



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: October 12, 2022
To: Local Educational Agency Leads
Route To: Principals, School Safety Specialists, School Administration, School Social Workers, School Psychologists, School Faculty
From: Christopher Irving, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner
Division of Field Support and Services

School-Based Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Training

On August 1, 2022, Governor Phil Murphy signed into legislation, N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.4, requiring the establishment of threat assessment teams in public, charter, and renaissance school projects. The purpose of a threat assessment team is to provide school teachers, administrators, and other staff with assistance in identifying students with behaviors of concern, assessing those students' risk for engaging in violence or other harmful activities, and delivering intervention strategies to manage the risk of harm for students who pose a potential safety risk. Threat assessment teams' purpose is also to prevent targeted violence in the school and to ensure a safe and secure school environment that enhances the learning experience for all members of the school community. Accordingly, the board of education of each school district and the board of trustees of each charter school or renaissance school project must develop and adopt a policy for the establishment of a multi-disciplinary threat assessment team at each school.

Any policy developed by a school district, charter school or renaissance school project concerning the establishment of a threat assessment team must be aligned with guidelines being developed by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), and include, but need not be limited to:

1. guidance for students, teachers, and all school staff regarding the recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior in a student that may represent a threat to the school community;
2. the designation of members of the school community to whom threatening behavior shall be reported;
3. the development and implementation of policies concerning the assessment and intervention of students whose behavior poses a threat to the safety of the school community, and appropriate actions to be taken, including available social, developmental, and law enforcement resources, for students whose behavior is identified as posing a threat to the safety of the school community;
4. coordination and consultation with the school safety specialist;
5. a policy that the threat assessment team shall not disclose or disseminate any information obtained during their assessment beyond the purpose for which the information was provided to the threat assessment team, except that the threat assessment team is authorized to disclose the information to applicable agencies to pursue appropriate action for any student whose behavior is identified as posing a threat to the safety of the school community.

If a student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan has been identified, the threat assessment team must consult with the IEP team or 504 team to determine whether the aberrant behavior is a threat to school safety and is being properly addressed in a manner that is required by N.J.A.C.6A:14 and all federal and State special education laws.

Threat assessment teams must be multidisciplinary in membership and, to the extent possible, include the following individuals:

1. a school psychologist, school counselor, school social worker, or other school employee with expertise in student counseling;
2. a teaching staff member;
3. a school principal or other senior school administrator;
4. a safe schools resource officer or school employee who serves as a school liaison to law enforcement; and
5. the school safety specialist designated pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.3

In order to fulfill its role in the establishment and training of school-based threat assessment teams, the NJDOE's Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning (OSPEP) is providing ongoing Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management virtual training for school communities through the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance *Students, Teachers, and Officers Preventing School Violence Act* grant program.

Participants of these virtual training sessions will gain an understanding of guiding principles regarding threat assessment and management, including how to identify and investigate threats and other concerning behavior in Local Education Agencies (LEAs). Participants will be provided step-by-step procedures related to gathering information to assess threats; and, where necessary, learning how to develop and implement plans to reduce risk and help maintain school safety, from national experts with experience investigating school threats and shootings. Grounded in research, threat assessment is recognized as the current best practice for preventing targeted school-based violence. This one-day training course is intended for administrators, teaching staff, school safety specialists, school psychologists, school counselors, school social workers, mental health professionals, school resource officers, local law enforcement, and other school personnel. LEAs are strongly encouraged to register multiple representatives.

For the 2022-2023 school year, participants can register for the one-day virtual training session, using the links below:

- [Friday, October 14 from 8:30 AM – 3 PM](#)
- [Thursday, November 17 from 8:30 AM – 3 PM](#)
- [Thursday, December 8 from 8:30 AM – 3 PM](#)
- [Thursday, January 26 from 8:30 AM – 3 PM](#)
- [Thursday, February 23 from 8:30 AM – 3 PM](#)
- [Thursday, March 23 from 8:30 AM – 3 PM](#)
- [Thursday, April 20 from 8:30 AM – 3 PM](#)
- [Thursday, May 18 from 8:30 AM – 3 PM](#)
- [Wednesday, June 28 from 8:30 AM – 3 PM](#)
- [Thursday, June 29 from 8:30 AM – 3 PM](#)
- [Wednesday, July 12 from 8:30 AM – 3 PM](#)
- [Wednesday, July 19 from 8:30 AM – 3 PM](#)

School Safety Specialists who attend this event will receive appropriate hours toward certification renewal. If you have any questions or concerns, please email OSPEP at school.security@doe.nj.gov.

c: Members, State Board of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group