be reviewed by the administrator to determine if there is no threat or if the reported threat is a transient threat which is defined in these guidelines. If the reported threat is not imminent and is not transient or cannot be cleared as transient, then the administrator should engage the school BTAM team and follow the threat assessment process and assessments as determined by the team. *Caution needs to be exercised by the administrator to not clear situations too quickly, when in doubt, seek out another school BTAM member and review the situation or conduct the initial screener in Appendix A.*

During an assessment, the administrator should be working to interview possible witnesses or gather additional information, as needed.

*Figure 2 - Roles and Responsibilities and Tasks*

<b>TASK</b>	<b>School Administrator</b>	<b>Trained BTAM Assessors</b>	<b>Other BTAM Members</b>
Receive initial threat report and make initial determination of No threat, transient or beyond (serious or very serious is to be determined by BTAM Team of which administrator is a part)	X		X
Contact parent/guardian of person(s) of concern and of any target(s)	X		
Contact District BTAM team, School safety specialist, IEP case manager, 504 building coordinator	X		
Conduct assessment, document case in aSAP!		X	
Act as second person during assessment			X
Gather information, interview witnesses while assessment is being conducted when appropriate	X		
Add details to the case in aSAP!	X	X	X

Provide paperwork to parent/guardian which may include request for psychiatric evaluation, discipline, referral to Performcare or other provider.	X		
When case warrants the contact of outside services, this should be done with the parents (call to performcare) the focus of this call should be to help parent understand typical and atypical behaviors of their child	X		
Engage in review of threat cases, determination of prevention measures, school climate	X	X	X
Schedule meetings to review cases	X		
Manage threat case	X	X	X
Determination of Case Closure	X	X	X

## Law Enforcement Involvement

The role of law enforcement is dictated by the [Uniform State Memorandum of Understanding between Education and Law Enforcement Officials \(MoA\)](#). All threats which are of an imminent nature, involve a weapon, include bodily harm, incendiary device, or are of a sexual nature will be reported to law enforcement immediately. Incidents which may be bias based, a planned school attack or threat against staff members will be reported to law enforcement immediately. All other incidents will also be reported to law enforcement based on the agreement between the Burlington Township Schools and Burlington Township Police School Resource agreement.

## School Climate

The role of school culture, our expectations of how each member of the school community will interact with other members, and school climate, the perceived impact of the collective school environment on individual members of the school community. Each school principal is tasked with creating an environment that is conducive to learning and safety for all students. Climate is determined by the interactions of students to students, students to staff, staff to students, staff to

staff, and community members to staff or students. Expectations should be developed that include expecting respect toward all other people in the school and reporting when this expectation is not met.

## Threat Reporting

All threat management relies on reporting of perceived or witnessed threats and/or situations of concern by individuals to school or law enforcement officials. Threat reporting will be taken seriously despite the age of the individual involved. Reporting will be accepted by various means. Although anonymous reporting is available, it is requested that anyone reporting a threat to contact and speak with an administrator.

### Threat Reporting by Community Members (Known/Anonymous)

The Burlington Township School District encourages anyone who believes there is a threat against the schools to report this information. Community members are encouraged if they *SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING, DO SOMETHING*, the do something would be to report the situation or concern. Community Members are encouraged to report potential threats in the following manner. In a case where the threat seems immediate, do not hesitate, call 911! In cases where you believe there is a threat or concerning behavior, call the school and speak with an administrator. If you are uncomfortable with revealing your personal information, the District has provided various means to submit anonymous concerns which can be found on this [website](#). These include an email address ([speakup@burltwpsch.org](mailto:speakup@burltwpsch.org)) and a phone number which can be called or texted [609-507-2767](tel:609-507-2767), both of which are staffed by the Gaggle Speakup service and staffed 24 hours a day. Please understand this form of information will be evaluated based on the nature of the concern and the information provided. It is always recommended that you call or contact a school administrator with information over reporting anonymously.

Figure 3 - Reporting by Community Members of Situations or Concerns

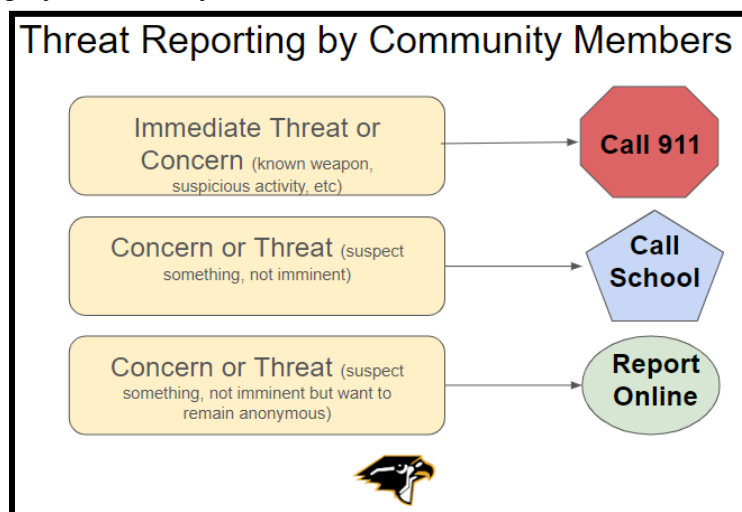
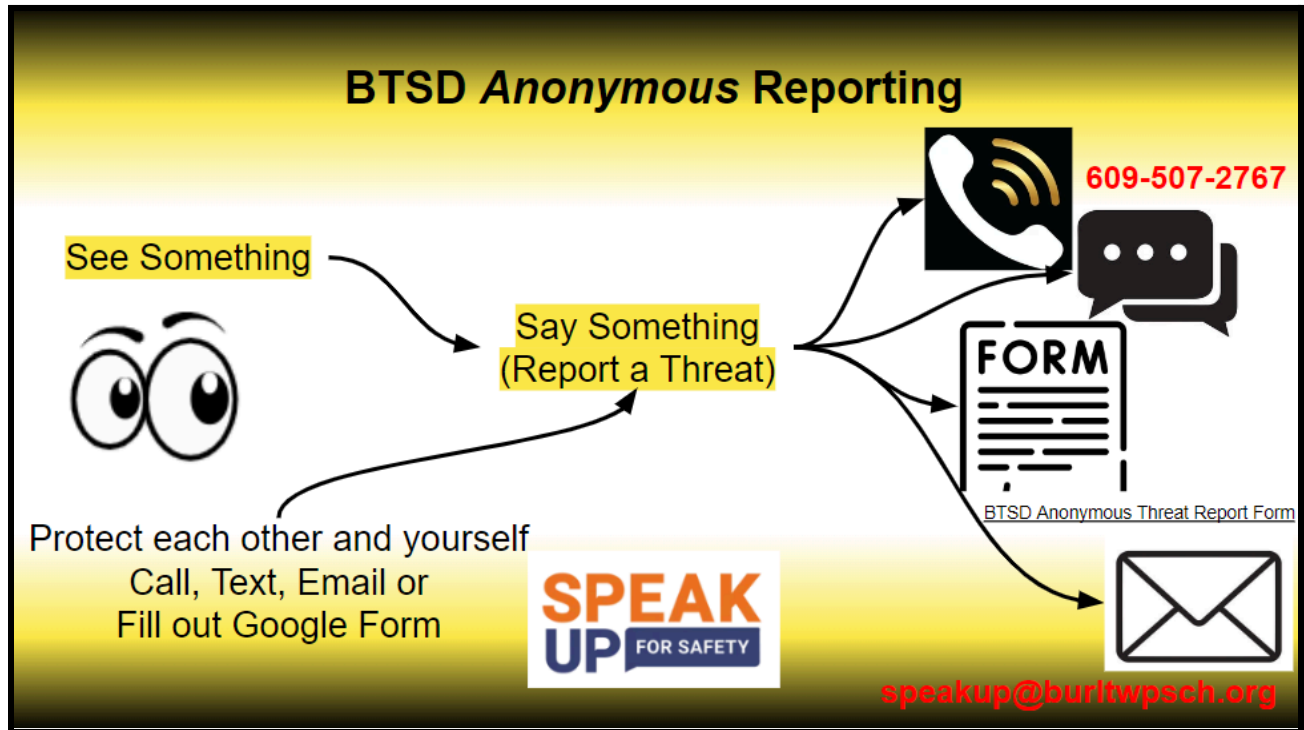


Figure 4 - Anonymous Threat Reporting Methods in BTSD



## Situations of Concern Reporting by Staff Members

Situations of concern reported by staff members should be done in person to an administrator as quickly as possible but no later than the end of the day in which the situation has come to their attention. *Staff should NOT wait until the end of the day, time may be of the essence.* All concerns should be addressed immediately if there is a safety concern regarding another person or the school or staff member. The staff member should NOT wait to report. Staff members can be provided with [Appendix D - Staff Member Collaboration Form](#) to gather information. Alternatively, this form can be used during BTAM meetings to ensure collection of information.

## Situations of Concern Reported by Students

Situations of concern reported by students will be treated as credible until proven otherwise and investigated in a manner consistent with the reporting of other school community members. Students should be encouraged to provide detailed information and staff members who receive these reports should report the information to administrators as quickly as possible but no later than the end of the school day in which they staff member became aware of potential threats. All concerns should be addressed immediately if there is a safety concern regarding another person or the school or staff member. The staff member should NOT wait to report the situation or concern that is brought forward by a student.

## Threat Assessment Forms

The aSAP! Software contains the initial screener within the software. The District accepts the NJDOE guidance on using the forms provided by Sigma/Ontic. One of these is the screener form which is also included in the aSAP! Software. As assessors may find paper more conducive to conducting the interviews, the District accepts forms completed on paper, on Google Doc and within the aSAP! Software.

## Types of Threats

According to O'Toole (2000) in *School Shooter: A Threat Assessment Perspective* threats can be identified as 4 categories of threats. A threat is defined as *direct, indirect, veiled, or conditional*.

Figure 5 - Types of Threats

### ***Types of Threats***

Threats can be classed in four categories: *direct, indirect, veiled, or conditional*.

***A direct threat*** identifies a specific act against a specific target and is delivered in a straightforward, clear, and explicit manner: "I am going to place a bomb in the school's gym."

***An indirect threat*** tends to be vague, unclear, and ambiguous. The plan, the intended victim, the motivation, and other aspects of the threat are masked or equivocal: "If I wanted to, I could kill everyone at this school!" While violence is implied, the threat is phrased tentatively -- "If I wanted to" -- and suggests that a violent act **COULD** occur, not that it **WILL** occur.

***A veiled threat*** is one that strongly implies but does not explicitly threaten violence. "We would be better off without you around anymore" clearly hints at a possible violent act, but leaves it to the potential victim to interpret the message and give a definite meaning to the threat.

***A conditional threat*** is the type of threat often seen in extortion cases. It warns that a violent act will happen unless certain demands or terms are met: "If you don't pay me one million dollars, I will place a bomb in the school."

Note: *School Shooter: A Threat Assessment Perspective* (2000)

## Making a Threat vs. Posing a Threat

Burlington Township Schools understands there is a difference between *making a threat* and *posing a threat*.

- An individual can make a threat with no *intention* or *ability* to act upon the threat



- An individual can *pose a threat* without ever *making a threat*
- An individual can both *make a threat* and *pose a threat*

The concern is for those individuals who *pose a threat*, whether they make a threat or not.

Figure 6 - 8 Warning Behaviors of Potential Violent Attackers



Source: NJCASIM Training 2024

In addition to reviewing the 8 warning behaviors we must consider the whole student as we pursue our work. Figure 7 demonstrates various concerns which may impact the person of concern and should be reviewed as part of the case.

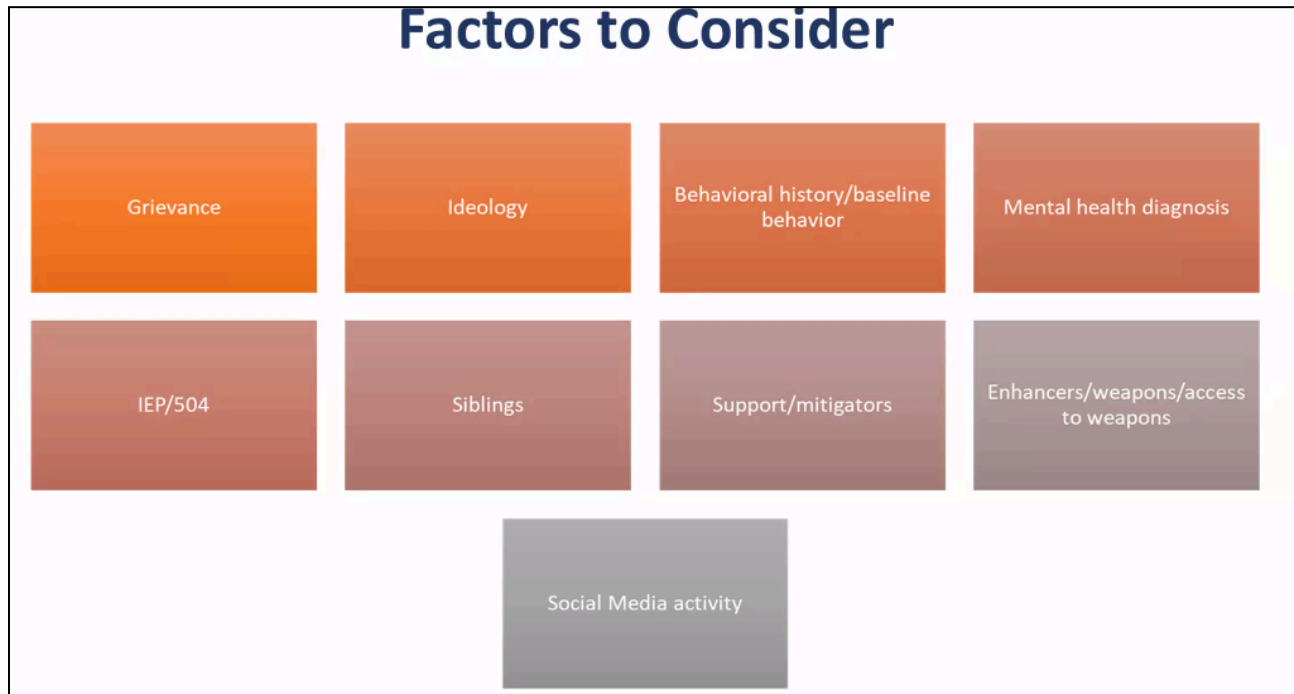
*Figure 7 - Behavioral Threat Indicators - Holistic Approach*



Source: NJCASIM Training 2024

In addition to the viewing person of concern as a whole being, there may be factors which may influence the person of concern and these may present both risk and supportive influences. For example, an IEP may represent that the person of concern has additional challenges which need to be addressed and represent that individualized interventions are in place; a sibling may be viewed by the person of concern in a positive manner (caring, mentoring, etc) or a negative manner (influencing, menacing, etc).

Figure 8 - Factors to Consider



Source: NJCASIM Training 2024

## Concern Levels

The nature of threats may be dynamic in nature and management. The assessment of a threat can be thought of as a triage method where the threat is considered by administration in consultation with the BTAM team to determine if it poses a potential concern. *No single person will make a determination about a potential threat or person of concern without consultation with at least two other members of the team including at least one member of the District team.* If the team determines there is a concern then a level of seriousness needs to be reviewed to determine the appropriate interventions, law enforcement involvement, and case management.

### No Concern

Sometimes there is a situation reported which upon investigation is deemed not to be a concern and is classified as a misunderstanding, misrepresentation or inaccurate reporting. This determination will be made by an administrator with a member of the BTAM team.

### Transient Concerns (Not a Concern Now)

Transient concerns are those which are classified as a response to anger or frustration without the intent to act. Transient concerns may be determined by the administrator and a member of the BTAM team in cases where it clearly is not a situation of concern (such as a classroom assignment). The verbal or physical incident(s) should be addressed by the school code of

conduct, restorative practices, school counseling, or other measures as determined by the administration as appropriate.

This type of incident is also referred to as not a concern now, or one that poses minimal risk.

This is based on the following:

- Threat is vague or indirect
- Information regarding threat is inconsistent, implausible or lacks detail
- Threat lacks realism
- The content of the threat suggests the person is unlikely to carry out the threat

In order to determine if a concern may be transient, building administrators should use [Appendix A - Administrative Screener](#). This screening tool is not meant to need the trained assessor.

## Low Level of Concern (Level I) (*Low Risk*)

This type of incident is also referred to as a Level I threat, or one that poses minimal risk. These are distinguished from transient threats as they have been made more than once *after interventions*, the person of concern has not accepted interventions as offered. This is based on the following:

- Transient concerns which are repeated
- Lack of self-adjustment and awareness after interventions
- This level indicates that the concern for future violence is low

Figure 8 - From "Making Prevention a Reality"

Level of Concern: Low	
<u>Communication of Concern</u>	
➤	A communication has been received or reported that causes some concern about potential for violence; it may be confusing, unrealistic, or make no allusions to violence at all.
➤	A clear grievance may not be stated or implied.
➤	The communication appears to be more venting about an issue than actually warning of future predatory violence.
➤	The communication may reference, or may itself be an attempt to resolve, an issue peacefully.
➤	The author may have not offered "bona fides" to establish credibility or viability of the threat.
➤	The communication may reference information that is inaccurate about the target, suggesting a lack of inside knowledge. Rudimentary research may or may not be evident. Little energy may have been expended in creating or delivering the communication.
➤	The language of the communication may suggest a lack of overall commitment to follow-through on a threat.
➤	The threatened action may be unrealistic or improbable (e.g., "I will plant a nuclear bomb at work.")
➤	The language may appear designed to <i>convince</i> the recipient of its seriousness, rather than <i>convey</i> an actual intent (e.g., "This is no joke.")

**Level of Concern: Low**Persons of Concern

- The person has come to the attention of threat assessors, either directly by his actions or by concerns reported from others.
- Even though the individual may have made a threat, through his actions and language it might appear he is seeking a peaceful resolution of an issue.
- If the person seems to have developed a grievance, it may not be to the level where violence appears justified in addressing it.
- Acting out violently may not currently be an acceptable means for him to achieve justice; this may be influenced by moral codes, spiritual/religious beliefs, a fear of legal sanctions, or other reasons.
- There does not appear to be a pressing time imperative to achieve resolution.
- The threat or other behavior may serve as venting.
- The person may have evidenced few to no warning behaviors.
- The person may not have a significant number of risk factors.
- Circumstances may make it nearly impossible for the subject to carry out his threat (e.g., the person of concern is incarcerated, does not have a proxy willing to act violently on his behalf, and the target is outside the institution.)
- Evaluation of the case leads to a conclusion that mitigators far outweigh enhancers.

## Substantive Concerns (Levels II and III)

A substantive threat is characterized by the intent to act in a harmful manner such as inciting or intending to fight (not a one off situation, but consistent pattern of behavior) or intent to cause harm, kill, shoot, stab or otherwise injure another person. These threats will require a trained assessor to complete. These threats can be further divided into *serious* and *very serious* threats. All substantive threats require the tracking of the case within the aSAP! Software and managed as a threat by the BTAM team until it is no longer perceived to be a threat or no additional information can be obtained or tracked, such as the student no longer attending the District. The determination of a substantive threat and level of that threat will be determined by the School BTAM team and submitted to the District BTAM team for review. The assessor will use [Appendix B - Threat Assessment Form](#).

Substantive threats will be reported to law enforcement (School Resource Officer whenever possible). Substantive threats can be classified as individual or global threats based on the target(s) of the threat. Individual substantive threats involve targeting an individual or small group of individuals. Global threats involve school wide or community threats.

Substantive threats can be classified as either Level II *moderate* or Level III *elevated and high*.

## Level II *Moderate Concern*

Substantive threats which *could be carried out* are *serious threats*. This type of threat is more direct, there seems to be evidence that the person making or posing the threat has given some thought to the threat. There may be a general idea of place, time or type of action, but nothing specific. There may be indications that preparatory steps have been taken by the person(s) of concern. The person(s) of concern may have conveyed messages that would indicate the threat is not an empty threat, such as “I’m serious” or “I really mean this.”

Serious threats need to be documented by the BTAM team using the appropriate questionnaires. Serious threats require action to be taken immediately to protect potential target(s). This should include notification to the potential target(s) and family. Referring to law enforcement (School Resource Officer whenever possible), applying the appropriate measures from the code of conduct and referring to counseling should also be initiated for serious threats. A safety plan may be needed for the target(s), the team should use [Appendix F - Safety Plan](#).

*This level of concern indicates that violence could possibly occur, although it may not be urgent. Monitoring should be continued to rule out the possibility of violence.*

Figure 9 - From “Making Prevention a Reality”

Level of Concern: Moderate	
<u>Communication of Concern</u>	
➤	The communication may explain an understandable grievance and may suggest that violence is being considered as an option for redress.
➤	The communication may suggest the person has gathered inside information about the target, beyond that which is generally or publicly known.
➤	The communication may reference the person’s engagement in warning behaviors.
➤	The communication may reference the existence of risk factors.
➤	There may be no sense of urgency in the communication; the person may still be pursuing peaceful alternatives to resolving his grievance. If a deadline is given, it may allow time for the recipient to respond and satisfy the grievance.
➤	The communication may suggest ambivalence by the author; he may not have completely made up his mind whether violence is an acceptable resolution (e.g., “This will happen either Tuesday or maybe Wednesday.”)
➤	Threat assessors may not have complete or accurate information that would guide the assessment towards one end of the continuum or the other.



**Level of Concern: Moderate**Persons of Concern

- The person may have surpassed some of the low level of concern factors, or there is an absence of significant mitigating factors.
- The person may have a grievance, and is more likely to be considering violence as an option and as a means to achieve justice.
- The person may not have made a decision about whether to act out violently.
- Others may be concerned about the person potentially acting out violently.
- The person may exhibit a cluster of warning behaviors, potentially combining both expression and action.
- The person may be engaged in the research and planning phase of a possible attack (e.g., information gathering and basic research pertaining to a target.)
- The person may have an increased number of risk factors (e.g. acting out violently, a paranoid personality disorder, substance abuse, or instability in employment and relationships). At this point in time, these factors may or may not be appropriately managed by the person or those around him.
- Stressors may be present or forthcoming in the person's life that could be considered "wild cards;" their activation or exacerbation could move the person further toward violence. Oftentimes these stressors involve financial, employment, status, family, or relationship troubles.
- There may be significant information lacking from the investigation about the person, the potential victim, the context of the threat, or other substantial aspects, which make pinpointing a level of concern difficult. Critical factors which could impact the assessment one way or another are missing.

### Level III *Elevated and High Risk*

Substantive threats which *appear to pose an imminent and serious danger to the safety of others* are very *serious threats*. These threats are specific, direct and plausible. The threat suggests that steps have been taken toward carrying out the threat. Law enforcement **MUST** be contacted in the case of a *very serious threat*.

*Elevated Risk level indicates that the person of concern may be reaching a critical point on the pathway and they may not perceive there is the ability to stop.*

Figure 10 - From “Making Prevention a Reality”

Level of Concern: Elevated	
<u>Communication of Concern</u>	
➤	The communication may reflect an increase in intensity and/or severity in the tone and content—particularly in a series of communications, as well as the person’s use of multiple methods of delivery (e.g., in-person, telephone, fax, mail, electronic, etc.).
➤	The communication may indicate the person has conducted research on the target and has necessary inside, personal, or background information on potential victim(s). It strongly suggests he has the knowledge necessary to approach and attack.
➤	The communication may invoke special authority for violent action (e.g., divine sanction).
➤	The communication may be directed and fixated on a cause or a person.
➤	In a series of communications, in which the person has not acted, the most recent one may notably evidence a dramatic change in tone.
➤	The communication may reference a time imperative and/or suggest the person is losing patience.
Level of Concern: Elevated	
<u>Persons of Concern</u>	
➤	The person of concern may have surpassed all criteria for the low and moderate designations and now appears to have begun preparing for a violent act.
➤	Such preparations may include: weapons acquisition and training that are both contextually inappropriate and an escalation from his norm; evidence suggestive of time and energy-consuming research, such as surveillance; and/or suspicious probes or approaches to the target location.
➤	Increasing warning behaviors may become more evident.
➤	The person of concern may desire recognition and fame and believe that violence can help him achieve this.
➤	Stressors in the person’s life appear to be escalating and his abilities to cope with them appear diminished.
➤	Suicidal/homicidal ideation is likely to be present.



*High Level of Concern indicates that violence is possible and could occur within the near future. Immediate and continuing actions need to be taken.*

Figure 11 - From “Making Prevention a Reality”

#### Level of Concern: High

##### Communication of Concern

- The language appears less emotionally-driven and more action-oriented, suggesting that the person is operating in a predatory, as opposed to an emotional, reactive, or impulsive, mode.
  - There is a *terminal* theme to the communication, as if the relationship between the communicator and his victim will soon be over.
  - It may convey that action may be taken to end the grievance and achieve resolution.
  - The communication may convey the person has the means and ability to carry out the threat.
  - It conveys the person’s willingness to accept all negative consequences resulting from violence, and/or that the person may feel violence is the only available method of achieving justice.
- 
- Highly concerning communications do not generally name the precise time, place, or target in advance.

#### Level of Concern: High

##### Persons of Concern

- The person may have virtually or actually rehearsed the attack as a means to ensure he has both the ability and the internal mettle to commit violence.
- The person has finalized his planning and preparation for a viable attack.
- The person may have attempted to breach the target’s security through overt or surreptitious approach.
- The person has exhibited highly concerning warning behaviors.
- The person may exhibit a combination of serious mental illness, substance abuse or dependence, a history of violence or family of origin violence exposure, and/or other risk factors.
- The person has the means and ability to carry out a violent attack.
- The person appears willing to accept all negative consequences resulting from his violence.
- Violence appears to be the only avenue of achieving justice currently available.

*Indications of potential imminence should be reviewed for high risk concerns. Violence may occur within hours to weeks.*

*Figure 12 - From “Making Prevention a Reality”*

Indications of Potential Imminence
<p>Imminence refers to a time period potentially including hours to weeks prior to a violent incident. The actual time of an incident cannot be predicted. When indicia of imminence are observed, a law enforcement response is warranted to disrupt behaviors that may be leading to violence.</p> <p><u>Communication of Concern</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ The communication suggests that all inhibitors to violence may be evaporating; circumstances in the person’s life may be rapidly changing so as to force the action; a time or violent action imperative is presented.</li><li>➤ The communication suggests the person perceives his window of opportunity for an attack to be rapidly closing due to any number of circumstances, stressors, or precipitating events.</li><li>➤ The communication itself indicates that a breach or attack has begun or been completed; may contemplate that the author has already died; appears intended to claim credit for an attack, attempt to provide rationale for an attack, or establish a legacy.</li></ul>
<p><u>Persons of Concern</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Some warning behaviors demonstrated by a person of high concern could be associated with possible imminence, such as energy burst behaviors, last resort behaviors, end of life planning, sudden cessation of medications or other substance use, and sudden withdrawal from life pattern. Examples of each may be:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Energy Burst: Preparing equipment, conducting spot checks of a target location, buying needed supplies, and/or repeated posting online.</li><li>○ Last Resort: Posting a YouTube video called “The Day of Reckoning,” laying out how a person of concern is being tortured by the government (because he did not receive financial compensation for an imagined slight), cannot continue living with that insult, and offering the government one last chance.</li><li>○ End of Life Planning: Creating a will or giving away possessions.</li><li>○ Cessation of Medications or Substance Use: Suddenly stopping prescription psychoactive medication where normal pattern is taking the drug.</li><li>○ Withdrawal from Life Pattern: Failing to keep normal appointments or commitments and withdrawing to a position of enhanced privacy.</li></ul></li><li>➤ The person may be attempting to establish a legacy by claiming credit or attempting to provide a rationale for a violent act; communicating that a breach or attack has begun; and/or contemplating his own death during an assault.</li><li>➤ The person has initiated a violent incident plan by beginning his travel/approach to the target.</li></ul>

Figure 13 - Comparison of Threats

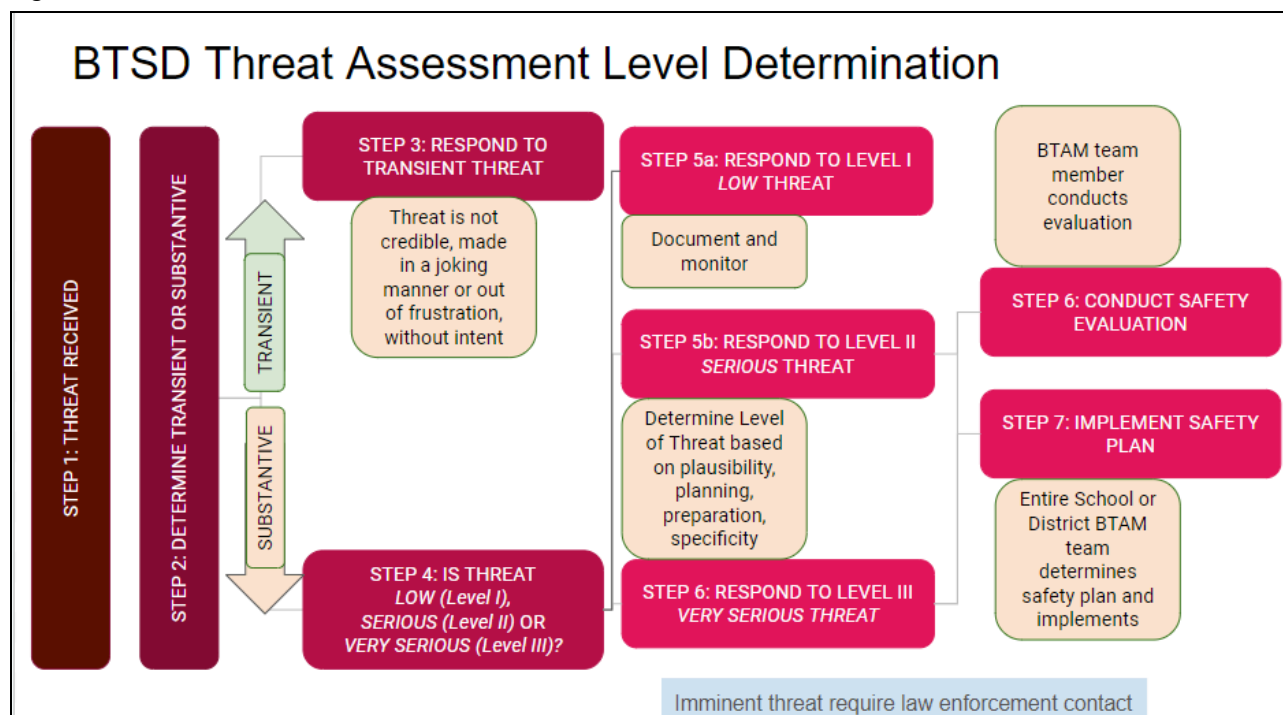
COMPARISON OF THREATS	
Transient	Substantive Threat
Not serious (no law enforcement involvement)	Serious (law enforcement involvement) Moderate, Elevated and High Risk
Joke exaggeration	Intent for harm
No need for protective action	Protective action needed (requires assessment and safety plan)

Note: This figure was adapted from Dr. Dewey Cornell's work on threat assessment in schools and layered with "Making Prevention a Reality"

## Threat Assessment Determinations

The Burlington Township School District has adapted resources from Sigma and Dr. Cornell Dewey's work on Threat Assessment in Schools to make this determination guide.

Figure 14 - BTSD Threat Assessment Level Determination



Note: This figure was adapted from Dr. Dewey Cornell's work on threat assessment in schools.

## Interventions

Interventions are critical in the management of persons of concern to help disrupt the potential pathway to violence and provide supportive factors. The list below is not an exhaustive listing of interventions and the District will need to work as a team to identify the level of interventions needed. *Creative and far reaching strategies should be considered by the team as part of the prevention.* Some research has indicated that interventions of law enforcement involvement and mental health assessments have been made in cases which do not warrant those levels of intervention. The District will work to ensure safety for all stakeholders while employing only those interventions which are necessary. *It should be noted that interventions may change over time or with additional information or as circumstances change.* In these cases, the level of risk associated with the case should be adjusted accordingly. See [Appendix G - Interventions and Support Management](#) for common interventions.

*Figure 15 is provided to help assist with understanding interventions that may take place at various risk levels and should not be used to determine risk level.*

*Figure 15 - BTSD Threat Assessment Interventions by Risk Level*

Interventions Based on Risk Level <small>Adapted from Jackson &amp; Vlojjoen, 2024</small>			
<b>Intervention</b> (use to ensure proper interventions are in place and use to help determine risk level based on interventions)	<b>LOW RISK</b>	<b>MEDIUM RISK</b>	<b>HIGH RISK</b>
Manage Case	X	X	X
Law Enforcement Involvement			X
Mental Health Assessment			X
Behavioral Intervention Plan			X
Counseling (outside, therapeutic)		X	X
Safety Plan for Target(s)		X	X
Provide Supportive Services	X	X	X
Assistance in resolving conflict	X	X	
Simple resolutions	X		
Warning	X		

*Note: This figure was adapted from Jackson and Vlojjoen, 2024, Journal of Threat Assessment and Management.*

## Documenting BTAM Cases

Burlington Township Schools utilizes the aSAP! Module of Hibster software to record, track and monitor threat cases. In addition, the District uses Google Sheets to house a summary spreadsheet of cases to act as a control roster and Google Docs to house Appendix G (Interventions) are maintained in Google Docs to be accessible to the team in a collaborative manner.

Details of how to compile information on the individual cases and use of the aSAP! Software will be covered in memos to the BTAM team on an annual basis and updated as new features or information arises.

## Scheduling BTAM Team Meetings

The BTAM District team should meet no less than twice each school year to review cases and actions of the building based teams. More frequent meetings will be beneficial and should be scheduled as needed. School level team meetings must be scheduled by the principal at least once per school year and must include the School Safety Specialist.

Periodically the District BTAM team should schedule meetings to review [Appendix H - Fidelity Implementation Checklist](#) to help refine the practices and procedures of the BTAM implementation within the District and schools.

## Transferring Cases

Each June, the District will schedule meetings to allow the preceding school to share information regarding open cases with the succeeding school. Care should be taken to determine if any cases can be closed prior to transferring the case.

## Closing BTAM Cases

According to the guidance provided by the NJDOE and based on the NTAC, the case can be closed when “the team’s assessment determines that the person of concern no longer poses a threat of violence or self-harm, the team can close the case or place it in inactive status.” For BTSD, this means:

- No identifiable concerns
  - No new acts or verbal indications of threat made or attributed to the person of concern
  - Interventions have been successful in diverting potential future pathway to violence
  - If no interventions are needed
  - If no continued monitoring is warranted
  - If only informal monitoring is warranted, this can be done in Powerschool log entries
-

When closing a case, the team should document in aSap! as well as on Appendix G the reasons for the closure including what interventions (if any) were effective in moving the person of concern away from the potential of posing a threat.

Special note, when a student leaves the District (not placed in an out of district placement), the team should close the case but leave the case in aSap! in case the student returns to the District.

If a student returns to the district, a team meeting should be held to review the potential for the student's case to be reopened based on any new or additional information, as available.

The NJDOE guidelines include that information "can be shared with other schools if the student transfers."

## Conclusion

Threat assessment has proven to be an effective means by which to ensure school safety. With the proper assessment of person(s) of concern, exploration of the pathway to violence and interventions which disrupt the potential for violence, Burlington Township Schools can ensure safety for all students. The reporting of threats is a critical component of this overall safety plan. The proper application of the determination of transient and substantive threats should be done by an administrator or member of the BTAM team. Determination of level of substantive threat *serious* or *very serious* should be done as a team exercise. Implementation of safety plans must be ensured, documented and reviewed. BTSD values the BTAM team and its members

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## APPENDICES

For the templates included as appendices, use the hot link in the title to the separate forms. Make a copy of the form and add the student initials, school initials and aSAP case number to the title. Once the form is complete, upload to the aSAP case.

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## APPENDIX A - Administrative Tool

This form is meant to be used by school administrators to help determine if the threat is *transient* or potentially *substantive* in nature. This form gets completed by the school administrator not the assessor. If after completing this form, an assessment is needed, the trained assessor will conduct the in depth interview with the student of concern. To assist the administrator and team, Appendix C Special Education / 504 student considerations checklist can be used to determine if a full assessment is needed.

Source: *Sigma Threat Assessment Associates (2021) Training, March 2023*

### Administrative Threat Assessment Screening Tool for Threat Assessment

*NOTE: If you believe there's an imminent threat or danger, immediately CALL 911 to alert law enforcement and follow established safety procedures.*

Person administering this initial screening tool / case worksheet: \_\_\_\_\_

Person(s) of concern (Person being assessed): \_\_\_\_\_

Person of concern's relationship to the target/school: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Initial Report: \_\_\_\_\_

Content of Initial Report:

---

### Screen the Initial Report

#### Screening Questions:

Using information from the initial report and any other information that is quickly obtainable, answer the following questions:

1. Is this an emergency? Is there an immediate danger or imminent safety concerns?

- ☐ YES it is an emergency / immediate danger. Take the following steps:.
  - ☐ IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY LAW ENFORCEMENT / Call 911
  - ☐ MAKE OTHER NOTIFICATIONS per established safety procedures
  - ☐ RUN a Threat Assessment when it is safe to do so (go to Page 3)
- ☐ NO, it is not an emergency. Answer Screening Questions below.

1a. In the initial report, is there any mention of sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, domestic violence, or dating violence?

- ☐ YES – NOTIFY the District Title IX Coordinator and proceed to Question 2
- ☐ NO - proceed to Question 2

1b. Is the threat vague or indirect?

---



- ☐ YES - describe
- ☐ NO - proceed to Question 2

1c. Is the threat inconsistent, implausible or lacking in detail?

- ☐ YES - describe
- ☐ NO - proceed to Question 2

1d. Does the threat lack realism?

- ☐ YES - describe
- ☐ NO - proceed to Question 2

1e. Does the content of the threat indicate it is unlikely to be carried out?

- ☐ YES - describe
- ☐ NO - proceed to Question 2

### Screening Questions (continued):

2. Is there a need to run a threat assessment?

Answer each of the following questions, based upon the initial report and readily available information:

2a) Has the person threatened violence or made any other communications about intent or plans for violence?

- ☐ YES - answer questions 2b, 2c, 2d and determine if student is IEP or 504
- ☐ NO - proceed to Question 2b

2b) Have other behaviors raised concern about violence to others / self & others?

- ☐ YES - answer questions 2c, 2d and determine if student is IEP or 504
- ☐ NO - proceed to Question 2c

2c) Is there a fearful victim or third party (e.g., someone who is taking protective action)?

- ☐ YES - answer questions 2d and determine if student is IEP or 504
- ☐ NO - proceed to Question 2d

2d) Is there another reason to run a threat assessment? Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ YES - determine if student is IEP or 504 and proceed to next section
- ☐ NO - proceed to next section

**THEN, FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS:**

---

If you answered NO to all questions in 2 above:

- DOCUMENT YOUR RESPONSES and CLOSE THE CASE.

If YES to any part of Question 2 AND the person of concern is NOT on an IEP or 504 Plan:

- RUN A THREAT ASSESSMENT (follow the steps starting on Page 3)

If you answered YES to any part of Question 2 AND the person of concern IS on an IEP or 504 Plan, answer the question below:

*Is the behavior that prompted concern inconsistent with baseline behaviors and/or cannot be managed with an existing behavior plan or other interventions already in place? See [Appendix C -Special Education/ 504 considerations](#)*

- ☐ YES – RUN A THREAT ASSESSMENT (follow the steps starting on Page 3)
- ☐ NO – Refer matter to Special Education personnel. Close and document case.

**Administrators: Use clarifying questions to help you determine the YES/NO answers above. This is where in the state’s training they have told us to “do the job administrators have always done” in deciding if there is more information needed and a team assessment.**

---

## APPENDIX B - Threat Assessment

### Threat Assessment: Assessing the Risk of Harm Self or Others Student Interview Form

Student Name		Date:	
Date of Birth		Grade:	
School:			
Interviewer(s):			
Description of Incident			

STUDENT INTERVIEW (Questions from Guidelines for Responding to Student Threats of Violence):  
Briefly explain purpose of the meeting and establish rapport with the student.

**\*\*The bold indicates the student's answers. The italicized bold indicates interviewers questions or comments.**

#### **Review of Threat:**

1. Do you know why you are here today? What happened? What exactly did you say/do? What did you mean when you said/did that?

--

2. I know you must have had reasons to say/do that; can you explain what led up to it?

--

3. How would you do it (What actions did you discuss that you would do?)

--

4. What could happen that would make you want to carry out the threat?

--

5. What would happen if **you** did do it? (Review both the effects on intended victims and consequences for the student?)

--

6. What do you think the school should do in a situation in which a student makes a threat like this?

7. What were you feeling then? How do you feel now?.

8. How do you think (the person threatened) felt?

**Relationship with intended victim(s); ask about the specific intended victim(s):** How long have you known this person?

1. What has happened in the past between you and this person?

2. What do you think this person deserves?

3. Do you see any way things could be improved between you and this person?

**Stress:**

1. What kind of things have been going on with you lately? What sort of things are you worried about?

2. How has your schoolwork been lately? Are there things you have been worried about with your school work? Other things at school?

3. What is the worst thing that has happened to you lately? Have any other bad things happened? Is there something you regret or wish you could change?

4. Have there been any changes in your family? Has anyone been sick, moved away, or had anything bad happen to him or her?

5. Do you have any family members in jail or in prison?

6. Do you take any medication? Do you know why?

7. Have you been involved in any counseling?

**Family Support:**

1. Whom do you live with your family? Are there other family members you don't live with? Have there been changes in the past year?

2. Whom in your family are you close to?

3. How well do your parents or guardians know you?

4. Where do you go after school?

5. How strict are your parents? What do they do to punish you? When was the last time you got into trouble with them? What was the worst time?

6. How did your parents react (or how will they react) when they find out about this situation?

**Depression:**

1. What has your mood been like the past few weeks? Have you felt down or depressed at times? How bad has it been? (Be alert for statements of pessimism and hopelessness that might indicate suicide risk.)

2. Have you felt nervous or anxious? Irritable or short tempered? How bad has it been?  
Have you ever felt like life wasn't worth living? Like maybe you would kill yourself?

3. Have you ever done something to hurt yourself on purpose? Have you ever cut yourself on purpose?

4. Have you had any problems with your sleep? Appetite? Energy level? Concentration?

5. Have you been taking any medication to help with your mood or for any other reason?

Note: If there are indications of suicidal thoughts or feelings, there should be a more extensive assessment of suicide risk. If necessary, develop a plan protecting the student and making appropriate referrals.

**Psychotic Symptoms:**

Ask a few probing questions and follow up if there is any indication of delusions or hallucinations. Phrase questions appropriate to the student's age and understanding.

1. Have you had any unusual experiences lately, such as hearing things that other cannot hear or seeing things that other cannot see?

2. Have you felt like someone was out to get you or wanted to harm you? Have you had any other fears that seem strange or out of the ordinary?

3. Do you have any abilities or powers that others do not have, such as ESP or reading minds?

4. Have you felt numb or disconnected from the world or felt like you were somehow outside your body?

**Weapons:**

Ask about any weapons mentioned in the threat.

1. You said that you were going to stab/shoot (name of victim). What were you going to stab/shoot him with?

2. Do you have a knife/gun/weapon? If so, what kind is it? If not, how would you get a hold of the gun/knife/weapon?

3. Have you ever had to use a gun/knife/weapon with someone? What happened? What do you think would happen if you did use a knife/gun/weapon with (name of victim?)

4. Are there guns in your home? Have you ever used a gun for hunting or target shooting? What do you think you might do if you had a gun?

5. Have you ever had to use the gun with someone? Have you ever thought about using a gun with someone?

**Bullying:**

Bullying is broadly defined and may include teasing, social exclusion, or other forms of humiliation in addition to physical threats of violence. The student may not use the term “bully” and may be reluctant to admit being the victim of bullying behavior, so be prepared to rephrase questions and probe for victim experiences.

1. Is there anyone who has threatened you recently? Is there anyone who makes you feel afraid? (Ask about sexual threats if appropriate to the situation.) He describes the events at the bus stop. He describes other times when he has felt “bullied” or threatened.

2. Is there anyone who has teased you or picked on your recently? Is there anyone who has beat you up or pushed you around? How about at home?

3. In response to any positive answer, follow up with more information: How often does it happen? What have you tried to do about it? Did you let any adult know about this? If so, what happened? Be alert to statements indicating that a bullied student feels like there is no solution to the problem or is contemplating revenge.

**Aggressive Behavior:**

1. Do people treat you fairly? Who has been unfair with you lately? When people treat you unfairly, what do you do about it?

2. When you get angry, what do you do? Has your temper ever gotten you into trouble?

3. Do you get into fights? When was the last time? What happened?

4. Have you ever threatened to harm anyone before?

5. Have you thought about what it would be like to hurt someone really badly? Have you written any stories or made any drawings that are violent?

6. Have you ever set fire to things?

7. Have you damaged your own property or someone else's property?

8. Have you ever intentionally hurt an animal?

**School Discipline:**

1. When was the last time you got into trouble in school? What happened? Have you ever been suspended or expelled? If so, what for?

2. Have your parents ever been called to school or certain classes?

---



3. Do you feel that the rules at this school are fair? What has been unfair?

**Delinquent Behavior:**

1. Have you been in trouble with the law or with police before? What happened?  
Have you ever gone to juvenile court? What was it about?

2. Have you done things that could have gotten you arrested or in trouble with the law? What was the worst thing? What else?

3. Do you drink beer, wine, or other alcohol? Have you ever? How often do you drink? When was the last time? Tell me about it.

4. Do you smoke/use marijuana? Have you ever? How often? When was the last time? Have you used any drugs? How often? When was the last time? Tell me about it.

**Exposure to Violence:**

1. Do you see or hear of violence in your neighborhood?

2. Do you know anyone who has been shot, stabbed, or beaten up really badly? Do people argue much at home? Does anyone get physically aggressive?

3. What kind of movies do you like? What kind of video games do you enjoy playing? What are your favorite internet sites?

4. Also, ask about his or her reactions to any recent reaction to any acts of violence in the news.

**Exposure to sexually explicit content**

1. What kind of movies and videos do you watch?

2. Do you ever watch anything where people are having sex? (If yes) How often do you watch videos where people are having sex? Do you watch on your phone, T.V. or another device?

**Peer Relations:**

1. What are your friends like? Have you had any trouble with your friends lately? Who is your best friend?

2. How would your friends describe you?

3. Do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend? (Keep in mind that the student might not be heterosexual, and there may be concerns in this area.) How are things going with him/her? Did you have one before? What happened in that relationship?

4. Do you have friends who get you into trouble?

5. Have you ever joined a gang or been part of a group like a crew, clique, posse, or mob?

6. Do any of your friends know about (refer to threat situation?) What was said about it? Is there anyone who feels the same as you do?

**Coping:**

1. How do you like to spend your free time?

2. What kinds of things do you do well?

3. What are your hobbies and interests? What do you enjoy doing?

4. Can you think of a problem you faced in the past that worked out okay? Can you think of a problem that you solved? Can you think of a time when you went to someone about a problem and that person was able to solve it?

5. What are your plans for the future? What would you like to do when you finish school?

6. What could we do that would help with (refer to the problem that led to the threat?)

7. Other concerning comments...

**Other Considerations and Assessor Reminders**

1. SIGNIFICANT Behavioral History (Yes or No and details)

Form should be uploaded into aSAP! when completed. (Completed?)

Entry should be made in PowerSchool logs to alert others of the existence of a completed Threat Assessment. (Completed?)

## APPENDIX C - IEP/504 Considerations

Source: Dr. Melissa Reeves, March 2024

### Special Ed/504 Considerations – Use if student has IEP/504 or Suspected Disability

\*This is designed to be an internal worksheet/personal notes for the BTAM team to help ensure special education considerations have been discussed and addressed. Pertinent information may then be transferred to the school/district's official BTAM safety plan paperwork.

<b>Student:</b>	<b>DOB:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Grade:</b>	<b>District/School:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> IEP or <input type="checkbox"/> 504 or <input type="checkbox"/> Suspected Disability Identified/suspected educational disability? Case Manager:		
BTAM Team Lead:		

**Did the threat assessment involved the following:**

- ☐ a special education representative was involved in the threat assessment process
- ☐ the disability was considered as part of the assessment
- ☐ the results of the threat assessment was communicated to the special education team/504 coordinator
- ☐ the TA was an individualized assessment based on reasonable judgment that relied on the best available objective evidence to ascertain:
  - ☐ the TA considered the nature, duration, and severity of the risk
  - ☐ the probability the potential injury will actually occur (means, method, accessibility; *poses* a risk; data supports the conclusion) ; and
  - ☐ the following reasonable modifications and/or the provision of auxiliary aids or services have been provided to try and mitigate the risk:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
---

**If a change of placement or more restrictive placement is being considered, is there evidence to support:**

- ☐ the student POSED a threat (there is a likelihood the threat could be carried out)
- ☐ the threat caused substantial disruption or material interference with school activities
- ☐ others interpreted the threat to be a “true threat”

**If the school/district is considering unilateral placement in alternative setting for up to 45 days [regardless if a manifestation, if while on school campus or function] it is because the student:**

- ☐ carried a weapon or possessed a weapon
- ☐ knowingly possessed or used illegal drugs or solicits sale of controlled substance
- ☐ inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person

**If the school is considering activating a Honig Injunction** (if believe maintaining current educational placement is likely to result in injury to students or others, may seek a court order to change student's placement), the district is not required to exhaust the admin remedies available under IDEA before filing a Honig injunction (i.e., can directly proceed to court to obtain injunction to temporarily remove a dangerous student). However,

- **Has the district met the 2-part test:**
  - ☐ has proven there is a strong likelihood to injure AND
  - ☐ the school has done all can do to reduce risk of injury (i.e., training teachers and other personnel, using behavioral intervention strategies, and providing appropriate special education and related services)

**Have considered if an FBA is needed**

- ☐ FBA will be completed: start date:

- ☐ Current FBA will be reviewed and updated if needed: date of review :

- ☐ FBA is not needed/appropriate in this case

**Have considered if a BIP is needed**

- ☐ A BIP is being developed: start date:

- ☐ Current BIP is being reviewed and to be modified, if needed: review date:

- ☐ A BIP is not needed/appropriate in this case

**Have considered if additional evaluation/assessment is needed:**

- ☐ An additional evaluation/assessment is recommended:

- specify type of evaluation:

- referral provided (name and contact info of referral provider):

☐ An additional evaluation/assessment is not needed/appropriate in this case

**If student is to be away from or removed from current placement for a period of time, a return to school plan will be developed:**

☐ Yes: date of return

☐ No: [state rationale for no return to school plan]:

☐ Yes, but at a later date when return date is known

## APPENDIX D - Teacher/Staff Collaboration Form

The team will either ask the staff member(s) who know and work with the student to complete this form or use this form during the meeting to gather information.

### Staff Member Collaboration Form - BTAM

Student Name		Today Date	
Date of Birth		Grade	
School:			
Staff Member Name:			
Description of Incident			

#### Academics:

1. How is the student doing academically? Have there been any changes to academics recently?

--

2. Describe the student's verbal and written skills? How well can they express themselves in word or writing?

--

3. Does the student require or receive any intervention programming or specialized instruction/accommodations

--

#### Teacher/Staff knowledge of Behavior of concern or Threat:

1. Have you seen or heard anything of concern from this student recently?

--

2. Have you heard this student talk about or write about these things before?

--

3. Is there another teacher or staff member who might know additional information about this student or this situation?

--

**Student's Peer Relationships:**

1. How well does this student get along with other students?

2. Who are the student's friends or close acquaintances?

3. Are there students who do not get along with this student?

4. Have there been other conflicts or difficulties with peers?

5. Has this student ever complained of being bullied, teased, harassed, or treated unfairly by others?

6. Do other students seem fearful of this student for any reason?

7. Has this student ever bullied, teased, harassed, or treated others unfairly?

**Depression Symptoms:**

1. Have there been any apparent changes in the student's mood, demeanor, or activity level? Is the student withdrawn or apathetic?

2. Has the student expressed any attitudes that could imply depression, such as expressions of hopelessness, helplessness, futility, inadequacy, shame, and self-criticism, or worthlessness?

3. Has this student shown any increase in irritability or seemed short tempered?

4. Has this student ever given indications of thoughts of suicide, talked about wanting to die, or commented about never being around anymore? Any indicators of self-harm?



---

**Discipline:**

1. What kinds of discipline or behavior problems have you experienced with this student?

2. How does this student respond to academics or behavior being corrected by an adult?

3. What is the student's response to being disciplined at school?

**Aggression:**

1. How does this student express anger?

2. Does this student seem to hold a grudge or seem resentful? Have they expressed resentment against any specific person or the school?

3. Has this student done anything that expresses anger or aggression, or has the student expressed an aggressive theme in written assignments, drawings, class projects?

**Parent Contact:**

1. Have you had any contact with this student's parents/guardians? What was the contact and the parent's response?

2. Has the parent ever talked about difficulties with the student's behavior at home or in the community?

**Additional Information:**

---

## APPENDIX E - Target/Witness Interview

The team member designated will ask the witness or target the questions on this form. This should be done by the administrator unless the team determines that another individual should conduct an interview. *Note - questions and techniques should be done with considerations including age and development stage of the interviewee as well as whether the interviewee is likely to have known about the potential threat. The interviewer should take care not to provide information not otherwise known to the interviewee.*

### Target/Witness Form - BTAM

Student Name (Target/Witness)		Today Date	
Date of Birth		Grade	
School:		Target or Witness	
Staff Member Name:			
Student of Concern Name and Incident			

1. How do you know [student of concern]? How long have you known them?

--

2. Do you consider [student of concern] a friend?

--

a. If so, what do you like to do together?

--

b. What are [student of concern]'s interests?

--

c. If not, how do you get along? Have you ever had any problems with [student of concern]?

--

3. Did you personally hear or see [student of concern] say anything concerning today about hurting themselves, someone else, or the school? What was it?

OR

It has been reported that you witnessed a threat. Would you tell me what happened?

- a. When did this happen?

- b. Who is/are involved {in the threat/situation}? How are they involved?

- c. What exactly was said (or written, posted, drawn, filmed, or otherwise communicated)?

- d. How did you react?

- e. How did others react?

- f. How did you feel when it happened?

- g. How do you feel now?

- h. What do you need to feel better/safer?

- i. Who was threatened? Who might be in danger?

- j. Do you know if there is a plan to hurt anyone?

k. What reasons, if any, were given for the threatened behavior?

l. Do any of the students who are involved with the threat have weapons or have access to weapons (including knives, swords, bats, explosives, etc.)?

4. Has anything like this happened before with [student of concern]?

a. Have any of the students involved done anything that would make you think they are practicing or preparing to follow through on the threat and harm someone?

5. Who else should we talk to? Why?

6. Is there anything else we should know about this situation?

7. What can we do to help?

## APPENDIX F - Safety Plan

When student(s) are identified as potential targets, a safety plan must be developed.

### **Safety Plan**

Student Name (Safety needed)		Today Date	
Date of Birth/ ID		Grade	
School:			
Student of Concern			

The safety issues of concern are:

--

1. Law Enforcement has been notified

--

2. The student will aid his/her own protection by

--

3. The student will receive the following support from the school

--

4. The student will receive the following support from the community

--

5. The student will receive the following support from home:

--

6. The student will receive the following support from law enforcement:

--

\_\_\_\_\_  
Administrator, Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Threat case manager, Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian, Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student, Date

## APPENDIX G - Interventions/Supports Management

Source: 15-Minute Focus Behavior Threat Assessment and Management for K-12 Schools by Dr. Melissa A. Louvar Reeves © National Center for Youth Issues [www.ncyi.org](http://www.ncyi.org)

### Interventions and Supports Management Tracking

Below is a list of interventions and supports to consider. This is not an exhaustive list but provides guidance as to the multiple options to be considered.

<b>MONITORING</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Check-in, checkout program <input type="checkbox"/> Reinforcement program <input type="checkbox"/> Safety contract <input type="checkbox"/> Adult/increased monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Late arrival/early dismissal <input type="checkbox"/> Adult escorts from class to class <input type="checkbox"/> Modify daily schedule (reduce free, unsupervised time; travel card). <input type="checkbox"/> Restrictions to schedule or activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing progress monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Track attendance Parent-school collaboration Parent/guardian will increase supervision <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor for precipitating events (i.e., anniversaries, losses, perceived injustice, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Change class schedule <input type="checkbox"/> Outside psychiatric evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> Home visits (check for weapons, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Searches <input type="checkbox"/> Ankle monitor <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing collaboration with agency supports, probation/ juvenile diversion, mental health professionals <input type="checkbox"/> Detained, incarcerated, or placed under intensive supervision
<b>RELATIONSHIP BUILDING</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Establish system for student to proactively seek support <input type="checkbox"/> Peer mentor <input type="checkbox"/> Adult mentor <input type="checkbox"/> Provide feedback and mentoring	<input type="checkbox"/> Peer supports <input type="checkbox"/> Increase engagement in school activities <input type="checkbox"/> Increase engagement in community activities <input type="checkbox"/> Engage in leadership activities	<input type="checkbox"/> De-escalation training for staff <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor reactions to grievances and precipitating events, and provide supports. <input type="checkbox"/> Trauma-informed training for staff
<b>SKILL DEVELOPMENT/RESILIENCY BUILDING</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Academic supports <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict resolution <input type="checkbox"/> Anger management group <input type="checkbox"/> Social skills group <input type="checkbox"/> Social-emotional learning curriculum	<input type="checkbox"/> Participation in school activities/ clubs <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling—in school <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling—out of school <input type="checkbox"/> Family supports/resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Conduct functional behavioral assessment (FBA) <input type="checkbox"/> Develop behavioral intervention plan (BIP) <input type="checkbox"/> Supports from behavior specialist/ school psychologist
<b>DISCIPLINE</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Letter of apology <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict resolution <input type="checkbox"/> Confrontation/warning	<input type="checkbox"/> Detention <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative to suspension <input type="checkbox"/> In-school suspension	<input type="checkbox"/> Ticketed by law enforcement <input type="checkbox"/> Charges filed by law enforcement <input type="checkbox"/> Law enforcement diversion

<input type="checkbox"/> Restorative practice <input type="checkbox"/> Removing privileges <input type="checkbox"/> Time-out/self-initiated time-out <input type="checkbox"/> Behavior contract <input type="checkbox"/> Parent meeting	<input type="checkbox"/> Out-of-school suspension <input type="checkbox"/> Habitually Disruptive Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative placement <input type="checkbox"/> Expulsion <input type="checkbox"/> Diversion program	program <input type="checkbox"/> Court issued non-contact/protective orders
<b>SCHOOL CLIMATE &amp; CULTURE</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Address systemic, procedural, or policy problems that may be precipitating stressors(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Build a caring and supportive climate and culture <input type="checkbox"/> Implement effective threat and suicide assessment procedures <input type="checkbox"/> Universal screenings for academic and social-emotional barriers to learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced social-emotional learning to include: <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying prevention <input type="checkbox"/> Violence prevention <input type="checkbox"/> Suicide prevention <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional regulation <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict management <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure positive dynamics among staff (serves as modeling for students)	<input type="checkbox"/> Early intervention with emerging problems (MTSS supports) <input type="checkbox"/> Explicitly teach about confidential reporting procedures <input type="checkbox"/> Give permission to "Break the Code of Silence" and get help for self/peer who is struggling

## APPENDIX H - Close Case Checklist

This checklist will be used to document the closing of a case based on lowering of concern level for the student.

Student Name		Today Date	
Date of Birth/ ID		Grade	
School:			
Team Members			
aSAP! Case Number			
Original Date of Concern			
Original Concern			
Subsequent Concerns			
Interventions put in place? (link Appendix G)			

CASE CLOSURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> No identifiable concerns were noted <input type="checkbox"/> CLOSE CASE <input type="checkbox"/> No Interventions were needed after initial case <input type="checkbox"/> CLOSE CASE	<input type="checkbox"/> No new acts of verbal indications of threats made or attributed to the person of concern <input type="checkbox"/> Since (ADD DATE) <input type="checkbox"/> CLOSE CASE <input type="checkbox"/> Interventions were used and have assisted person of concern <input type="checkbox"/> YES, CLOSE CASE <input type="checkbox"/> NO, Adjust interventions (case remains open)	<input type="checkbox"/> No additional monitoring is needed <input type="checkbox"/> CLOSE CASE <input type="checkbox"/> Informal monitoring via Powerschool log entries <input type="checkbox"/> Person of Concern has transferred out of District (NOT placed out of district by District) <input type="checkbox"/> CLOSE CASE, not in Powerschool closed due to transfer

TEAM DECISION TO CLOSE CASE:

DATE:



## APPENDIX I - Fidelity Checklist

Periodically, the District BTAM team will undergo a review of the BTAM practices in place using the following checklist and determine adjustments to the District's approach.

Source: Dr. Melissa Reeves, March 2024

### BTAM FIDELITY IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

This document is to help guide the establishment and systematic implementation of a high-quality Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) program that is in alignment with best practices. Teams can use this document to identify current areas of strengths and needs, and to establish future implementation goals within their BTAM process.

	YES	NO	STRENGTH OR NEED?
<b>Identify the decisions to be made and policies needed to support a K-12 behavioral threat assessment program.</b>			
1. Has your school district involved school/district legal counsel for guidance on policies and procedures for your behavioral threat assessment process?			
2. Has your school/district reviewed existing policies to ensure authority is established for the following?			
• Establishing behavioral threat assessment team(s) and team membership.			
• Establishing authority of team(s) to engage in threat assessment procedures on behalf of school/district.			
• Defining scope of BTAM team's jurisdiction (e.g., what is referred for threat assessment vs. suicide assessment).			
• Establishing authority to collect and maintain information (i.e., are BTAM records of student cases are FERPA records?).			
• Establishing authority to share information when needed (i.e., FERPA/HIPPA exceptions to confidentiality; what is considered an educational record)			
<b>Notes &amp; Future Steps/Goals:</b>			
	YES	NO	STRENGTH OR NEED?
<b>Building a behavioral threat assessment and management program.</b>			
3. Has a team structure been established to best serve the district and campuses (i.e., one team to serve the district, one team per school, or a hybrid model)?			
4. Have <i>multidisciplinary</i> BTAM teams been established with roles clearly defined?			
5. Does your school district provide training opportunities for its BTAM teams?			

• Does the training include strategies for mitigating bias and discrimination within the BTAM process?			
• Does the training address the role of the SRO as a school official vs an agent of law enforcement?			
• Does the training address the how BTAM can complement special education protocols and procedures yet must remain distinct from special education protocols and procedures?			
6. Has a BTAM team leader(s) been identified?			
7. Does each BTAM team meet on a regular and on an as-needed basis?			
8. Has your district developed policies defining prohibited or concerning behaviors? (e.g., which behaviors are referred to the BTAM team vs another intervention/problem-solving team)			
9. Has your district developed policies and procedures for defining the threshold for a BTAM assessment (i.e., how to screen reports to determine which need a full threat assessment)?			
<b>Notes/Future Steps:</b>			
	YES	NO	STRENGTH OR NEED?
<b>Working behavioral threat assessment and management cases.</b>			
10. Has your school district established more than one reporting mechanism for potential threats (e.g., dedicated email address, phone #, online form, link on school website, smartphone applications.)?			
• If yes, does your school provide training on the established reporting mechanism(s)?			
11. Does your behavioral threat assessment process involve the use of a screening and assessment tool based upon best practices/research (i.e., Secret Service/NTAC model)?			
12. Does your behavioral threat assessment process include the confidential documentation of behavioral threat assessments (e.g., a management system, app, Excel, or Word document with security features activated)?			
13. Does your behavioral threat assessment process include gathering information from multiple sources (e.g., interviews, social media, school personnel, school documents, school issued email/internet accounts, law enforcement, etc.)?			
14. Does your behavioral threat assessment process include a case management intervention and support plan to reduce risk?			
15. Does your behavioral threat assessment process allow room for re-assessing and changing plans if needed (i.e., progress monitoring)?			
16. Does your behavioral threat assessment process include varying procedures for different types of campus threats (such as self-harm, suicide, act of violence, threat of violence, or bullying)?			
17. Does your behavioral threat assessment process involve varying responses for different types of campus threats (such as calling 911, notifying the superintendent, activating response protocols, other interventions, etc.)?			
18. Does your behavioral threat assessment process establish which behaviors should be referred for law enforcement intervention (such as physical violence, threats of violence, planned school attack, or behavior involving weapons)?			
19. Does your behavioral threat assessment team know of or have a list of resources available to students and their families to assist them (e.g., local, regional, or state mental health resources)?			

20. Does your behavioral threat assessment process ensure a course of action/intervention is put in place for an individual(s) assessed by a behavioral threat assessment team?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the threat assessment fully conducted BEFORE disciplinary action is decided? (BTAM process should be completed <i>before</i> any disciplinary actions are decided)</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the intervention and management decisions based upon level/seriousness of concern (e.g. AVOIDS a zero tolerance approach; provides alternatives to suspension, focuses on supportive interventions, disciplinary action (if necessary and appropriate) is paired with interventions/supports, etc.)</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If yes, does your behavioral threat assessment process include a plan to follow-up on a course of action/ intervention provided for an individual(s) assessed by a behavioral threat assessment team?</li> </ul>			
21. Does your behavioral threat assessment process ensure a course of action/intervention is put in place for students impacted by a threat?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If yes, does your behavioral threat assessment process include a plan to follow-up on a course of action/intervention provided to student(s) impacted by a threat?</li> </ul>			
22. Does your behavioral threat assessment process include documenting threats where no action was necessary (e.g., no course of action/intervention or other referral was needed)?			
23. Does your team collect data on the # of threat assessment conducted?			
24. Does your collect demographic data regarding the number of threat assessment done?			
25. Does your team collect threat assessment <i>outcome</i> data? (e.g. level of risk determined, types of interventions and supports offered – both within and outside of the school, # of suspension and expulsions, # of students (and families) that received help/additional supportive services etc.)			
<b>Notes/Future Steps:</b>			

## Appendix J - In District Training

The District takes the role of providing training to the team members, full staff, families and the general school community seriously. As training material is produced and training is conducted, those resources will be added here. Training is also done on an ongoing basis in each meeting about individual students of concern as well we team meetings for status updates on all cases within each building.

- ☐ BTAM Training for Building Admin 2024-02-02
  - ☐ BTAM Building Based Meetings 2024-04
  - ☐ BTAM Training for Board of Education 2024-07
-