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COMMUNITY THREAT ASSESSMENT

1. PURPOSE

The director of education has developed this administrative procedure to support the implementation of the Community Threat Assessment Protocol (CTAP) for dealing with high risk student behaviour. This procedure outlines the steps that will be taken by Principals and In-School Threat Assessment Teams to address student behaviour that may pose a threat/risk to students themselves, or others. This procedure also outlines the steps that will be taken to activate the HPEDSB/Community Threat Assessment team, through the Superintendent of Education - Safe Schools.

This administrative procedure is intended to promote a commitment to making schools safe for students, staff, volunteers and visitors. Staff will respond to all student behaviours which pose a potential risk to other students, staff, school visitors or members of the community. Early intervention measures by the school board and community team members are intended to prevent school violence and traumatic events.

2. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this administrative procedure.

Community Threat Assessment Protocol (CTAP) Resource Guide: A protocol for dealing with high risk student behaviours prepared by Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board in collaboration with community services and agencies. This protocol reflects the work of Kevin Cameron, Director of the Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response, the Yukon Threat Assessment Program (Y-TAP) and, the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative. The CTAP outlines a comprehensive and collaborative response to student threat making behaviours.

In-School Threat Assessment Team: Is composed of the Principal, Vice-Principal, Child and Youth Counsellor (CYC), Guidance Staff and others as designated.

HPEDSB/ Community Threat Assessment Team: Is composed of School Principal, Superintendent of Education - Safe Schools, School Superintendent, Child and Youth Counsellor (CYC) Supervisor, central special education staff as designated, police, and community team members as per CTAP agreement.

Threat Assessment: Is the process of determining if a threat maker (someone who utters, writes or emails, etc., a threat to seriously harm or kill a target or targets) actually poses a risk to the target he/she has threatened.

Risk Assessment: Is the process of determining if a student of concern may pose a risk to some unknown target or targets at some unknown period of time.

Worrisome Behaviours: Include but are not limited to: drawing pictures that contain violence, writing stories/journal writing that contain violence, making vague/generalized statements about violence towards others that do not constitute a threat. Worrisome behaviours may be an early warning sign of the development of more serious high risk behaviours. Worrisome behaviours must always be addressed. (Refer to CTAP Resource Guide p. 13.)

High Risk Behaviours: Are behaviours that express intent to do harm, to act out violently against someone or something. High Risk behaviours include but are not limited to: interest in violent content, unusual interest in fire setting, escalation of physical aggression, significant change in anti-social behaviour, unusual interest in and/or possession of weapon/replica of a weapon, bomb threat, and internet threat to kill or injure self or others. High Risk behaviours must always be addressed. (Refer to CTAP Resource Guide p. 13.)

Intervention Plan: Is the outcome of the Community Threat Assessment Protocol (CTAP) process, which addresses all of the concerns identified through the threat/risk assessment process.

Parent/ Guardian CTAP Notification Letter: This letter will be issued annually to all parents/guardians and upon registration for students new to the district. See Form 385-1

3. REPORTING INCIDENTS TO THE PRINCIPAL

Any person who is concerned about student behaviours that may pose a risk or threat to that student or to others will report the concern to the school principal/designate.

In the case of behaviour which poses an **immediate threat** (weapon in possession that poses a serious threat to others, a plan for serious assault, homicidal/suicidal behaviour, or fire setting) a **call will be placed to 911** and the appropriate response to ensure security at the school will be taken.

In the case of **worrisome or high risk behaviours**, the Principal will consult with the In-School Threat Assessment Team to determine the level of risk and to develop a response plan. The Principal will consult with the school Superintendent as necessary.

4. IN-SCHOOL THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

All schools will have an In-School Threat Assessment team that is composed of the Principal, Vice-Principal, Child and Youth Counsellor (CYC), Guidance Staff, and others as designated. The Principal may refer student behaviour concerns to the In-School Threat Assessment Team.

The In-School Threat Assessment Team will respond to threat making behaviour or suicidal risk by working together to complete **Appendix D: Risk Threat Assessment Form – level 1** from the Community Threat Assessment Protocol. This includes completing Series I-VII questions from the CTAP. See CTAP Resource Guide pages 16-21.

Based on the results of the Series I - VII questions and the input of all of the members of the In School Threat Assessment Team, a course of action will be determined. The team will focus on the questions: "To what extent does the student pose a threat to school/student safety?" "Does the student pose a threat to himself/herself or someone outside the school (i.e., family)?"

Low Level of Concern

Risk to the target(s), students, staff and school safety in minimal:

- Threat is vague and indirect
- Information contained within the threat is inconsistent, implausible or lacks detail; threat lacks realism
- Available information suggests that the person is unlikely to carry out the threat or become violent
- Typical baseline behaviour

Medium Level of Concern

The threat could be carried out, although it may not appear realistic. Violent action is possible:

- Threat is more plausible and concrete than low level threat. Wording in the threat and information gathered suggests that some thought has been given to how the threat will be carried out (i.e., possible place and time)
- No clear indication that the student of concern has taken preparatory steps (i.e., weapon seeking), although there may be an ambiguous or inconclusive reference pointing to that possibility. There may be a specific statement seeking to convey that the threat is not empty: "I am serious!"
- Moderate any lingering concerns about the student's potential to act violently
- Increase in baseline behaviour

High Level of Concern

The threat or situation of concern appears to pose an imminent and serious danger to the safety of others:

- Threat is specific and plausible. There is an identified target. Student has the capacity to act on the threat
- Information suggests concrete steps have been taken toward action on threat. For example, information indicates that the student has acquired or practiced with a weapon or has had a victim under surveillance
- Information suggests strong concern about the student's potential to act violently
- Significant increase in baseline behaviour

The In-School Threat Assessment Team will determine the level of concern that the student presents. If there is a **low to medium level of concern**, the student can likely be managed at school with appropriate supervision and school based/district supports.

If there is a **medium to high level of concern**, the In-School Threat Assessment Team will determine if further assessment is required. The principal will notify the School Superintendent and the Superintendent of Education - Safe Schools to discuss next steps.

If there is imminent danger, call 911.

5. SHARING INFORMATION WITH STAFF

In cases where a student poses a significant threat of violence to others, either during the in-school threat assessment or community threat assessment, the principal has an obligation to provide staff with information under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act* clarifies that employers and supervisors must provide workers with information, including personal information, related to a risk of workplace violence from a person with a history of violent behaviour [Section 32.0.5(3)].

However, this duty is limited and applies only when the:

- (a) worker can be expected to encounter the violent person in the course of his or her work; and the
- (b) risk of workplace violence is likely to expose the worker to physical injury.

Employers and supervisors must also not disclose more information than is reasonable necessary for the protection of a worker from physical injury.

There may be other laws that govern the release of personal or medical information such as the:

- *Youth Criminal Justice Act (Canada)*
- *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (Canada);* and
- *Personal Health Information Protection Act*

The employer will have to take into account a person's right to privacy under those laws in addition to a worker's right to be informed of workplace violence risks under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

In such cases, the principal may wish to seek advice from the superintendent.

The principal will also notify the superintendent and the safe workplace coordinator each time this occurs.

6. REPORTING IN-SCHOOL THREAT ASSESSMENT RESULTS TO SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

The Principal will refer all student behaviour concerns that are discussed with the In-School Threat Assessment Team to his/her school Superintendent. The School Superintendent and the Superintendent of Education - Safe Schools will discuss the student behaviour concerns presented and may decide to activate the HPEDSB/ Community Threat Assessment Team and process.

7. ACTIVATION OF HPEDSB/ COMMUNITY THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM BY SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION - SAFE SCHOOLS

As appropriate, the Superintendent of Education - Safe Schools will activate the HPEDSB/ Community Threat Assessment Team.

The Safe Schools Child Youth Counsellor (CYC) Coordinator will make contact with the members of the HPEDSB Central Threat Assessment Team and will contact the appropriate community members, as per the protocol, based on the student concerns presented.

A HPEDSB/community threat assessment meeting will be convened in a timely fashion, usually within 48 hours of activation.

The HPEDSB Central Threat Assessment Team will have representation from Special Education Services that includes a multi-disciplinary team of Child and Youth Counsellors, Attendance Counsellors, Psychological Services, Special Education Coordinators and others as designated

by the Superintendent of Special Education. A minimum of two members of this team will participate in all HPEDSB/Community Threat Assessment meetings.

8. PARENT/ GUARDIAN AND STUDENT INVOLVEMENT in HPEDSB/ COMMUNITY THREAT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Parents/ guardians will be informed of the HPEDSB/Community Threat Assessment Protocol through an annual parent notification letter and upon registration at schools within the board. Principals will make reasonable efforts (and record all attempts) to inform parents/ guardians about the student behaviour concerns that are being referred to the HPEDSB/Community Threat Assessment Team, as appropriate. See Form 385-1.

Parents/guardians will be invited to participate in an interview with a member of the HPEDSB Threat Assessment Team, prior to the HPEDSB/Community Threat Assessment meeting.

The student involved in the threat making behaviour will be invited to participate in an interview with a member of the HPEDSB Threat Assessment Team, prior to the HPEDSB/Community Threat Assessment meeting.

As outlined in the annual parent notification letter and the HPEDSB/Community Threat Assessment Protocol, the threat assessment meeting will occur in a timely fashion, with or without the consent and/or participation of the parent/guardian or student in prior interview discussions.

9. CONDUCTING THE HPEDSB/COMMUNITY THREAT ASSESSMENT MEETING

The threat assessment meeting will be scheduled in a timely fashion, usually within 48 hours of activation.

The Principal of the school will chair the threat assessment meeting with support from the HPEDSB Threat Assessment Central Team. A member of the HPEDSB Central Threat Assessment Team will complete the report and intervention plan as outlined in the protocol.

The strength of the school board/ community partnership lies in the multidisciplinary composition of the response teams at the school and community levels. Without delay, the response teams will share and review student information and the details of the threatening situation or evidence in order to collaborate effectively and make use of a board range of expertise. This collaborative process will respect the individual's rights to privacy and the safety of all.

All team members are accountable to the protocol purpose and have a shared obligation to actively take steps to prevent traumatic events in schools. The goal is to remove, or reduce as much as possible, any threats to the safety of students, parents, school staff, other persons, the school or other buildings or property, arising from any actions or physical or verbal behavior engaged in by students or their peers on school property or elsewhere.

Information will be shared during the meeting that pertains to the Series I – VII questions and the threat/ risk concerns about the student. Guidelines and legislation regarding information sharing are outlined in the HPEDSB/Community Threat Assessment Protocol.

All members of the HPEDSB Central Threat Assessment Team will discuss the relevant information regarding the student. As a team, they will consider the questions: “To what extent does the student pose a threat to school/student safety?” “Does the student pose a threat to himself/herself or someone outside the school (e.g., family)?”

With the input of all of the threat assessment team members, the level of concern of the student will be determined and a course of action and intervention plan will be written. See CTAP Resource Guide, pages 22-25.

10. REPORTING THE RESULTS OF THE HPEDSB/COMMUNITY THREAT ASSESSMENT MEETING

The threat assessment report and intervention plan will be presented to and reviewed with the Superintendent of Education - Safe Schools and the school Superintendent by the HPEDSB Central Threat Assessment Team members.

10.1 CTAP Report and Intervention Plan

An electronic copy of the CTAP report will be sent to each participating community service/ agency. One hard copy of the CTAP report will be filed with the Superintendent of Education - Safe Schools. Additional copies of the report will be created or shared only with direction from the Superintendent of Education – Safe Schools. **Copies of the CTAP report will not be filed in the student’s OSR.**

10.2 Communication with Parent/Guardian

The appropriate Superintendent will communicate the results of the threat assessment meeting to the parents/ guardian of the student of concern.

11. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERVENTION PLAN

HPEDSB staff and community partners will implement agreed upon action steps outlined in the intervention plan.

12. COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING

11.1 Communication Plan

All staff and stakeholders (e.g., parents, school councils, students, trustees, community services/ agencies, Parent Involvement Committee, SEAC) will receive communication about the CTAP through meeting agendas and newsletters. The CTAP Resource Guide is available on the HPEDSB website.

11.2 Training

Ongoing training for new administrators, the In-School Team and the Central Team members will be provided through the office of the Superintendent of Education - Safe Schools.

All training will reflect the work of Kevin Cameron, Director of the Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response, the Yukon Threat Assessment Program (Y-TAP) and, the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative.

13. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Implementation of the HPEDSB/Community Threat Assessment Protocol (CTAP) will be monitored by the Superintendent of Education - Safe Schools. Ongoing communication and discussion will take place with community services/ agencies and staff. Refinements to the protocol will be made as necessary.

Data regarding the activation of In-School Threat Assessment teams and the HPEDSB/Community Threat Assessment team will be gathered by the office of the Superintendent of Education - Safe Schools and reported to Administrative Council annually.

Legal References:

Education Act as amended by the Education Amendment Act (Progressive Discipline and School Safety), 2007
Education Act, section 265 Duties of Principal: Care of Pupils; Part XIII Behaviour, Discipline and Safety
Municipal Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act
Occupational Health and Safety Act

District References:

- Administrative Procedure 149: Safety and Well-Being of Students and Staff
- Administrative Procedure 153: Emergency Response
- Administrative Procedure 166: Tragic Events
- Administrative Procedure 421: Safe Workplace – Violence in the Workplace

Resource Guides: HPEDSB/Community Threat Assessment Protocol (CTAP) Resource Guide, Code of Conduct, Progressive Discipline, Bullying Prevention and Intervention – located on the Safe Schools web site