

Student Relations and Safety

When Students Make Threats

A Guide for JCPS Employees



Student Relations and Safety Department

4309 Bishop Lane
Louisville, KY 40218
Telephone No: 485-6140
Fax No: 485-6144



- The principal/designee will also consider if he or she has a duty to warn the potential victim's parent/guardian when a threat is made.

The Role of Faculty and Staff

There are some things each faculty and staff member can do to help ensure a safe school. These include the following:

- Faculty/Staff should be aware of each student's behavior and emotional state as well as conflicts that may arise between students.
- Faculty/Staff should set high expectations for student conduct and should employ effective behavior-management techniques.
- Faculty/Staff should communicate the importance of reporting potential violence and should promise anonymity to students who make reports.

Definition

A threat is when a person states or otherwise communicates his or her intent to inflict harm or property loss on another person. A threat may be an overt statement like, "I'll shoot you," or it may be something subtle like, "It would be a shame if something happened to your car." A threat may even be nonverbal, like a student pointing a finger as if it were a gun or dragging it across his or her throat. In any form, threatening is prohibited under the JCPS Code of Acceptable Behavior and Discipline and the Student Bill of Rights.

Sending a Message

At each location in the Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS), faculty and staff work to provide an orderly learning environment in which students feel safe and thrive academically. To ensure this, threats cannot be ignored. Each member of the faculty and staff must send a clear and consistent message to students: **Threatening behavior will not be tolerated.**

What to Do

Any employee who witnesses or is made aware of threatening behavior should take appropriate action and should report the incident to the principal/designee as soon as possible. The principal/designee should investigate the incident and take disciplinary action in accordance with the JCPS Code of Acceptable Behavior and Discipline and the Student Bill of Rights.

While assessing the incident, the principal/designee should consider the following:

- Under what circumstances was the threat made?

- Was the threat made in earnest?
- Does the student making the threat have access to weapons or explosives?
- Does the student have a history of aggressive or violent behavior?
- What steps are appropriate to protect the safety and property of others?
- Has the student been identified as being eligible for Exceptional Child Education (ECE) services or is he or she suspected of being eligible, and what special considerations need to be made?

Who to Call

- If the principal/designee determines that the threat is serious, he or she should contact the Security coordinator at **485-3121**.
- When a student threatens to do something unlawful that will likely result in substantial injury or property loss, it may be terroristic threatening, a Class-A misdemeanor. In these cases, law enforcement officials must be notified.
- If gang involvement is suspected, the information should also be provided to the Safe and Drug-Free Schools (SDFS) Office at **485-3260**.
- The parent/guardian of the student making the threat should be notified.
- If a social worker, probation officer, therapist, or other mental-health/social services professional is involved with the student, he or she should be notified when a student makes a threat.