

# **Behavioral Threat Assessment (BTA)**

## **Procedures Manual**



**The School Board of Broward County, Florida**

For the most current version, please use electronic BTA manual located at:

<http://bcps-mentalhealth.com/threatAssessment.php>

# The School Board of Broward County, Florida



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# BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT

## INTRODUCTION

On February 14, 2018, seventeen innocent lives were lost, and many others were physically injured and emotionally impacted as a result of a school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, a school in Broward County, Florida. Following this tragedy, new state legislation and district policy regarding school safety and threat assessment were developed and enacted. *Florida Senate Bill 7026 Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act* (SB 7026) took effect on March 9, 2018 and was amended on May 9, 2019 (SB 7030). On March 5, 2019, the School Board of Broward County adopted the *Threat Assessment Policy* (SBBC 2130). Each of these highlighted the importance of ensuring fidelity to high-quality threat assessment procedures through accountability and on-going professional development.

Broward Schools has had a mandated set of procedures for violence prevention and threat assessment. The district's approach to violence prevention and threat assessment was initiated in 2002, with the writing of the first edition of the *Threat Assessment Procedures Manual*. Since this first edition, the manual was revised regularly (2008, 2012, 2017). The district's approach to violence prevention contained three components. The first two components were comprised of a *Warning Signs* presentation and the *Silence Hurts: Safe Zone Listeners* campaign to help prevent violence in the schools by catching problems early through identifying students who may be at-risk for violent behavior. These violence prevention efforts helped create a system which could receive, record, and disseminate information from students about suspected threats in schools. As the third component of the district's approach, the Threat Assessment Process was designed as a three-stage process. This process historically included an initial response to threats, screening steps to assist in determining threat level, and in-depth assessment to further aid in the development of supervision and action plans.

Best practices and continuous improvement in the district's threat assessment approach has been a primary goal since the draft of the first *Threat Assessment Procedures Manual* in 2002. A crucial component of preventing targeted violence at schools relies on developing positive school climates built on a culture of safety, respect, trust, and social and emotional support. Students in a safe and supportive learning environment feel empowered to share concerns with adults. Going forward, violence prevention across the district encompasses multi-departmental programs, initiatives, and campaigns which promote social-emotional competence as well as psychological and physical safety in schools. These include *Sandy Hook Promise*, *social-emotional learning (SEL)*, *Bullying Prevention*, *Silence Hurts*, and *Warning Signs: Safe Zone Listeners*. This 2019 revision of the district's behavioral threat assessment procedures incorporates the most updated recommendations from national leaders in threat assessment, such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the U.S. Secret Service, and the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). Finally, the need for increased accountability has provided the impetus for developing an electronic database for the documentation and monitoring of threat assessments across the district, a new component of the district's process. With the goal of maintaining safe and secure schools, the *2019 Behavioral Threat Assessment (BTA)* procedures manual will outline and provide guidance to school and district staff on the most current threat assessment policies and procedures for Broward County Public Schools, Florida.

# CHAPTER 1: THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY'S THREAT ASSESSMENT POLICY (SBBC 2130)

Threat Assessment Policy (SBBC 2130) (5) was written in accordance with state legislation (6, 7) , established research, and recognized standards of practice regarding threat assessment and management in school settings. The policy also provides guidance and important definitions to establish consistency and common language among district BTA team members.

## Definitions

- A. A **threat** is communication or behavior that indicates that an individual poses a danger to the safety of school staff or students through acts of violence or other behavior that would cause harm to self or others.
- The threat may be expressed/communicated behaviorally, orally, visually, in writing, electronically, or through any other means.
  - The communication and/or behavior is considered a threat regardless of whether it is observed by or communicated directly to the target of the threat; observed by or communicated to a third party, and regardless of whether the target of the threat is aware of the threat.
- B. A **threat assessment** is a systematic process that is designed to identify situations/persons of concern, investigate and gather information, and assess and manage the situation in order to mitigate risk.
- C. An **aberrant behavior** is that which is atypical for the person or situation and causes concern for the safety or well-being of those involved. Aberrant behavior for an individual involves actions, statements, communications or responses that are unusual for the person or situation; or actions which could lead to violence toward self or others; or are reasonably perceived as threatening or causing concern for the well-being of the person. Aberrant behaviors can include (but are not limited to):
- Unusual social distancing or isolation of subjects from peers and family members;
  - Sullen or depressed behavior from an otherwise friendly and positive person;
  - Out of context outbursts of verbal or physical aggression;
  - Increased levels of agitation, frustration and anger;
  - Confrontational, accusatory, or blaming behavior;
  - An unusual interest in or fascination with weapons; and/or
  - Fixation on violence as means of addressing a grievance.
- D. An **imminent threat** exists when the person's behavior/situation poses a clear and immediate threat of serious violence toward self or others that requires containment and action to protect identified or identifiable target(s); and may also exhibit behavior that requires intervention.
- E. A **threat assessment team** shall include, pursuant to Florida statute, persons with expertise in counseling, instruction, school administration, principal, when available, and law enforcement\*. Persons with expertise in counseling include school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and family counselors. Additional personnel with knowledge of the child or circumstances may also serve as members of the team.

*\*In Broward County Public Schools, Armed Safe School Officers-Marshal/Guardians are not law enforcement officers. Therefore, they do not fulfill the law enforcement requirement.*

## Roles and Responsibilities

Some of the key roles and responsibilities school-based threat assessment teams shall adhere to are outlined below:

- Each school principal shall identify a school-based threat assessment team with the mandatory team members and alternate team members before students report to school each year. The mandatory team members must include:
  - Administrator (Principal, when available)/Administrative Designee
  - Mental Health Professional (School Counselors, School Psychologists, School Social Workers, Family Counselors)
  - Teacher (with knowledge of the student)
  - Law Enforcement
  - Additional personnel with knowledge of the child or circumstances may also serve as members of the team (e.g., Security Specialist, ESE Specialist, Behavior Specialist, etc.)
- All school-based administrators and threat assessment team members must attend and complete mandatory district threat assessment trainings annually. Members will be trained on the roles and responsibilities of each team member. Each mandatory team member shall report their completion of this requirement to their supervisor.
- The team shall identify members of the school community to whom threatening behavior should be reported.
- The team must provide annual training and guidance to students, staff, and parents on recognizing behaviors of concern, the roles and responsibilities in reporting the behavior, and the various options for submitting a report, including anonymous reporting.
- All SBBC employees, volunteers, and contractors are required to report to school administration any expressed threat(s) or behavior(s) that may represent a threat to the community, school, or self.
- Each school principal must assign school-based staff members who can proactively monitor and respond to all incoming reports where safety is of concern.
- Each threat assessment team **must respond, within 24 hours when school is in session**, to any report of a threat or any patterns of behavior that may pose a threat to self or others. If school is not in session, the school principal must immediately refer the matter to law enforcement for evaluation, and the threat assessment team must meet no later than the end of the first day school is back in session to consider the matter and ensure it is resolved.
- The threat assessment, its determination, along with any interventions provided, will be recorded in the appropriate electronic data systems by the threat assessment team.
- All threat assessment outcomes and recommendations must be reported to the school principal, who will review the documents to ensure completeness and fidelity. The completed threat assessment documentation will also be submitted to the principal's supervisor for review.
- Upon completion of the BTA, the principal or his/her administrative designee is required to immediately attempt to notify the student of concern's parent/legal guardian.
- Threat assessment team members shall follow established procedures for referrals to school-based, community, and/or healthcare providers for mental health services, evaluation, or treatment.
- If an immediate mental health or substance abuse crisis is suspected, school personnel shall follow policies to engage behavioral health crisis resources, including, but not limited to, mobile crisis teams and school resources officers, who have been trained in crisis intervention.

- Where an immediate threat to life or physical safety exists, reports must result in an immediate notification to law enforcement.
- The threat assessment team must consult with law enforcement when a student exhibits a pattern of behavior, based upon previous acts, or the severity of an act, that would pose a threat to school safety.
- Upon a preliminary determination by the threat assessment team that an individual poses a threat, members of the threat assessment team may request and obtain criminal history record information. No member of the team shall redisclose or use such information beyond the purpose for which such disclosure was intended.
- Regardless of threat assessment activities, disciplinary action and referral to law enforcement are to occur as required by law and school board policies.
- If a student is facing possible expulsion or suspension as a consequence of certain actions, the school should consider ways in which these can be safely enacted and identify resources that may assist the student during this time. In addition, a threat assessment team may use alternatives to expulsion or referral to law enforcement agencies unless the use of such alternatives will pose a threat to school safety.
- Threat assessment records are considered education records and shall be maintained and released in accordance with The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), state statute, and School Board Policy 5100.2: Transfer, Retention, And Disposal (See [Maintenance of Records and Information Sharing](#)). School-based administrators must ensure that FERPA log is completed when appropriate. If further assistance is needed, please contact the Risk Management Privacy Officer 754-321-1914.

## CHAPTER 2: THREAT ASSESSMENT BEST PRACTICES AND CONSIDERATIONS

The procedures detailed in this manual were developed in accordance with legislation and policies enacted by the State of Florida and the District, and nationally recognized standards of practice regarding threat assessment and management. This chapter outlines the essential framework for threat assessment teams to conduct behavioral threat assessments.

### Pathways to Violence

The Behavioral Threat Assessment Center (BTAC), housed within the FBI's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (NCAVC), is an international leader in threat assessment and management. Their publication, *Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing, and Managing the Threat of Targeted Attacks*, provides an overview of scientific research on violence prevention and risk factors indicative of a potential for violence. Below is an overview of the research compiled by BTAC [\(1\)](#) on the pathways that lead a person of concern towards violence.

Most people learn to process and cope with negative experiences through healthy responses. Individuals most at risk for perpetrating targeted violence, however, are brittle, tending to obsess over injustices and are unable to withstand rejections or triggering events. Generally, the more stressors and triggers that exist in a person's life, the more difficult it becomes to cope. A stressor can be anything in the person of concern's life that causes tension or anxiety and can include:

- School/work-related failure or disappointment
- An unhappy home environment
- Financial distress
- Material, relational, or status losses in family, intimate/peer, occupational and self-image
- Potential future events, such as divorce, terminal illnesses, chronic pain/health issues

Years of research suggests that an individual on a path towards violence tends to cover a series of steps. However, pathways are not identical for every person of concern. The process may be linear through a certain sequence of steps or steps may be co-mingled. Time spent at each step may vary. Most often, deeply held grievances are the first step on the pathway to violence. Motivators can also include the need for revenge for a perceived injury or other grievance, quest for justice (as defined by offender), desire for notoriety or recognition, desire to solve a problem perceived to be unbearable, and/or a desire to kill or be killed.

Generally, an individual's pathway to violence may include the following:

- Grievance (i.e., personal grievance or humiliation based upon real or imagined injustices)
- Ideation (i.e., idea that violence is an acceptable, or the only, means to achieve redress)
- Research and Planning (i.e., when, how, where, etc.)
- Preparation (i.e., equipment, skills, resources)
- Breach (i.e., circumvention of security measures at target location prior to attack)
- Attack (i.e., preplanned or opportunistically chosen targets)

## Risk Factors and Warning Behaviors

Whether or not an individual has made a direct threat should not be a driving factor in the decision to proceed with threat assessment; waiting until direct threats are made can be a grave mistake. According to available research, most offenders do not necessarily make direct threats towards specific targets but rather display identifiable indicators of violent intent prior to perpetrating an attack. While an expression of intent to inflict harm is a clear identifier, a person who poses a threat may also be identified by an analysis of risk factors and other concerning warning behaviors that needs further exploration. *Risk factors* enhance the threat that someone may pose. These include but are not limited to:

- A history of violence (i.e., history of past violence, childhood exposure to violence, past involvement with law enforcement)
- Health/mental health factors (i.e., substance use, personality disturbance, severe mental illness, history of suicidality, organized behavior)
- Weapons (i.e., access/familiarity/fascination with firearms, stabbing instrument, explosives)
- Problematic behavioral history (i.e., history of stalking, harassing, threatening behavior, or non-compliant behavior)
- Lack of social/environmental positive supports (i.e., unhealthy support system, isolation, instability)

Predicting the exact occurrence or timing of an occurrence of violence is not possible. However, certain identifiable warning behaviors warrant particular attention in gauging whether an act of violence may occur. *Warning behaviors* are changes in patterns of behavior that suggest increasing or accelerating risk for violence. These can also help to assess the potential imminence of a violent event. Outward behavior should be regarded as a manifestation of someone's state of mind. When behaviors exhibited by the person of concern cause fear in others, people should take notice. Warning behaviors can include:

- Person of concern engages in research, planning, and/or preparation (e.g., researching/obtaining weapons, selecting potential targets, conducting a rehearsal, engaging in an attack).
- Fixation warning behaviors such as an increasing preoccupation with a person or cause.
- Fascination with violence and/or weapons, military or law enforcement paraphernalia, suggesting a warrior mentality and a desire to copycat previous attackers.
- Acts of aggression committed for the first time in an effort to test one's ability, such as animal cruelty, assault, firearm discharge, arson, vandalism, or rehearsed violence with inanimate objects.
- Leaked information to a third-party regarding thoughts, characterized by overt threats or by indirect expressions, can provide clues regarding an individuals' thoughts, feelings, or an intention to harm.
- Implicit or explicit communications of a desire to do harm/kill.
- An approach or attempt to gain proximity to an intended target through trespassing, stalking, burglaries, or other criminal mischief, as escalation, pre-attack surveillance, or a final act of preparation.
- A burst of energy in would-be offenders, such as frequent trips, errands, purchases, or communications, has been noted to occur in the hours, days, or weeks prior to a targeted violence incident.
- End of life planning or terminal behaviors that may indicate last resort thinking and a plan to end one's life in the near future.
- Other last resort behaviors can include communications or actions indicating increasing desperation or distress, such as indicating that time is running out, exhibiting drastic changes in appearance, or a sudden onset of reckless behaviors.

- Sudden cessations of medications or other substance use or sudden withdrawal from typical life patterns or obligations can signal that a person is making final preparations for an attack.

## **Mitigators**

*Mitigators* are protective factors that may prevent or inhibit a person of concern from thinking about or carrying out an act of targeted violence. Threat assessment teams should consider the following possible inhibiting factors:

- Pursuit of non-violent, legally and socially sanctioned methods of conflict resolution
- Sense of humor
- Positive, realistic future short and long-term goals
- Persons, things, or circumstances of sufficient value to the person that reduce the likelihood of violence
- Supportive family (e.g., provides healthy structure/supervision)
- Healthy social supports (e.g., positive influences, religious affiliations, community group/club)
- Positive coping mechanisms (e.g., exercise, healthy interests, hobbies)
- Access and receptiveness to assistance (e.g., mental health, financial, medical)
- “On the radar” for violence prevention (i.e., individual has been previously identified as a person of concern and is the focus of an effective support plan)

## **Best Practices in Threat Assessment**

The goal of the threat assessment process is to be preventative, not punitive (9). For this reason, the procedures outlined in this manual are based on best practice guidelines in the prevention of violence and threat assessment. The University of Virginia’s *Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines* (CSTAG) incorporate recommendations made by the Secret Service’s National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) and the FBI’s BTAC (3). Furthermore, the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) has provided model policies and procedures to help local school boards establish and operate threat assessment teams, developed using a synthesis of available research (9, 10). Collectively, these resources provide research-based guidance for school threat assessment teams in the identification and reporting of threatening behavior, the assessment process, and management of prevention and safety plans.

## **Barriers to Engagement**

There are many barriers that teams may face to successful engagement in threat assessment, particularly during analysis of indicators of potential violence. Some of these barriers can include lack of knowledge regarding threat assessment policies and procedures, fatigue and desensitization of school-based teams, limitations to open communication among agencies, and misinformation regarding the impact of mental health factors (1). To overcome these barriers, a culture of shared responsibility in schools, workplaces, and other environments must empower bystanders witnessing warning behaviors to come forward to report concerns (1). This culture of shared responsibility is created by environments that foster positive connections and a sense of community. Safe school climates, which encourage positive, trusting relationships among classmates and their teachers and break down “codes of silence” are a crucial component of preventing targeted violence at schools (4).

## Research-Based Recommendations

A multidisciplinary threat assessment team must be established within schools. This team should include a variety of disciplines within the school community, a specifically designated leader (e.g., principal or administrative designee), clear protocols and procedures, and regular opportunities for collaboration and meetings (4). The designated leader shall initiate an initial inquiry/triage upon receiving a threat report (10). The leader may designate a subset of team members for additional data collection (10). Defined roles and responsibilities of team members during this process may include review of threatening behavior/communications, review of records, and conducting interviews (10). Determination of the seriousness of a threat shall be made expeditiously and in consultation with threat assessment team members (10). All team members should work collaboratively, communicate actively with each other, and have the opportunity to review cases to ensure concerns have been adequately addressed (10).

All threats should be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated to determine level of concern. Even threats made anonymously and/or through electronic communication should be assessed. It is critically important to gather as much information as possible. At times, information will simply not be available due to factors such as legal or logical impediments, but generally speaking there is often a great deal of information which can be accumulated in an effort to truly understand what is happening with a person of concern. Preliminary assessments can sometimes be offered pending development of additional information. Law enforcement should be notified immediately in the event of an imminent threat. Research on best practices (1, 3, 4, 10) suggests the following as critical to successful threat assessment:

- The continuum of identifiable indicators of violent intent, or warning behaviors, should be well defined.
- Reporting mechanisms should be known, easy to understand and use, and ideally offer a variety of means to report threats, including anonymous reporting.
- The school community should feel confident that reports will be taken seriously, kept confidential, and handled appropriately.
- Building rapport can facilitate information-gathering efforts. Threat assessment team members should demonstrate that their goal is to support individuals who may be struggling, while ensuring that the student and school are safe. When teams have established this rapport, parents or guardians may be more likely to share their own concerns, and the student may be more forthcoming about frustrations, needs, goals, or plans.
- Documentation of reports made, information gathered, and intervention strategies taken should be maintained.
- Regular training for all stakeholders should take place, including faculty, staff, administrators, students, parents, and law enforcement.

Distinguishing among transient versus substantive threats is critical to the determination of appropriate responses to threat reports. *Transient threats* are threats that can be easily resolved and do not reflect a real intent to harm others. In a school setting, many transient threats are expressions of humor, anger, frustration or fear that can be disruptive but do not represent a serious concern. The person may retract the threat or offer an explanation and/or apology that indicates no future intent to harm. According to the CSTAG model, *substantive threats*, in contrast, reflect a serious intent to harm others. These typically include warning behaviors such as planning and preparation, recruitment of accomplices, and acquisition of a weapon (3).

Once a threat report has been received, BTA procedures should incorporate the following steps ([1, 3, 4, 10](#)):

- Threat assessments should begin with collecting information from a variety of sources. This can include interviews with the student of concern, people familiar with the student, review of formal academic, disciplinary, or law enforcement records, and consideration of social media postings.
- Second, information regarding risk factors, warning behaviors, and threat mitigators should be analyzed in the context of the student of concern's age and social/emotional development to determine credibility and seriousness of the threat.
- Third, the team should respond to all substantive threats with protective actions, including protecting potential victims and implementing conflict resolution strategies.
- Fourth, the team should respond to all very serious substantive threats with mental health screenings, law enforcement involvement, and a safety plan. Risk management for a student of concern should include a carefully planned, individualized intervention strategy, or a series of interventions, resources to assist the student, and monitoring.

### **Considerations for Determination of Risk Level**

Objective and multifaceted threat assessment is always necessary when a report is received because there is no demographic profile for a targeted violence offender ([1, 4](#)). Threat assessment teams must consider the totality of risk factors, warning behaviors, stressors, precipitating events, and protective factors present in a person of concern's life. A person may be of particular concern due to individual qualities that include a unique combination of these factors. Once the team has gathered all available information, they can begin to assess level of risk. The team will determine whether a threat is *unfounded* or whether a student poses a *low, medium, or high* level of risk (See [APPENDIX H](#)) and recommend appropriate management strategies. Human judgement, applied to the totality of circumstances surrounding the threat, must drive the threat assessment team's ultimate decision on level of concern. The level of risk a student poses can change over time due to the evolving nature of warning behaviors, surrounding circumstances, and attempted interventions ([1](#)).

Expect behavioral changes in the person of concern if he/she becomes aware of the threat assessment process. At times, when persons of concern become aware of the threat assessment process, behavioral changes may occur, such as: deception, hiding behaviors, acceleration of their plan, or increased feelings of persecution. Sometimes management involves suspension or expulsion from school. When this is necessary, teams and school administrators should consider how it might affect their ability to monitor the student. Removing a student from school does not eliminate the risk to the school community. Teams should develop strategies to stay connected to the suspended or expelled student to determine whether the student's situation is deteriorating or if the behaviors of concern are escalating so that they can respond appropriately. Overall, looking at behavioral changes and their meaning is important. Therefore, the response to the intervention or support plan will likely require ongoing monitoring and revisions, as needed ([1](#)).

### **Considerations for People with Disabilities**

Threat assessments must be conducted for all students (non-disabled students and students with disabilities). Threat assessment teams often have questions regarding whether a person's disability is contributing to their potential for violence. Most people with disabilities do not commit violent acts ([1](#)). However, the likelihood of violence is slightly greater for someone with a serious mental illness, particularly psychotic disorders, than for someone who is not so afflicted ([1](#)). Even if the beliefs articulated by a person of concern seem clearly delusional,

it is important to assess how capable the person may be of acting out violently or how fixated the person is on resolving a grievance. Overall, threat assessment and threat management is an intertwined, dynamic process with mental disorder symptoms and diagnoses being several pieces in a larger puzzle (1).

Threat assessment must always be based on an individualized process (10). A determination that a person with a disability poses a direct threat should not be based on generalizations or stereotypes about the effects of a particular disability (10). Threat assessment teams should direct their attention to symptoms and behaviors, rather than formal diagnoses, for purposes of assessing violence concern (1). Students with emotional issues or developmental disorders may behave in a way that is maladaptive, but might not be concerning or threatening because the behavior is a product of their diagnosis (4). Students with disabilities may lack an understanding of the consequences of their actions. Behaviors exhibited by a student with an identified disability need to be evaluated in the context of that diagnosis and the student's known baseline of behavior (4). When considering a serious mental illness, threat managers should assign a logical level of significance to it, based upon the nature of the observed symptoms, risk factors, and/or warning behaviors (1). If a student identified as having a disability exhibits maladaptive behaviors and/or behaviors of concern, the appropriate accommodations and/or services/interventions to address these behaviors must be documented in their educational plan (e.g., 504 Plan, IEP, FBA/PBIP).

Threat assessments may be intimidating for students, particularly those with special needs. When working with a person with a disability, it is important to use proper etiquette to interact most effectively, make the person feel comfortable, and obtain accurate information. Below are some basic tips to follow (8):

- Utilize adults who are familiar with the student's unique needs and levels of functioning.
- Stress, particularly for people with mental illness, can affect the person's ability to function. In a crisis, stay calm, supportive, and ask the person what will make them feel most comfortable.
- Consider the individual's sensory needs. It may be easier for the person to function in a quiet, small environment with soft lighting and without distractions.
- Give the person your full attention. Do not interrupt them or finish their sentences. Be patient and allow the person to take their time.
- Speak directly to and make eye contact with the person with a disability, not to their companion, aide, or sign language interpreter. Respect the person's manner of communication (e.g., sign language, written vs. oral, etc.) and allow for sufficient processing time.
- Rephrase, rather than repeat, sentences that the person does not understand.
- Gauge the pace, complexity, and vocabulary of your speech according to theirs.
- For people with developmental disabilities, speak in clear sentences, using simple words and concrete, rather than abstract, concepts. Break down complex ideas into smaller parts.
- People with developmental disabilities may be anxious to please and may tell you what they think you want to hear. Questions should be phrased in a neutral way to elicit accurate information. Verify responses by repeating each question in a different way.
- People with autism and other developmental disabilities often prefer predictable situations. It can be helpful to make sure plans and the interview agenda is concrete and presented in advance. Sudden changes and transitions may be difficult.
- Consider that the student may engage in some behaviors that may be interpreted as non-compliant but may be a product of the student's disability. Utilize strategies that typically work for the child in order to gain their cooperation

# CHAPTER 3: BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT (BTA) PROCEDURES

## Overview of Broward School's BTA Process and Procedures

Broward School's BTA process involves: 1) gathering information about the incident, 2) data collection, 3) analysis, determination of risk level, and creating a support plan. Overall, the corresponding school's BTA team will utilize these procedures to evaluate the presence of factors that indicate whether violence might be a possibility and develop risk management strategies to reduce risk of violence. *EdPlan serves as the BCPS electronic database for BTA records. When a threat report is received, BTA teams must follow procedures and complete all components below on the BTA tab on EdPlan (See [APPENDIX A](#)).*

### STUDENT RISK INTAKE FORM

- ❑ Complete **Student Risk Intake Form** to assess the student's risk to self and/or others.
  - If the individual poses a threat of harm to others, follow BTA procedures below.
  - If a threat to self is identified, also follow the Suicide Risk Assessment (SRA) process.
  - Take immediate actions for imminent threats.

### BTA PART 1: INCIDENT INFORMATION

- ❑ Prior to completing BTA Part 1 on EdPlan, all team members must be added to the student of concern's team on the **EdPlan Team** and **Family/Others tab** (See [APPENDIX A](#)).
- ❑ **Incident Information:** Specific details about the incident, threat, and/or concern.

### BTA PART 2: DATA COLLECTION

- ❑ **Interviews and Sources:** Names of persons interviewed and interview details.
- ❑ **Records Review:** Review relevant records and specify person who reviewed the information.
- ❑ **Attached Sources:** Attach/store all relevant artifacts pertaining to the student's BTA.
- ❑ **Interview Documents:** Lists interview forms completed for BTA.

### BTA PART 3: ANALYSIS, RISK LEVEL, AND STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN

- ❑ **Analysis:** Answer 10 key questions to analyze *risk factors*, *warning behaviors*, and *mitigating circumstances* (consider all information collected in [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)).
- ❑ **Determination of Risk Level:** Determine risk level based on all information collected
  - *Unfounded:* Following a threat assessment, the threat could not be corroborated or substantiated.
  - *Low:* Person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence and any underlying issues can be resolved easily.
  - *Medium:* Person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence at this time but exhibits behaviors that indicate a continuing intent to harm and/or potential for future violence.
  - *High:* Person/situation appears to pose a threat of violence, exhibiting behaviors that indicate both a continuing intent to harm and efforts to acquire the capacity to carry out the plan.
- ❑ **Student Support Plan (SSP)**
  - **Mandatory Actions & Additional Actions:** Finalize action steps that will comprise the SSP

## Student Risk Intake Form

*The Student Risk Intake Form is to be utilized to document the initial report of concern. The Student Risk Intake Form is the beginning of the process and will always lead to either a behavioral threat assessment (BTA) and/or suicide risk assessment (SRA). This is to be completed by a school-based administrator using information from the individual(s) making the report.*

### STUDENT RISK INTAKE FORM

#### Information About the Incident

- Incident Type
- Today's Date
- Who reported this initial concern?
  - Reporter Name
  - Affiliation to School
  - Contact Number
- Who was this concern reported to?
  - Name of Individual
  - Affiliation to School
  - Contact Number
- Date Reported
- Time Reported (if known)
- Date Administrator Learned of Incident
- DMS Incident Number (if applicable)
- Date of Incident
- Time of Incident
- Location of Incident
- Time of Incident

- Narrative Details:** Write a narrative below detailing the incident, threat to self, threat to others, and/or concerning behavior reported. Please include the location and time of the incident, threat, or concerning behavior. Determine if there are other individuals who witnessed the student engaging in threatening, aberrant, or concerning behavior. Where threats were communicated, quote where possible, and use quotation marks to indicate direct quote. Attach original documentation, if available, later in the BTA and/or SRA processes.

- Primary Target(s):** If a threat to others has been made, has the intended target been identified?

- Witness(es):** If additional witnesses were identified by the reporter, please list them.

- Name of Witness
- Affiliation
- Contact Number

- ❑ **Intake Outcome(s)** (Check all that apply):
  - ❑ **If the individual is suspected of posing a threat of harm to others, then mobilize the threat assessment team and conduct BTA within 24 hours, starting with [BTA Part 1: Incident Information](#).**
  - ❑ **If imminent threat to others is suspected, then contact law enforcement immediately.** Document the name of the law enforcement official contacted, date/time of contact, and outcome of contact.
  - ❑ **The following actions are also mandatory:**
    - Utilize law enforcement to contain the threat and consult with the school safety team.
    - Take immediate precautions to protect potential victim(s).
    - Initiate school safety plan procedures (e.g., Code Yellow, Code Red), if warranted.
    - Consult with SRO, as appropriate, to assist in monitoring/supervising the student of concern and determining the need for law enforcement action.
    - Inform Principal or administrative designee of imminent threat. Principal will inform their supervisor.
    - Notify parents of intended victim(s) before they leave school grounds.
    - Notify parent of the person who poses the threat and attempt to enlist their support in preventing that student from carrying out the threat.
    - If the student is on campus and significant mental health concerns are noted, consult with a mental health professional and employ Baker Act procedures, if warranted.
    - Complete and submit BCPS SIU Immediate Notification Form.
    - Mobilize full threat assessment team.
    - Follow discipline policy, as indicated.
  
- ❑ **If the individual is suspected of posing a threat of harm to self, then ensure the student is medically safe, maintain adult supervision, and contact a Suicide Designee or other mental health professional to conduct Suicide Risk Assessment (SRA) immediately (2).**
- ❑ **If imminent threat to self is suspected and if the student is on campus, follow Baker Act procedures immediately. If the student is not on campus, then contact law enforcement immediately.** If a Baker Act Assessment was initiated, document the name of the Baker Act Assessment Initiator, the date/time initiated, and the outcome of the Baker Act Assessment if known (e.g., Was the student transported to the hospital? Was the student hospitalized?).
- ❑ **The following actions are also mandatory:**
  - Ensure the student is medically safe first.
  - Keep the student with an adult to provide supervision.
  - Contact the Suicide Prevention Designee or another mental health professional.
  - Contact the SRO, Local Law Enforcement or the Youth Emergency Services Team at (954) 677-3113.
  - Notify parent of the at-risk student and attempt to enlist their support in creating a safety and support plan.
  - Schools should not contact the legal guardian to take the student off campus whether it is to their home or to a hospital.
  
- ❑ If **both** a threat to self and others is selected above, **both the BTA and SRA processes** must be completed. Each situation is unique and needs to be assessed to determine which process to follow first. If you require assistance, please contact the Psychological Services Department (754) 321-3440 and/or SEDNET Department (754) 321-3421.

## BTA Part 1: Incident Information

*In addition to initial information obtained through the Student Risk Intake Form, Part 1 documents more specific details regarding the incident and/or threat report and any immediate actions taken when an imminent threat has been identified. The BTA Part 1 is to be completed by a school-based administrator using information from the individual(s) making the report. BTA Part 1-3 must be completed within **24 hours** of receiving the report.*

### **BTA PART 1: INCIDENT INFORMATION**

- Prior to completing BTA Part 1 on EdPlan, all team members must be added to the student of concern's team on the EdPlan Team and Family/Others tab (See [APPENDIX A](#)).
  
- Proceed with documenting any additional details of the incident report in each of the sections below within [EdPlan BTA Part 1](#):
  - Information about the Incident
  - Sources
  - Details
  
- If the individual is suspected of posing a threat of harm to others, mobilize the threat assessment team and conduct BTA within 24 hours, proceeding with BTA [Part 2](#) and [Part 3](#).**
  - If imminent threat to others is suspected, then contact law enforcement immediately.**
    - Document the name of the law enforcement official contacted, date/time of contact, and outcome of contact.
  - The following actions are also mandatory:**
    - Utilize law enforcement to contain the threat and consult with the school safety team.
    - Take immediate precautions to protect potential victim(s).
    - Initiate school safety plan procedures (e.g., Code Yellow, Code Red), if warranted.
    - Consult with SRO, as appropriate, to assist in monitoring/supervising the student of concern and determining the need for law enforcement action.
    - Inform Principal or administrative designee of imminent threat. Principal will inform their supervisor.
    - Notify parents of intended victim(s) before they leave school grounds.
    - Notify parent of the person who poses the threat and attempt to enlist their support in preventing that student from carrying out the threat.
    - If the student is on campus and significant mental health concerns are noted, consult with a mental health professional and employ Baker Act procedures, if warranted.
    - Complete and submit BCPS SIU Immediate Notification Form.
    - Mobilize full threat assessment team.
    - Follow discipline policy, as indicated.

*Regardless of law enforcement action, the threat assessment team must gather relevant information and complete BTA Parts 2 and 3 **within 24 hours of the administrator receiving the initial report**. If school is not in session, the school principal must immediately refer the matter to law enforcement for evaluation, and the threat assessment team must meet **no later than the end of the first day school is back in session** to consider the matter and ensure it is resolved (5).*

## BTA Part 2: Data Collection

*The school-based administrator must assemble the mandatory members of the threat assessment team. The threat assessment team shall include persons with expertise in counseling, instruction, school administration, principal, when available, and law enforcement\*. Persons with expertise in counseling include school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and family counselors. Additional personnel with knowledge of the child or circumstances may also serve as members of the team (5).*

*\*In Broward County Public Schools, Armed Safe School Officers-Marshals/Guardians are not law enforcement officers. Therefore, they do not fulfill the law enforcement requirement.*

### **BTA PART 2: DATA COLLECTION**

- Assemble BTA team and assign data collection [roles and responsibilities](#) to each team member (e.g., Who will conduct interviews? Who will review records? Who will collect artifacts?).
- Proceed with BTA procedures on EdPlan [BTA Part 2](#).

### **Interviews and Sources**

- Please indicate names of individual(s) interviewed throughout the BTA process, name of the interviewer(s), and date of interview(s).

### **Interview Documents**

- Interviews are to be entered into EdPlan. If printed forms are utilized (APPENDIX B through F), the information must be entered or uploaded as an attached source (Click on + sign next to the corresponding “Interviewee Name/Interviewed By” row within Interviews and Sources above) into EdPlan.
- This section lists BTA interview forms completed:
  - Initial Student Interview (Required)
    - Must be completed by a school-based administrator
    - Also recommended that a mental health professional be present during this interview

*The interviewer must begin by attempting to establish rapport, then use the interview questions as a guide to interview the student who either made a threat or exhibited a behavior of concern. The developmental level of the student must be considered, and the language of the questions adjusted accordingly.*

- Teacher Input Form (Required)

*Information about a student of concern’s behavior in a variety of settings is needed from each of his/her teachers. The information from the teacher(s) will be very helpful in developing a support plan for the student. The teacher(s) should answer the questions to the best of his/her knowledge, based on their own observations of the student.*

**Clinical Parent Interview** (Required for *Medium/High* Risk Levels at [Part 3 Determination of Risk Level Phase](#))

- Must be completed by mental health professional with a parent/guardian. An additional school staff member may participate, if warranted.
- Also recommended if more information is necessary at [Part 3 Analysis Phase](#)

*The interviewer must begin by attempting to establish rapport and engage the parent as an ally. Use the interview questions as a guide to interview the parent/guardian of a student who either made a threat or exhibited a behavior of concern. Try to use open-ended questions rather than leading questions and ask follow-up questions, as appropriate.*

**Clinical Student Interview** (Required for *Medium/High* Risk Levels at [Part 3 Determination of Risk Level Phase](#))

- Must be completed by mental health professional. An additional school staff member may participate, if warranted.
- Also recommended if more information is necessary at [Part 3 Analysis Phase](#)

*The purpose of this interview is to maintain the safety and well-being of the student and others. Therefore, this interview has two objectives:*

- 1) **Intervention and/or referral needs.** *Assess the student's present mental state and determine whether there are urgent mental health needs that require attention, such as risk of suicide, homicide, psychosis, or rage. Beyond these immediate needs, consider whether there are other referral or support needs.*
- 2) **Threat reduction.** *Gather information on the student's motives and intentions in making the threat in order to understand why the threat was made and identify relevant strategies or interventions that have the potential to reduce the risk of violence.*

*The interviewer must begin by attempting to establish rapport, then use the interview questions as a guide to interview the student who either made a threat or exhibited a behavior of concern. Open-ended questions, rather than leading questions, should be used. The developmental level of the student must be considered, and the language of the questions adjusted accordingly. Follow-up questions should be asked, as appropriate.*

## Records Review

- Complete a review of relevant records (i.e., cumulative file, BASIS, EdPlan, Pinnacle, TERMS, Acceliplan, etc.) and summarize any information relevant to the threat assessment process. Attach any additional relevant artifacts pertaining to the student's BTA. Specify the name of reviewer and job title for each section.

Required:

- Behavioral/Discipline History
- ESE, 504, and/or Gifted History
- Academic/Attendance History

- ❑ Other, if applicable (i.e., records indicative of [\*risk factors, warning behaviors, or mitigating factors\*](#)):
  - Classwork/Homework Assignments
  - Journal/Artwork
  - Social Media
  - Other Relevant Sources of Information (i.e., original written communication of threats, witness statements referenced in [Part 1](#), photos, documents, etc.)

- ❑ Following a records review, the team must answer the following question:
  - Has the student previously exhibited behaviors of concern or posed a threat?

### BTA Part 3: Analysis, Risk Level, And Student Support Plan

*When assessing a potential threat or concerning behavior, the threat assessment team must determine not only whether a threat has been made or communicated, but also if a person poses a danger to self or others or if they are potentially on a [pathway to violence](#). The threat assessment team must coordinate resources to provide intervention to individuals whose behavior may pose a threat to the safety of school staff or students. The threat assessment team must plan for the implementation and monitoring of appropriate interventions in order to manage or mitigate the student's risk for engaging in violence and increasing the likelihood of positive outcomes. Interventions should remain in place until the team assesses that the student is no longer in need of supports and does not pose a threat to self or others (5).*

- Assemble all mandatory BTA team members to collaboratively analyze available data, determine level of risk, and develop appropriate interventions.
- Proceed with BTA procedures on [EdPlan BTA Part 3](#).

### **BTA PART 3: ANALYSIS, RISK LEVEL, AND STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN**

#### **Analysis**

- If more information is needed to answer the questions below, a Clinical Student and/or Clinical Parent Interview ([Interview Documents](#)) should be conducted by a mental health professional.
- Answer 10 key questions to analyze potential [risk factors, warning behaviors](#) and [mitigating circumstances](#). Consider all information collected in [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#).
  1. What is the student's motive(s) and/or goal(s)?
    - Consider any previously identified grievances or concerns.
  2. Have there been communications suggesting ideas, intent, planning, or preparation for violence? Does the threat of violence appear to be transient (i.e., easily resolved and/or no real intent to harm others) or substantive (i.e., a serious intent to harm others)? Is there physical evidence (if yes, describe)?
  3. Has the student shown any inappropriate interest in, fascination, and/or identification with other incidents of mass or targeted violence?
    - Consider the student's social media posts, writing/blogs, or internet searches, types of films, tv shows, and video games the student is interested in, etc.
  4. Does the student have (or are they developing) the capacity to carry out an act of targeted violence?
    - Consider student's access to weapons/means to carry out the attack. How organized is his/her thinking/behavior/planning? If he/she practicing or rehearsing for the violence? Consider the intensity of effort expended in attempting to develop the capability?
  5. Is the student experiencing hopelessness, desperation, and/or despair? Is there a history of suicidal ideation? Does he/she perceive him/herself as a victim?
    - Consider if the student has experienced recent stressors (e.g., failure, loss, and/or loss of status) and is having difficulty coping.

6. Does the student have a positive, trusting, or sustained relationship with at least one responsible person?
  - Consider individuals at school, home, or in the community that can provide support, guidance, or assistance. Consider if the student is emotionally connected to other people or becoming more socially isolated.
  
7. Does the student see violence as an acceptable, desirable, or the only way to solve a problem? Does the peer group condone violence? Is there a history of aggression/violence/bullying?
  - Consider whether the setting around the student (e.g., friends, family members, coworkers, etc.) explicitly or implicitly support or endorse violence as a way of resolving problems or disputes. Consider whether the student appears to be expressing sentiments of finality or desperation to address his/her grievance(s).
  
8. Are the student's conversation and 'story' consistent with his/her actions?
  - Consider whether the information from interviews and from the student's own behavior confirms or disputes what the student reports.
  
9. Are other people concerned about the student's potential for violence?
  - Consider individuals in the school, family, and/or community that have expressed concerns about the student's behavior or potential for violence.
  
10. What circumstances might affect the likelihood of an escalation to violent behavior?
  - Consider any factors that might exacerbate the current situation. Consider threat assessment team interventions that may escalate, deescalate, or have no effect on movement towards violence (e.g., disciplinary actions).

### **Determination of Risk Level**

- ☐ The BTA team must consider the answers to the 10 key questions and all data collected to determine the level of risk the individual of concern poses for targeted violence toward others (Please refer to [APPENDIX H](#) for expanded definitions of risk levels):
  - *Unfounded*: Following a threat assessment, the threat could not be corroborated or substantiated.
  - *Low*: Person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence and any underlying issues can be resolved easily.
  - *\*Medium*: Person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence at this time but exhibits behaviors that indicate a continuing intent to harm and/or potential for future violence.
  - *\*High*: Person/situation appears to pose a threat of violence, exhibiting behaviors that indicate both a continuing intent to harm and efforts to acquire the capacity to carry out the plan.

\*For *Medium/High* level risk, Clinical Parent and Clinical Student Interviews ([Interview Documents](#)) must be conducted to assist with developing the Student Support Plan (SSP).

- ❑ Parent notification is required at this phase if not already contacted for imminent threat ([Part 1](#)) or clinical interviews completed for [Analysis](#). Please contact the parent and document the date, time, and name of the parent, and the outcome of the notification. Please be advised that while parental consent is not required when conducting a threat assessment, parent notification is required.

### **Student Support Plan (SSP)**

*In addition to the mandatory action steps, the team will identify responses that can help support the student of concern and make positive outcomes more likely. The actions selected will comprise the Student Support Plan (SSP). The resources and supports the student needs will differ depending on the information gathered during the assessment. Supports can range from holding a parent conference to creating a safety plan for the student. It is recommended that the original threat assessment team members help develop the SSP with the inclusion of the parent/guardian. Some actions may need to be taken immediately (e.g., safety plan) while others (e.g., IEP meetings) may need to occur at a later time.*

- ❑ Once the level of risk has been determined, the BTA team will follow the mandatory actions that correspond to the level of risk identified. Identify which individual is responsible for each mandatory action.

#### **Mandatory Actions:**

- **Unfounded**

- Contact student's parents and/or guardian.
- Additional responses, as determined by the threat assessment team.

- **Low**

- Contact student's parents and/or guardian.
- See that threat is resolved through explanation, apology, or making amends.
- Follow discipline procedures as per policy 5.8.
- Additional responses, as determined by the threat assessment team.

- **Medium**

- Contact student's parents and/or guardian.
- See that threat is resolved through explanation, apology, or making amends.
- Caution the student about the consequences of carrying out the threat.
- Notify intended victim(s)'s parents and/or guardians.
- Conduct Clinical Parent Interview.
- Conduct Clinical Student Interview.
- Consult with SRO to assist in monitoring/supervising the student and determining need for law enforcement action.
  - Document the name of the law enforcement official contacted, date/time of contact, and outcome of contact.
- Refer to CPS Team to determine need for academic/behavioral intervention and/or the need for psychological evaluation.
- Develop safety plan.
- Assign a team member to monitor student and status of intervention(s).
- Follow discipline procedures as per policy 5.8.
- Additional responses, as determined by the threat assessment team.

○ **High**

- Contact student's parents and/or guardian.
- Provide direct supervision of subject student until guardian(s) assume control.
- See that threat is resolved through explanation, apology, or making amends.
- Caution the student about the consequences of carrying out the threat.
- Notify intended victim(s)'s parents and/or guardians.
- Conduct Clinical Parent Interview.
- Conduct Clinical Student Interview.
- Refer to CPS Team to determine need for academic/behavioral intervention and/or the need for psychological evaluation.
- Consult with SRO to assist in monitoring/supervising the student and determining need for law enforcement action.
  - Document the name of the law enforcement official contacted, date/time of contact, and outcome of contact.
- Assign a team member to monitor student and status of intervention(s).
- Follow discipline procedures as per policy 5.8.
- If the threat assessment records were shared with Law Enforcement, please complete the FERPA log and contact the Privacy Officer if clarification is needed.
- Additional responses, as determined by the threat assessment team.

**Additional Actions**

- In addition to the mandatory action steps, the team will identify additional actions that can help support the student and make positive outcomes more likely. The mandatory and additional actions selected here will comprise the SSP.
- Review all actions (mandatory and additional) with individuals who did not participate in the threat assessment who work with the student.

**Meeting Participants**

- Identify the name and title of each of the BTA mandatory team members and any additional team members who participated in the threat assessment. *Reminder:* The [threat assessment team](#) shall include persons with expertise in counseling, instruction, school administration, principal, when available, and law enforcement. Persons with expertise in counseling include school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and family counselors. Additional personnel with knowledge of the child or circumstances may also serve as members of the team (5).

**Finalize BTA & Student Support Plan**

- Select COMPLETE THREAT ASSESSMENT once the BTA team has completed Parts 1 through 3 of the BTA process.  
*Please note: Finalizing this document will send alerts to the predetermined individuals for notification (e.g., Cadre Director, School Principal, etc.)*

- Print the final page of the BTA from the student's Documents tab. Team members must confirm their participation by either signing the form or indicating they participated via telephone, etc.
- Upload the scanned signature page to the Documents tab for the student. On the Documents tab for the student, you will click 'Upload External Attachments', select the scanned signature page from your computer, and then select the Behavioral Threat Assessment document that it applies to. Please refer to [APPENDIX A](#) for detailed instructions.
- Along with the electronic record in EdPlan, completed threat assessments must be documented in TERMS by a member of the BTA team. BTA Team Member will enter the TERMS L-Panel code that corresponds with the determined risk level:
  - 220- Schl Safety **Unfounded**
  - 221- Schl Safety **Low**
  - 222- Schl Safety **Medium**
  - 223- Schl Safety **High**

## Monitoring Plan

- Once the BTA and SSP have been finalized, the team is required to create a Monitoring Plan for Medium and/or High risk levels. For Low risk levels, the team may create a corresponding Monitoring Plan if warranted.
- Through the Monitoring Plan, the team identifies any actions that require continued implementation and monitoring. This includes disciplinary actions and any further actions to be taken with the student who made the threat or displayed concerning behavior. The team will also identify any actions to be taken with potential victims of the threat and/or any students impacted by the threat. The Monitoring Plan will be listed in the student's BTA dashboard.
- Identify the names and titles of individuals who participated in the development of the Monitoring Plan. It is recommended that the original BTA members, along with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student of concern also be included in its development.
- Once the team has identified further actions to be taken, they must select FINALIZE MONITORING PLAN **within 72 hours** of completing BTA Part 1-3.  
*Please note: Finalizing this document will send alerts to the predetermined individuals for notification (e.g., Cadre Director, School Principal, etc.)*
- Print the final page of the Monitoring Plan from the student's Documents tab. Team members must confirm their participation by either signing the form or indicating they participated via telephone, etc.
- Upload the scanned signature page to the Documents tab for the student. On the Documents tab for the student, you will click 'Upload External Attachments', select the scanned signature page from your computer, and then select the Monitoring Plan document that it applies to. Please refer to [APPENDIX A](#) for detailed instructions.
- The BTA team must reconvene every 30 school days (or earlier if warranted) from the development of the initial Monitoring Plan for review and modifications. Identify and select the review date in the Monitoring Plan before finalizing. Maintain and upload documentation (e.g., logs, data) for all actions selected on the Monitoring Plan.

## Maintenance of Records and Information Sharing

- Threat assessment records are considered education records and shall be maintained and released in accordance with FERPA, state statute, and School Board Policy 5100.2: Transfer, Retention, And Disposal.
- Parents have the right to inspect records if requested. If records are shared or released, the names and identifying information of individuals other than the student of concern must be redacted.
- SBBC will provide education records to other agencies when provided with signed written consent from the student's parent/guardian or student age 18 or older designating the education records that may be released.
- Pursuant to FERPA regulations and applicable state statutes, SBBC will provide education records in the following circumstances without obtaining written consent from the student's parent/guardian or student age 18 or older. School-based administrators must ensure that FERPA log is completed when appropriate. If further assistance is needed, please contact the Risk Management Privacy Officer 754-321-1914.
  - SBBC shall provide any and all educational records of individual students in a health or safety emergency, if the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of students or other individuals. When school officials determine that there is an articulable health or safety emergency, school officials will may disclose **only** information from education records to any person whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of students and other individuals.
  - Threat assessment teams shall contact other agencies involved with the student and any known service providers to share information and coordinate necessary follow up.
  - Pursuant to SB 7030, the procedure for transferring and maintaining records of students who transfer from school to school shall be prescribed by rules of the State Board of Education. The transfer of records shall occur within 3 school days. These records shall include verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns, including threat assessment evaluations and intervention services.
  - Upon request on the day of the BTA meeting, SBBC shall provide to School Resource Officers (SRO) or other Law Enforcement officers (LEO) any and all education records discussed and used during a threat assessment meeting to determine the level of threat and/or interventions to be provided to the student.
  - When conducting a BTA, the threat assessment team may obtain criminal history record information from SRO's/Law Enforcement Officers. No member of the threat assessment team shall redisclose or use such information beyond the BTA process.
  - All state and local agencies and programs (e.g., DOE, DJJ, DOH, etc.) may share with each other records or information that are confidential if the records are reasonably necessary to ensure access to appropriate services for the students and to ensure safety of the student and others.

## REFERENCES

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## APPENDIX A: EdPlan Guide



### Behavioral Threat Assessment (BTA) Quick Reference Guide

#### Be on the lookout for:

- ❖ If a field is a required, a red '(Required)' icon will appear below that field. You will not be able to finalize the assessment without completing required fields.
- ❖ Enter data into all required fields on the page, working from top-to-bottom, left-to-right. The field types you will see include drop-downs, text fields, checkboxes, radio buttons, and date selectors. Text fields with scroll-bars to the right indicate that there is more text above or below the text that can be seen at that moment.
- ❖ Additional fields can appear depending on the answers given; for example, if you answer 'Yes' to a question, additional fields may appear to elaborate on that answer.
- ❖ Save your progress when you can. There are many 'Save' buttons within each page of the process for your convenience, but you do NOT have to click each one. Clicking any 'Save' button on the page will save ALL fields on that page.
- ❖ Clicking on the Green Right Arrow button at the top of a page will save all data and check for any errors on that page. If there are no errors, then you will be taken to the next page in the process until you reach the final page.
- ❖ Clicking on the Orange Left Arrow will NOT save data and will take you back to the previous page in the process.
- ❖ Clicking the Blue Arrow on the right-hand side of the page will open a menu that allows you to navigate to other pages. Clicking on another page in this menu will navigate to the other page even if there are errors on the current page, but it will NOT save data on the current page.

#### EDPlan Main Menu

When you first log in you will be taken to the EDPlan Main Menu page.

- ❖ The Behavioral Threat Assessment widget provides a quick, visual display of the number and status of threat assessments for your students.
- ❖ The Resource Information panel at the bottom of the page contains reference documents available for you to download. Behavioral Threat Assessment related resources are located under the BTA tab.
- ❖ On the Main Menu page, hover the cursor over the 'Student' drop-down menu and select 'Student Search'.
- ❖ Search for the student who is the subject of the BTA and click on the student's name in the resulting 'Select a Student' table.

#### Student Risk Intake Form

- ❖ Once in the student profile, hover over 'Behavioral Threat Assessment' in the blue menu bar and select 'Student Risk Intake Form' from the drop-down. The Student Risk Intake Form page will display.
- ❖ In the first panel, titled 'Information about the Incident', fill in the fields with data about the incident. You may select multiple checkboxes under Affiliations to School, and you can enter 'N/A' if a contact number is not available.
- ❖ If your answer is 'Yes' to 'Has the intended target been identified?', then checkboxes and a text field will appear to specify the Primary Target(s). You may list multiple target names in the text field by separating them with a comma.

- ❖ You have the option to include witness names, affiliations, and contact numbers in case additional witnesses were identified by the reporter.
- ❖ The final part requires you to select the intake outcome. Based on the available evidence at this time, does the incident involve a threat to others, a threat to self, or both?
- ❖ Next you will see buttons to save, create a draft, and/or finalize the document at the bottom of the panel. After finalizing the document, a panel will appear titled 'Proceed to BTA and/or SRA' with a note directing you to the BTA process and/or SRA process depending on your selection(s) under 'Intake Outcome'.
- ❖ In the final panel, titled 'View Previous Documents' you can view draft or finalized documents created on this page as well as previous BTA documents for this student. Click on the document name to open and view the document.

## Behavioral Threat Assessment

### Part I

- ❖ After finalizing the Student Risk Intake Form, if the option 'Threat to others' was selected, you should click on the Behavioral Threat Assessment drop-down from the blue menu bar and select Behavioral Threat Assessment.
- ❖ Click on the blue 'Create New Threat Assessment' button and you will be taken to 'Part 1: Information About the Incident'.
- ❖ Enter information about the incident in the first panel, like the incident information you entered in the Student Risk Intake Form.
- ❖ The next panel titled 'Sources' addresses the source of the report. The 'Source of Initial Report' text field is required and is used to enter the name of the person who reported the incident. If the reporter is anonymous, then you can type 'Anonymous' in that field and select 'Anonymous' in the Affiliation to School checkbox area below.
- ❖ Document the details of the incident in the narrative text field according to the instructions on the page.
- ❖ Under the 'Details' panel, first enter a narrative about the context of the behavior.
- ❖ If your answer is 'Yes' to 'Has the intended target been identified?', then checkboxes and a text field will appear to specify the Primary Target(s). You may list multiple target names in the text field by separating them with a comma.
- ❖ If your answer is 'Yes' to 'Was law enforcement required to be contacted?', then required fields will appear to enter the date and time that law enforcement was notified. A bulleted list of instructions for cases of imminent threats to others will also appear.
- ❖ Instructions establishing a timeline that applies to all behavioral threat assessments can be seen at the bottom of the panel.
- ❖ When you have filled in all fields on the page, click the Green Right Arrow at the top of the page to check for errors and move on to Part II. If any error messages appear, you must enter the required information to correct those errors before you are able to use the Green Right Arrow to move to Part II. Remember that you can always navigate to other parts of the process regardless of errors on the current page by using the menu accessed by clicking the Blue Arrow on the right-hand side of the page.
- ❖ A 'View Previous Documents' panel appears at the bottom displaying previous documents.

### Part II

This section covers interviews and records and serves as a digital repository for behavioral threat assessment related artifacts.

- ❖ In the top panel, the first interview row prepopulates with the subject student name and role. The interviewer and date information must be entered. You can add additional interview rows by clicking the '+' button in the lower left of the panel. Interview documents can be attached to each row by clicking the '+' icon to the right and then clicking the upload arrow icon to choose a file. After choosing a file, click the 'Upload File(s)' button to attach it.
- ❖ Interviews that have been finalized in EDPlan will display in the 'Interview Documents' panel with checkboxes to associate the interview with the current behavioral threat assessment. You can view the document by clicking on the document name.

- ❖ The next panel is a review of records for the student. It also serves as a repository for any artifacts relevant to the student subject and incident. The first three items, along with their associated fields, are required. You can attach relevant files to any of the items by clicking the '+' button next to 'Attach Sources'.
- ❖ The last requirement is to answer whether the student has previously posed a threat. If your answer is 'Yes', then you must select the target(s) of the threat as well as write a narrative describing the previous incident(s).
- ❖ Click the Green Right Arrow at the top of the page to check for errors and move on to Part III.

## Part III

In Part III, the team will analyze, determine a risk level, and document action steps.

- ❖ There are 10 areas for the team to answer questions during their analysis. Please enter all available and relevant information.
- ❖ In the 'Risk' section, select the radio button under 'Determination of Risk Level' corresponding to the level determined by the team based on the available evidence.
- ❖ Enter a narrative describing parent contact in the 'Parent Notification' section following the instructions on the page. While parental consent is not required when conducting a threat assessment, parent notification is required.
- ❖ Under 'Identify Responses', one or more responses can be selected and relevant information about that response can be entered in the corresponding fields.
- ❖ Under 'Actions', the date, time, and contact name can be entered if law enforcement was notified. Also, the date and time of notification of the District Risk Management team can be entered, along with the DMS incident number if applicable.
- ❖ A list of 'Action Steps' will appear with various actions depending on the risk level selected above.
- ❖ Required 'Meeting Participant' names are entered below, and additional meeting participants can be entered by clicking the '+' button.
- ❖ When all required fields have been entered on all pages, you can finalize the threat assessment by clicking the 'Complete Threat Assessment' button. NOTE: It can take around 10 seconds for the finalization process to complete, at which point you will be automatically returned to the BTA main page for the student.

## Monitoring Plan

If the team determines that the student requires an ongoing Monitoring Plan, you can create one by clicking the 'Open' button under the Monitoring Plan column on the BTA dashboard for the student.

- ❖ Enter the Begin Date of the Monitoring Plan.
- ❖ Enter any Discipline information that is relevant.
- ❖ Select any Further Actions with the student making the threat and any potential victims, as well as date and narrative information where applicable.
- ❖ Required 'Meeting Participant' names are entered below, and additional meeting participants can be entered by clicking the '+' button.
- ❖ Enter the Meeting Date and the Review Date. This cannot be more than 30 days in the future as a Monitoring Plan must be reviewed every 30 days.
- ❖ When all required fields have been completed, you can finalize the plan by clicking the 'Finalize Monitoring Plan' button. A button will appear for designated users to acknowledge the monitoring plan.
- ❖ Note: Designated users can determine the plan is not necessary and select 'Plan Not Needed' to delete the plan.

### Monitoring Plan Reviews:

- ❖ When it is time to review a Monitoring Plan for a student, navigate to the BTA dashboard for the student by clicking 'Behavioral Threat Assessment' in the blue student menu bar.

- ❖ At the bottom of the page for that plan under 'Continuing Actions' you have the option to continue the plan with revisions, continue with no revisions, or close the monitoring plan. You must enter the date reviewed, and if you choose to continue the plan, you must enter the next review date before clicking 'Update Monitoring Plan'.
- ❖ If the plan is being continued, all actions and data from the previous monitoring plan will be pulled into the new version. These fields will be editable if you chose to continue the plan with revisions. In either case, designated users can then acknowledge the monitoring plan with the new review date in place.

## Interviews Tabs

Designated users will have the ability to create interview documents with the option of saving a draft before finalizing each interview. Interview pages can be accessed by hovering over 'Behavioral Threat Assessment' in the blue menu bar and clicking on the desired interview in the drop-down.

- ❖ Interviews:
  - Initial Student Interview
  - Clinical Student Interview
  - Clinical Parent Interview
  - Teacher Input Form
- ❖ You must complete all required fields at the top of the page and answer all questions before finalizing an interview document. Once an interview document is finalized, it cannot be edited.
- ❖ Previous interview documents can be viewed in the documents panel at the bottom of each interview page.

## Adding or Editing Parent/SRO/Non-EDPlan User Information

- ❖ Adding parents or other non-EDPlan users (like SRO's) can be done within a student's record.
- ❖ Hover over the 'EDPlan Team' drop-down menu in the student's blue menu bar and click on 'Family/Others'.
- ❖ To add a new person to the team, click the 'Add New Parent/Guardian' button.
- ❖ You must enter information into the required Full Name and Relationship fields. Ex. Relationship may be 'Law Enforcement Official'.
- ❖ Click 'Update the Database' to save. Details can be edited from the Parents/Guardians page or by clicking the 'Details' button for that person on that page. Be sure to click 'Update the Database' to save any changes.

## Adding Contacts

- ❖ You have the ability to add contacts (communications) within a student's profile; use this to document conversations or notifications to various parties as needed.
- ❖ Hover over the "EDPlan Team" dropdown menu and select "Contacts".
- ❖ A new page will open and allow you to create a new parent contact or non-parent contact.
- ❖ Selecting either choice will open a new page of blank fields to enter the contact's name and other relevant information about the encounter.
- ❖ Contacts will be stored in the system indefinitely, and a document can be created listing all contact encounters by clicking the 'Print Contact Logs' or 'Export Contact Logs' buttons on this page.

## Uploading External Attachments

- ❖ Once in the student's profile, click on the tab in the blue menu labeled "Documents"

- ❖ To upload an external attachment (e.g. a signature page), select the “Upload External Attachments” button at the BOTTOM of the page. DO NOT select “Upload External Documents”, as this is used to add an entirely new document to the student’s record.
- ❖ A new page opens and you will see a list of documents; select the document you want to attach a signature page to, click ‘Choose File’ to select a file from your computer, then click the ‘Upload File’ button.
- ❖ You will now see a link for the attached file next to the document you selected on the “Documents” tab, as well as the date it was attached.

## Support Troubleshooting

- ❖ If you are experiencing any issues with the system and its functionality in general, please select the “Send us a Message Link”.
- ❖ This is located at the upper right-hand corner of the page next to “Log Out”.
- ❖ Once you click the link, a pop out window will appear on the bottom right corner of the screen with your name and email pre-populated.
- ❖ Select a ‘Question Type’ from the dropdown menu (please select the specific part/page of EDPlan that is not functioning), the student if applicable, a subject line to summarize the issue, and a larger narrative box for issue description. Note: Deletion Requests, Threat Assessment Related, and adding an attachment are optional.
- ❖ NOTE: PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE STUDENT INFORMATION IN THE “SUBJECT” FIELD.

## APPENDIX B: Student Risk Intake Form

*Forms are to be entered into EdPlan. If printed forms are utilized, the information must be entered or uploaded as an attached source into EdPlan.*

*The Student Risk Intake Form is to be utilized to document the initial report of concern. The Student Risk Intake Form is the beginning of the process and will always lead to either a behavioral threat assessment (BTA) and/or suicide risk assessment (SRA). This is to be completed by a school-based administrator using information from the individual(s) making the report.*

### STUDENT RISK INTAKE FORM (Page 1 of 3)

#### INFORMATION ABOUT THE INCIDENT

**Incident Type:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Today's Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Who reported this initial concern?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Affiliation to School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Who was this concern reported to?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Affiliation to School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Reported:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time Reported:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Administrator Learned of Incident:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DMS Incident Number (if applicable):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Incident:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time of Incident:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location of Incident:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Write a narrative below detailing the incident, threat to self, threat to others, and/or concerning behavior reported. Please include the location and time of the incident, threat, or concerning behavior. Determine if there are other individuals who witnessed the student engaging in threatening, aberrant, or concerning behavior. Where threats were communicated, quote where possible, and use quotation marks to indicate direct quote. Attach original documentation, if available, later in the BTA and/or SRA processes.*

**STUDENT RISK INTAKE FORM (Page 2 of 3)**

**Narrative:**

**If a threat to others has been made, has the intended target been identified? (Circle One):** Yes    No

**Primary Target(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Target Names:** \_\_\_\_\_

**WITNESSES (if applicable): Name of Witness:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Affiliation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Intake Outcome:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Law Enforcement Official Contacted:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Law Enforcement Contact:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time of Law Enforcement Contact:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Outcome of Law Enforcement Contact:** \_\_\_\_\_

## STUDENT RISK INTAKE FORM (Page 3 of 3)

**Intake Outcome(s)** (Check all that apply):

- If the individual is suspected of posing a threat of harm to others, then mobilize the threat assessment team and conduct BTA within 24 hours, starting with [BTA Part 1: Incident Information](#).**
- If imminent threat to others is suspected, then contact law enforcement immediately.** Document the name of the law enforcement official contacted, date/time of contact, and outcome of contact.
- The following actions are also mandatory:**
  - Utilize law enforcement to contain the threat and consult with the school safety team.
  - Take immediate precautions to protect potential victim(s).
  - Initiate school safety plan procedures (e.g., Code Yellow, Code Red), if warranted.
  - Consult with SRO, as appropriate, to assist in monitoring/supervising the student of concern and determining the need for law enforcement action.
  - Inform Principal or administrative designee of imminent threat. Principal will inform their supervisor.
  - Notify parents of intended victim(s) before they leave school grounds.
  - Notify parent of the person who poses the threat and attempt to enlist their support in preventing that student from carrying out the threat.
  - If the student is on campus and significant mental health concerns are noted, consult with a mental health professional and employ Baker Act procedures, if warranted.
  - Complete and submit BCPS SIU Immediate Notification Form.
  - Mobilize full threat assessment team.
  - Follow discipline policy, as indicated.
- If the individual is suspected of posing a threat of harm to self, then ensure the student is medically safe, maintain adult supervision, and contact a Suicide Prevention Designee (SPD) or other mental health professional to conduct Suicide Risk Assessment (SRA) immediately (2).**
- If imminent threat to self is suspected and if the student is on campus, follow Baker Act procedures immediately. If the student is not on campus, then contact law enforcement immediately.** If a Baker Act Assessment was initiated, document the name of the Baker Act Assessment Initiator, the date/time initiated, and the outcome of the Baker Act Assessment if known (e.g., Was the student transported to the hospital? Was the student hospitalized?).
- The following actions are also mandatory:**
  - Ensure the student is medically safe first.
  - Keep the student with an adult to provide supervision.
  - Contact the SPD or another mental health professional.
  - Contact the SRO, Local Law Enforcement or the Youth Emergency Services at (954) 677-3113.
  - Notify parent of the at-risk student and attempt to enlist their support in creating a safety and support plan.
  - Schools should not contact the legal guardian to take the student off campus whether it is to their home or to a hospital.
- If both a threat to self and others is selected above, both the BTA and SRA processes must be completed. Each situation is unique and needs to be assessed to determine which process to follow first. If you require assistance, please contact the Psychological Services Department (754) 321-3440 and/or SEDNET Department (754) 321-3421.**

## APPENDIX C: BTA Incident Information Form

Forms are to be entered into EdPlan. If printed forms are utilized, the information must be entered or uploaded as an attached source into EdPlan.

In addition to initial information obtained through the Student Risk Intake Form, Part 1 documents more specific details regarding the incident and/or threat report and any immediate actions taken when an imminent threat has been identified. The BTA Part 1 is to be completed by a school-based administrator using information from the individual(s) making the report. BTA Part 1-3 must be completed within **24 hours** of receiving the report.

### INCIDENT INFORMATION FORM (Page 1 of 3)

#### INFORMATION ABOUT THE INCIDENT

Incident Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Who reported this initial concern? \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation to School: \_\_\_\_\_

Who was this concern reported to? \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation to School: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Reported: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Reported: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Administrator Learned of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

DMS Incident Number (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Write a narrative below detailing the incident, threat to self, threat to others, and/or concerning behavior reported. Please include the location and time of the incident, threat, or concerning behavior. Determine if there are other individuals who witnessed the student engaging in threatening, aberrant, or concerning behavior. Where threats were communicated, quote where possible, and use quotation marks to indicate direct quote. Attach original documentation, if available, later in the BTA and/or SRA processes.

**INCIDENT INFORMATION FORM (Page 2 of 3)**

**Narrative:**

**What was the context for the behavior? What was happening at the time and/or just before?**

**If a threat to others has been made, has the intended target been identified? (Circle One):** Yes    No

**Primary Target(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Target Names:** \_\_\_\_\_

**WITNESSES (if applicable): Name of Witness:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Affiliation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Intake Outcome:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Law Enforcement Official Contacted:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Law Enforcement Contact:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time of Law Enforcement Contact:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Outcome of Law Enforcement Contact:** \_\_\_\_\_

## INCIDENT INFORMATION FORM (Page 3 of 3)

- If the individual is suspected of posing a threat of harm to others, mobilize the threat assessment team and conduct BTA within 24 hours, proceeding with BTA [Part 2](#) and [Part 3](#).**
  - If imminent threat to others is suspected, then contact law enforcement immediately.**
    - Document the name of the law enforcement official contacted, date/time of contact, and outcome of contact.
  - The following actions are also mandatory:**
    - Utilize law enforcement to contain the threat and consult with the school safety team.
    - Take immediate precautions to protect potential victim(s).
    - Initiate school safety plan procedures (e.g., Code Yellow, Code Red), if warranted.
    - Consult with SRO, as appropriate, to assist in monitoring/supervising the student of concern and determining the need for law enforcement action.
    - Inform Principal or administrative designee of imminent threat. Principal will inform their supervisor.
    - Notify parents of intended victim(s) before they leave school grounds.
    - Notify parent of the person who poses the threat and attempt to enlist their support in preventing that student from carrying out the threat.
    - If the student is on campus and significant mental health concerns are noted, consult with a mental health professional and employ Baker Act procedures, if warranted.
    - Complete and submit BCPS SIU Immediate Notification Form.
    - Mobilize full threat assessment team.
    - Follow discipline policy, as indicated.

*Regardless of law enforcement action, the threat assessment team must gather relevant information and complete BTA Parts 2 and 3 **within 24 hours of the administrator receiving the initial report**. If school is not in session, the school principal must immediately refer the matter to law enforcement for evaluation, and the threat assessment team must meet **no later than the end of the first day school is back in session** to consider the matter and ensure it is resolved ([5](#)).*

## APPENDIX D: BTA Initial Student Interview

*Interviews are to be entered into EdPlan. If printed forms are utilized, the information must be entered or uploaded as an attached source (Click on + sign next to the corresponding "Interviewee Name/Interviewed By" row within Interviews and Sources above) into EdPlan.*

### INITIAL STUDENT INTERVIEW (Page 1 of 2)

Student Name:	Student ID:	Grade:
School Name:	Date of Interview:	
Interviewer Name:	Interviewer Title:	
Interviewer #2 Name: (optional)	Interviewer #2 Title: (optional)	

**Directions:** *Must be completed by a school-based administrator. It is recommended that a mental health professional also be present. Please begin by attempting to establish rapport, then use these interview questions as a guide to interview the student who either made a threat or exhibited a behavior of concern. Consider the developmental level of the student and adjust the language of the questions accordingly.*

1. What is your understanding of why I/we want to talk to you? (If the student does not reply or does not know, explain the perceived threat or behavior that led to this interview.)
2. I need to find out the specifics of this situation from your point of view. Give me your description of what happened, who was involved, and what you said or did. (Probe for more specific details such as method, plausibility, intended victim(s), where, when, and how.)
3. What was the reason you said/did that? (Probe to find out if there is a prior conflict/history to this threat/behavior.)
4. What are the steps you have taken or the plans you have made toward carrying out the threat?



## APPENDIX E: BTA Teacher Input Form

*Interviews are to be entered into EdPlan. If printed forms are utilized, the information must be entered or uploaded as an attached source (Click on + sign next to the corresponding "Interviewee Name/Interviewed By" row within Interviews and Sources above) into EdPlan.*

### TEACHER INPUT FORM (Page 1 of 2)

Student Name:  
School Name:  
Teacher Name:

Student ID:  
Date of Completion:  
Subject Taught:

Grade:

**Directions:** *Some concerns have been raised about this student. To assist us in providing supports for this student, we need information from each of his/her teachers about his/her behavior in a variety of settings. The information you provide will be very helpful in developing a support plan for this student. Based on your observations of this student, please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge.*

1. Has the student made a direct or indirect threat (verbal, nonverbal, or written) to your knowledge?
2. Do you have reason to suspect the student has been involved with drugs or alcohol? If yes, please explain.
3. Does the student display aggressive or disruptive classroom behavior? If yes, please explain.
4. Does the student have poor school achievement, poor school attendance, or declining school productivity?
5. Does the student have difficulty with social skills or poor peer relations?

**TEACHER INPUT FORM (Page 2 of 2)**

6. Does the student have difficulty controlling impulses, anger, or other emotions?
7. Has the student displayed a fascination with weapons or acts of violence?
8. Has the student been found with violent drawings or writings?
9. Does the student externalize blame? Has the student displayed an inability to accept criticism?
10. Are peers, and/or staff, fearful of the student?
11. Has the student displayed recent drastic changes in behavior?
12. Does the student appear sad or anxious?
13. Are there indications that the student has engaged in, or been the target of, bullying?
14. Are you aware of any current stressors the student may be experiencing? If yes, please describe.
15. Please list any concerns you may have regarding the student or if you have any additional information you feel would be helpful.

## APPENDIX F: BTA Clinical Parent Interview

*Interviews are to be entered into EdPlan. If printed forms are utilized, the information must be entered or uploaded as an attached source (Click on + sign next to the corresponding "Interviewee Name/Interviewed By" row within Interviews and Sources above) into EdPlan.*

### CLINICAL PARENT INTERVIEW (Page 1 of 8)

Student Name:	Student ID:	Grade:
School Name:	Date of Interview:	
Parent/Guardian Name:		
Interviewer Name:	Interviewer Title:	
Interviewer #2 Name: (optional)	Interviewer #2 Title: (optional)	

**Directions:** *A mental health professional must complete this interview with the parent/guardian. An additional school staff member may participate, if warranted. Please make every effort to establish rapport and engage the parent as an ally. Explain to the parent that the purpose of the interview is to help their child be safe and successful at school. Please use this as a guide to interview the parent/guardian and try to use open-ended questions rather than leading questions. As follow-up questions, as appropriate.*

### RAPPORT BUILDING AND INTERVIEW INTRODUCTION

1. As you know, we are quite concerned about (Student Name) and the current situation. What is your view on what is happening? (If the parent/guardian is unaware of the concerns, explain the perceived threat or the behavior that led to this interview?)
2. Has your child behaved this way/talked about things like this before? (Ask about previous school concerns.)

### SOCIAL AND SCHOOL FACTORS

1. How does he/she appear to get along with his/her peers? Who are his/her close friends? Does he/she seem to have a large or small group of friends? Has his/her social group changed recently? Does he/she maintain long-term friendships or seem to frequently change his/her friends? How do you feel about your child's choice of friends?

## **CLINICAL PARENT INTERVIEW (Page 2 of 8)**

2. How do you feel about your child's choice of friends?
  
3. Does he/she appear to be isolating himself/herself from others?
  
4. Has your child reported being teased/intimidated/rejected or bullied in some other way?
  
5. Are you aware of any relationships break (with a girl/boyfriend or best friend) in your child's life?
  
6. Does he/she currently participate in any community/extracurricular activities? If no, did he/she used to belong to any groups/teams?
  
7. Do you know how (Student Name) is doing in school in terms of grades? Behavior?
  
8. What are your child's feelings towards school? Have you noticed any changes in your child's attitude towards school in the past several months? Does your child appear to be apathetic towards school? Has he/she been having difficulties at school?

### **FAMILY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATIONS**

1. Who lives in the home?

**CLINICAL PARENT INTERVIEW (Page 3 of 8)**

2. How has he/she been getting along with all family members? (Ask about parent/guardian(s) and siblings.)
  
3. How is discipline typically handled in your home? Are there differences of opinion?
  
4. How much time do you typically spend with your child during the week? What do you typically do together?
  
5. Is there adult supervision available after school and on weekends?
  
6. What music does your child listen to? What does he/she like to watch on TV/phone/computer? Do you know what they do on the internet/social media?
  
7. Does he/she display a high interest level in violent video games, movies, music, television, or internet sites? If so, please explain.
  
8. Has your child shown an interest in any reports of targeted violence in the media, extremist groups, or murder?
  
9. Do you supervise his/her television and internet use?

## **CLINICAL PARENT INTERVIEW (Page 4 of 8)**

10. Does your family own a weapon? Does your child have access to any weapons in the home? Outside of the family home? Does your child have experience with weapons? Does your child have an interest or fascination with weapons? If yes to any of these questions, please describe.
  
11. Are there any important events that have affected you family/child? (Ask about any recent/pending changes such as: move, divorce/separation, losses, financial/employment status, or any involvement with law enforcement/the courts.)
  
12. Has your child experienced any disappointment or setbacks? (Ask about disappointments that may include family relations, intimate/peer relations, school/occupational, self-image status.)
  
13. Has your child ever been a victim of abuse?
  
14. Has your child been exposed to violence in the home or in the neighborhood? If yes, please explain.

### **HISTORY OF VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR**

1. Has there been any physical or verbal aggression displayed by your child with peers or family members?
  
2. Does your child tend to do things without considering the consequences of his/her actions first? (To evaluate impulsivity.)

### **CLINICAL PARENT INTERVIEW (Page 5 of 8)**

3. How does your child typically express anger? (Give examples such as acting out, passive-aggressive behaviors, and internalizing behaviors.)
  
4. Has your child ever engaged in any troubling behavior, such as following/stalking/or harassing someone? If yes, please describe.
  
5. Has your child displayed destructive behavior towards property at home or in the community?
  
6. Has your child intentionally inflicted harm on any animals or other children? If yes, please describe.
  
7. Do you have any suspicions that your child may be using drugs or alcohol?
  
8. Has your child been involved with law enforcement or the courts in the past?

### **EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH FUNCTIONING**

1. What has your child's mood been like in the past few weeks?
  
2. Has your child been unusually nervous/anxious? Irritable/short-tempered? If so, please describe.

### CLINICAL PARENT INTERVIEW (Page 6 of 8)

3. Has your child had problems with sleep? Appetite? Energy level? Concentration? If yes, please describe.
  
4. Has your child had any hospitalizations or any serious illness? Have they had any recent medical treatment or are they taking medications? Do they have any current or past medical diagnoses?
  
5. Has your child ever seen a therapist/counselor due to their mood/behavior? (Ask about school and/or community providers.) Has your child ever been hospitalized under the Baker Act?
  
6. Has your child displayed any self-injurious behaviors or made suicide threats?
  
7. Does he/she appear to overreact to criticism and/or authority? Does your child demonstrate severe rage for seemingly minor reasons?
  
8. Have you observed any behaviors that you thought were very odd or ever bizarre? (Probe for possible symptoms of psychosis [e.g., hallucinations, delusional beliefs].)
  
9. Is there any history of mental health concerns on either side of the family?

**PARENT'S PERCEPTION OF THE THREAT/CONCERNING BEHAVIOR**

1. Has your child expressed feelings of being mistreated and/or have they had any longstanding conflict (e.g., grudges, grievances) with a peer, teacher, or other individual? If yes, please describe.
  
2. Has your child told you of any plans or a desire to harm or kill others? If yes, has he/she shared a specific plan?
  
3. What do you think caused your child to make the reported threat/engage in the behavior that caused the school to become concerned?
  
4. Has your child made any threats to harm others in the past?
  
5. Have you seen any drawing, writings, internet posts (e.g., poems, letters, social media comments) by your child that were violent or threatening in nature? If yes, please describe.
  
6. Does the threat or reported behavior seem consistent with his/her behaviors/actions as of late?
  
7. How concerned are you that your child might follow through with violent actions? What past behaviors or incidents support your concern?
  
8. What do you think can help decrease the likelihood of him/her attempting to follow through with violent action? Is there anything that you feel might increase the likelihood?

**IDENTIFICATION OF SUPPORT RESOURCES AND INTERVIEW CLOSURE**

1. Who does your child have to talk to or assist him/her when having problems? Will these individuals be available to him/her with this current situation? (Determine what supports or stabilizing factors may be available or in place, such as mental health professions, peer groups, family support, religious groups, etc.)
  
2. Are there any steps that you think can be taken by the school, yourself, or (Student Name) to make things better for him/her? (Let them know their concerns are taken seriously and help the parent/guardian come up with strategies to address his/her child's needs.)

*Close with a statement that describes short-term next steps and express gratitude to the parent/guardian(s) for their support and follow through. You may wish to inform the parent/guardian that if any emergency situation comes up at home, they should immediately contact law enforcement and/or Mobile Crisis/Youth Emergency Services at 954-677-3113.*

## APPENDIX G: BTA Clinical Student Interview

*Interviews are to be entered into EdPlan. If printed forms are utilized, the information must be entered or uploaded as an attached source (Click on + sign next to the corresponding "Interviewee Name/Interviewed By" row within Interviews and Sources above) into EdPlan.*

### CLINICAL STUDENT INTERVIEW (Page 1 of 10)

Student Name:	Student ID:	Grade:
School Name:	Date of Interview:	
Interviewer Name:	Interviewer Title:	
Interviewer #2 Name: (optional)	Interviewer #2 Title: (optional)	

**Directions:** *A mental health professional must complete this interview with the student of concern. An additional school staff member may participate, if warranted. The purpose of this interview is to maintain the safety and well-being of the student and others. Therefore, this interview has two objectives:*

- 1) **Intervention and/or referral needs.** *Assess the student's present mental state and determine whether there are urgent mental health needs that require attention, such as risk of suicide, homicide, psychosis, or rage. Beyond these immediate needs, consider whether there are other referral or support needs.*
- 2) **Threat reduction.** *Gather information on the student's motives and intentions in making the threat in order to understand why the threat was made and identify relevant strategies or interventions that have the potential to reduce the risk of violence.*

*Please begin by attempting to establish rapport, then use these interview questions as a guide to interview the student who either made a threat or exhibited a behavior of concern. Try to use open-ended questions rather than leading questions. Consider the developmental level of the student and adjust the language of the questions accordingly. Ask follow-up questions, as appropriate.*

### RAPPORT BUILDING AND INTERVIEW INTRODUCTION

1. What is your understanding of why you have been asked to meet with me?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. We are concerned about behavior that has been reported. What's your side of it?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What is your understanding of why the adults at school are concerned?

## CLINICAL STUDENT INTERVIEW (Page 2 of 10)

*In order to help me better understand this situation and be able to help you, I am going to ask you some more questions.*

### **SOCIAL AND PEER FACTORS**

1. What do you typically do after school? Do you have any hobbies or interests?
2. Are you involved with any groups or teams outside of school? If not, why?
3. What are your favorite movies/video games/TV shows/music groups/internet sites? [Look for themes of violence or interest/fascination with mass shootings or other targeted violent attacks.]
4. Do you have any social media accounts? What kind of pages or people do you follow? [Look for themes of violence or interest/fascination with mass shootings or other targeted violent attacks.]
5. Who are your friends? How long have you been friends with them? Do you have a best friend? How long have you been best friends? Have you had a problem with any of your friends recently?
6. How would you describe the kids at your school? Are there any groups of kids that you don't get along with? [To identify potential targets]

## **CLINICAL STUDENT INTERVIEW (Page 3 of 10)**

1. How would your classmates describe you? Is that an accurate description? Do you feel they misunderstand you?
2. Do you get teased or bullied by other children? Is there anyone who makes you feel afraid? [Probe for concerns at school and outside of school.]
3. Have you recently broken up with a girlfriend or boyfriend? Have you recently ended a good friendship? If yes to either, what happened?
4. Have you been pulling away from your friends or do you feel isolated recently?

### **FAMILY, SCHOOL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATIONS**

1. Who do you live with (parent/guardian)? How well do they know you? What are their work hours? [These questions will provide information regarding supervision available to child.]
2. Do you do any family activities together? How often? What do you typically do?
3. Does anyone in your family seem sad or angry?



## CLINICAL STUDENT INTERVIEW (Page 5 of 10)

11. How do your parents/guardians react to your school performance? Do you worry that your parents/guardians will punish you for doing poorly in school?

### HISTORY OF VIOLENT OR AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

1. Have you ever hurt an animal while playing around? Have you ever hurt any other animals on purpose? [If yes, ask for details.]
2. Have you ever damaged your own property or someone else's property? [If yes, ask for details.]
3. Do you ever pick on or bully other children? [If yes, ask for details.]
4. Have you ever seen or heard of someone being seriously hurt? Have you ever seen or heard of violence in your neighborhood? How did that make you feel?
5. Have you ever purposely hurt someone in the past? [If yes, ask for details.]





## CLINICAL STUDENT INTERVIEW (Page 8 of 10)

3. What makes you angry? Are you angry at anyone right now? What do you do when you get angry? Has your temper ever gotten you in trouble?
  
4. Do you have any difficulties with sleeping, eating, or concentrating? [If yes, ask for details.]
  
5. Do you ever feel lonely? Do you prefer to be alone? [If yes, ask for details.]
  
6. Do you blame yourself for things that happen?
  
7. How do you handle or deal with stress or anger? [Inquire about coping skills such as journaling, exercise, reaching out to social supports, use of drugs/alcohol, etc.]
  
8. Have you had any unusual experiences lately? Have you heard things that others cannot hear or seen things that others cannot see? [Probe for delusions/hallucinations and details related to those symptoms.]





## APPENDIX H: BTA Determination of Risk Level

*The points for consideration which are listed below are not intended to be an exhaustive list. Each case involves many pieces of information and assessors should consider the totality of facts and circumstances. No individual factor listed below should be determinative in arriving at a level of concern. Conversely, it is not necessary for each factor to be present in a case before assessors are able to assign the corresponding level of concern.*

<p><b>UNFOUNDED:</b> <i>Following a threat assessment, the threat could not be corroborated or substantiated.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ False accusation of a threat</li> <li>➤ Due to the lack of supporting evidence (e.g., documentation, witness statements, etc.) the student was not deemed to have made or pose a threat</li> </ul>
<p><b>LOW THREAT RISK:</b> <i>Person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence and any underlying issues can be resolved easily.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A communication has been received or reported that causes some concern about potential for violence; it may be confusing, unrealistic or <i>improbable</i> (e.g., “I will plant a nuclear bomb at work.”) or make no allusions to violence at all.</li> <li>➤ A clear <i>grievance</i> may not be stated or implied. If the person seems to have developed a grievance, it may not be to the level where violence appears justified in addressing it.</li> <li>➤ The threat or other behavior may serve as venting rather than actually warning of future predatory violence.</li> <li>➤ Even though the individual may have made a threat, it may appear through his/her actions and communications that he/she appears to be seeking a peaceful resolution of an issue.</li> <li>➤ The communication or person may not have offered details to establish <i>credibility</i> or <i>viability</i> of the threat.</li> <li>➤ The communication may reference information that is <i>inaccurate</i> about the target, suggesting a lack of inside knowledge.</li> <li>➤ The person is unlikely to have access to the means or the potential target in order to carry out the threat.</li> <li>➤ The communication is <i>vague</i> and <i>indirect</i> or may suggest a lack of overall commitment to follow through on a threat.</li> <li>➤ The method of delivery is <i>indirect</i> (e.g., anonymous letter versus a letter hand-delivered to the target).</li> <li>➤ Acting out violently may not currently be an acceptable means for him/her to achieve justice; this may be influenced by moral codes, spiritual/religious beliefs, a fear of legal sanctions, or other reasons.</li> <li>➤ There does not appear to be a pressing time/deadline for resolution.</li> <li>➤ The person may have evidenced few to no warning behaviors.</li> <li>➤ The person may not have a significant number of <i>risk factors</i> and <i>protective factors</i> (e.g., parental support, counseling, peer relationships) are in place that mitigate the risk of violence.</li> <li>➤ <b>Low</b> level suggests that the concern for future violence is low. Additional data gathering may be desirable and monitoring for any changes in violence risk factors or warning behaviors may be appropriate.</li> </ul>

### **MEDIUM THREAT RISK:**

*Person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence at this time but exhibits behaviors that indicate a continuing intent to harm, and/or potential for future violence, and/or exhibits other concerning behavior that requires intervention.*

- The person may have a *grievance* and is more likely to be considering violence as an option for resolution or as a means to achieve justice.
- There may be no sense of urgency in the communication; the person may still be pursuing peaceful alternatives to resolving his/her grievance. If a deadline is given, it may allow time for the threat assessment team to respond and find a resolution to the grievance.
- The person may not have made a decision about whether to act out violently (e.g., “I don’t want to hurt them, but no one is helping me.”)
- The person may have surpassed some of the low level of *concern factors*, or there is an absence of significant *protective factors* (e.g., parental support, peer relationships).
- 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 *stressors* or *risk factors* (e.g. acting out violently, disappointment/failure, 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.
- 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.
- This **Medium** level suggests that violence could possibly occur, although the situation is not urgent. Violence cannot be ruled out. The threat assessment team may not have complete or accurate information to guide the outcome of the assessment. Monitoring and additional actions are necessary or desirable.

### HIGH THREAT RISK:

*Person/situation appears to pose a threat of violence, exhibiting behaviors that indicate both a continuing intent to harm and efforts to acquire the capacity to carry out the plan, and may also exhibit other concerning behavior that requires intervention.*

- 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 language of the threat 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.
- The person has the means and ability to carry out the threat.
- The person has conducted research on the target and has necessary inside, personal, or background information on potential victim(s). It strongly suggests he/she has the knowledge necessary to approach and attack.
- The communication may indicate directions are being received from a higher power or that the person is experiencing delusions that encourage violent action.
- The communication may be *directed* and *fixated* on a cause or a person. There is a *terminal* theme to the communication, as if the relationship between the communicator and his/her target will soon be over.
- The individual may convey that action may be taken to end the *grievance* and achieve resolution.
- The person may feel violence is the only available method of achieving justice and/or appears willing to accept all negative consequences resulting from violence.
- Highly concerning communications do not generally name the precise time, place, or target in advance. However, communications may reference a time/deadline or suggest the person is losing patience.
- The person appears to have begun preparing or finalizing *plans* for a violent act. Such *preparations* may include: weapons acquisition or training/practice that are out of character for the individual and an escalation from his/her norm; evidence suggests increased focus and time spent on research and planning (e.g., surveillance, suspicious investigating, or approaches to the target location.)
- The person may have virtually or actually *rehearsed* the attack as a means to ensure he/she has both the ability and the internal will to commit violence.
- The person has exhibited highly concerning *warning behaviors*. Suicidal/homicidal ideation is likely to be present.
- 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 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/her abilities to cope with them appear diminished.
- This **High** level of concern suggests the person of concern is reaching a critical point on a pathway to violence from which he/she perceives it may be difficult to turn back. This level suggests that violence is possible and could occur within the near future following any precipitating events. Immediate and continuing attention is required from threat management resources to ensure violence does not occur.

### IMMINENT THREAT RISK:

*The persons/behavior/situation poses a clear and immediate threat of serious violence towards self or others that requires containment and action to protect identified or identifiable target(s) and may also exhibit behaviors that require immediate intervention.*

- The communication suggests that *protective factors* that prevent violence are diminishing (e.g., loss of counseling, mentorship, peer relationships). Circumstances in the person's life may be rapidly changing so as to force the action and a timeframe may be indicated.
- The communication suggests the person perceives his/her window of opportunity for an attack to be rapidly closing due to any number of *circumstances, stressors, or precipitating events*.
- The communication itself indicates that a *breach* or *attack* has begun or been completed; may indicate *intent* to die as a result of the attack; appears intended to claim credit for an attack, attempts to provide rationale for an attack or establish a legacy.
- Some *warning behaviors* demonstrated by a person of high concern could be associated with possible *imminence*, such as energy burst behaviors (e.g., preparing equipment, conducting spot checks of a target location, buying needed supplies, and/or repeated posting online), last resort behaviors, end of life planning, sudden cessation of medications or other substance use, and sudden withdrawal from usual interests, activities, or people.
- **Imminent** level of threat risk indicates that violence is likely to occur within hours or weeks and all efforts should focus on locating, containing, and neutralizing the threat of violence. When indications of imminence are observed, a law enforcement response is warranted to disrupt behaviors that may be leading to violence.

## APPENDIX I: District Resources & Contact Information

For the most current version of this manual and other current mental health resources, please use the <i>BCPS Mental Health Portal</i> located at:  <a href="http://bcps-mentalhealth.com/">http://bcps-mentalhealth.com/</a>
For assistance with <i>threat assessment procedures</i> : <b>Psychological Services</b> (754) 321-3440
For assistance with <i>school violence prevention</i> : <b>Psychological Services</b> (754) 321-3440 <b>School Climate &amp; Discipline</b> (754) 321-1655
For assistance with <i>DMS/discipline</i> : <b>School Climate &amp; Discipline</b> (754) 321-1655
For assistance with <i>SEDNET referrals, community mental health providers, suicide prevention and Baker Act</i> : <b>SEDNET</b> (754) 321-3421
For assistance with <i>SEL and counseling services</i> : <b>Family Counseling</b> (754) 321-1590 <b>School Counseling</b> (754) 321-1627
For assistance with <i>substance abuse prevention</i> : <b>School Climate &amp; Discipline</b> (754) 321-1655
<b>Special Investigative Unit (SIU School Police)</b> (754) 321-0725