# STUDENTS 09.429

**Threat Assessments**

**Definitions**

"School safety" shall mean a program of prevention that protects students and staff from substance abuse, violence, bullying, theft, the sale or use of illegal substances, exposure to weapons and threats on school grounds, and injury from severe weather, fire, and natural disasters.

“School security” shall mean procedures followed and measures taken to ensure the security of school buildings, classrooms, and other school facilities and properties.

“Threat assessment team” and “team” shall mean a school safety and security threat assessment team established pursuant to this policy and [KRS 158.4410](http://policy.ksba.org//DocumentManager.aspx?requestarticle=/KRS/158-00/4410.pdf&requesttype=krs).

**Establishment and Membership of Teams**

A school safety and security threat assessment team shall be established at each school of the District. The members of the team at each school shall be designated by the District School Safety Coordinator, and shall consist of two (2) or more school staff members. School staff members that may be designated as a member of the team at any given school may include: school administrators; school counselors; school resource officers; school-based mental health services providers; teachers; and other school personnel. If necessary, a threat assessment team may serve more than one (1) school of the District.

**Purpose of Team**

The purpose of a team shall be to identify and respond to students exhibiting behavior that indicates a potential threat to school safety or school security.

**General Components of School Safety And School Security Planning**

According to the U.S. Secret Service Guide, Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence, key components of a comprehensive school safety and school security plan include efforts to:

1. Foster a climate of respect and trust;
2. Build relationships;
3. Promote communication;
4. Identify concerning behaviors;
5. Maintain a threat assessment team;
6. Reinforce clear policies and procedures;
7. Provide resources to appropriately respond to students;
8. Promote information-sharing between the school District and appropriate community stakeholders as allowed by law;
9. Liaison with law enforcement; and
10. Provide consistent training to stakeholders.

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**Guiding Principles of Comprehensive Threat Assessment Planning**

The District School Safety Coordinator, members of threat assessment teams, and other appropriate District administrators and staff, shall give appropriate consideration to the following non-exhaustive list of general principles as threat assessment teams are established and as they plan for and conduct their work:

1. A threat assessment process best functions as one component of overall school safety, in conjunction with physical school security and emergency management.
2. Students may engage in a continuum of concerning behaviors, the vast majority of which will be non-threatening and non-violent, but may still call for some type of response.
3. Students should feel empowered to communicate their own concerns to appropriate school staff without fear of reprisal. Incoming reports regarding concerning behavior or statements presenting a threat to school safety and school security should be given due consideration and assessed.
4. The goal of a threat assessment process is to identify, assess, and respond to potential threats to school safety and school security. The process begins with establishing a comprehensive plan for schools to:
5. Identify students or situations of concern;
6. Gather additional relevant information in a lawful manner;
7. Assess the student or situation risk, in context based on the totality of the information available; and
8. Identify and implement or recommend appropriate response strategies to address the concern.

**Threat Assessment Team Member Training**

Training to members of threat assessment teams should be provided or arranged by the District regarding the purpose of the team, the guiding principles stated above, and the members’ roles in enhancing school safety and school security through identifying and responding to students exhibiting behavior that indicates a potential threat to school safety or school security. Training shall address the following: strategies to properly respond to students who provide information about a threatening or concerning situation, ways to assess and respond to potential threats, and how and to whom they should report threatening communications or behavior.

**Threat Assessment Team Monitoring**

The District School Safety Coordinator and the Superintendent/designee shall monitor the work of the threat assessment team in each school of the District.

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**Threat Assessments**

**Access to Student Records**

Threat assessment team members, including any members who are not school District employees, are hereby designated as “school officials” for purposes of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act **(**FERPA), and as such may access student records to the extent necessary in connection with the work of the team, in accordance with FERPA and Board Policy 09.14.

**Interaction of Team Activities With School Disciplinary Action and/or Law Enforcement**

Threat assessment team activities and any responses undertaken or recommended by a team, do not negate or override applicable disciplinary procedures or action under Board policy or the Code of Acceptable Behavior and Discipline or legal reporting requirements, including those covering bullying or criminal activity; dependency, neglect or abuse; or domestic and dating violence.2

**Immunity from Civil or Criminal Liability**

A school District, School Safety Coordinator, and any school employees participating in the activities of a school safety and security threat assessment team enjoy immunity from civil and criminal liability regarding their participation in the threat assessment process as provided in [KRS 158.4410](http://policy.ksba.org//DocumentManager.aspx?requestarticle=/KRS/158-00/4410.pdf&requesttype=krs).1

**References:**

1[KRS 158.4410](http://policy.ksba.org//DocumentManager.aspx?requestarticle=/KRS/158-00/4410.pdf&requesttype=krs)

 U.S. Secret Service Guide, ***Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence***

**Related Policies:**

209.2211; 09.227; 09.438

 05.4; 09.14; 09.425

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