



AP 357 – VIOLENCE THREAT RISK ASSESSMENT: STUDENTS

BACKGROUND

Student and staff safety are our priority. The division is committed to providing safe, caring, and accepting learning and work environments for our students, staff, parents/guardians/caregivers, and members of our wider learning community who are guests in our facilities. In accordance with this administrative procedure, threats must be taken seriously, investigated, and include an appropriate response. All actions or statements suggesting intent to harm or act violently against someone, or something will be considered a threat and will be assessed using division procedures.

The purpose of the Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) process is to prevent violence by identifying, assessing, and managing individuals who may pose a risk to themselves or others. The process is designed to be proactive, collaborative, and timely. VTRA is not a disciplinary or punitive response; it is a therapeutic model focused on early intervention, support, and reducing risk through understanding the underlying factors contributing to the behaviour. Violence prevention in our schools and neighbourhoods is a community responsibility. The division and our community partners are committed to making our schools and community safer and this commitment is evident in the development of the division's *Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol (CTASP)*, which was signed in August 2011.

PROCEDURES

1. Fair Notice

- 1.1. At the start of each school year, schools will provide fair notice to students, staff and parents/guardians/caregivers outlining the division's commitment to a safe and caring environment and explaining the VTRA process. This includes the requirement for principals to distribute an annual letter, provided by the division, informing parents/guardians/caregivers that Saskatoon Public Schools has a Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol in place, that threat assessments will occur when warranted, and that the process may involve multiple community partners.
- 1.2. Fair notice may also include but is not limited to: printed material in school and student handbooks and agendas, assembly presentations, postings on websites and parent portals, and discussions in classrooms.

2. Training and Review

- 2.1. Through the division's Safe, Caring, and Accepting Schools initiative, Safe School Team members and support personnel participate in VTRA training and understand the protocol for investigating threatening behaviours.
- 2.2. Ongoing training for new administrators, counsellors, designated central office personnel, administrative council members and community partners will be planned by the superintendent with responsibility for Safe, Caring, and Accepting Schools. Training will align with the work of the North American Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response.



- 2.3. All administrators and members of Safe School Teams will receive annual training or refresher sessions on VTRA procedures.
 - 2.4. AP 357 and the VTRA form and Resource Guide will be reviewed annually to ensure alignment with best practice and the Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol (CTASP).
3. Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol
 - 3.1. Saskatoon Public Schools will respond to student behaviours that may pose a potential risk for violence to students, staff, and members of the community, or towards the school or other property.
 - 3.2. As per Saskatoon Public Schools' *Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol*, school threat assessment teams, and if deemed necessary community partners, will assess threatening behaviours and plan for appropriate interventions.
 - 3.3. Each school has a multi-disciplinary threat assessment team (Safe School Team) that includes the school principal and/or vice principal, school counsellor(s), and school resource officer (police officer).
 - 3.4. Central office support is provided through the Safe, Caring, and Accepting Schools team and administrative council members.
4. Purpose and Process
 - 4.1 The purpose of a Student VTRA is:
 - 4.1.1 To ensure the safety of students, staff, parents/guardians/caregivers, and others.
 - 4.1.2 To ensure a full understanding of the context of the threat.
 - 4.1.3 To begin to understand the factors that contribute to the individual of concern's behaviour.
 - 4.1.4 To be proactive in developing an intervention and support plan that addresses the emotional and physical safety of the individual of concern.
 - 4.1.5 To promote the emotional and physical safety of all.
 - 4.2 The process for a Student VTRA is as follows:
 - 4.2.1 Threat making behaviour(s) by students are reported to the principal/vice principal who activates the Saskatoon Public Schools' VTRA Protocol.
 - 4.2.2 A separate VTRA form must be completed for each incident. Each form must identify only one level of risk. If a new incident occurs, a new form is required, even if involving the same student.
 - 4.2.3 Principals will ensure timely communication with parents/guardians/caregivers of both the individual of concern and the target(s), outlining safety measures in place and providing ongoing updates as the situation evolves.
 - 4.2.4 Interviews are held with the individual of concern, parents/guardians/caregivers, students and staff as necessary, and documented in the VTRA form.



- 4.2.5 An investigation determines the level of risk and directs an appropriate response to the incident.
- 4.2.6 Intervention plans are developed and monitored within the VTRA form.
- 4.2.7 Discipline that results from a violent or threatening act is recorded separately in a Student Incident Report form in Clevr in accordance with AP 354 – Discipline.
- 4.2.8 A safety plan that results from or is updated due to a violent or threatening act is recorded separately in a *Safety Plan* form in Clevr.
- 4.2.9 Before closing a VTRA process or transitioning a student to a new school, principals must confirm that all requirements from the intervention plan have been completed in full or that the receiving school is aware of the intervention plan.
- 4.2.10 At the conclusion of the VTRA process, the Safe School Team must document in the VTRA form the level of risk. If a high level of risk is assessed the VTRA may proceed to Stage 2.

5. Stage 2 VTRA - Multidisciplinary Risk Evaluation and Intervention

5.1. A Stage 2 VTRA may be initiated when:

- 5.1.1. The Safe School Team, the superintendent, and the SCAS Consultant determines that risk factors require multi-agency planning and intervention.
- 5.1.2. The incident involves a firearm, replica firearm, explosive, or other weapon capable of causing serious injury or death, or there is credible information about student access to such a weapon.
- 5.1.3. There is serious violence, physical harm, or targeted threats toward individuals or groups.
- 5.1.4. The individual of concern has engaged in high-risk behaviour indicating imminent danger.
- 5.1.5. There is a need for specialized mental health, child protection, or law enforcement involvement.

5.2. Stage 2 VTRA Process:

- 5.2.1. The principal or designate consults with the SCAS Consultant and area superintendent to determine if Stage 2 VTRA should be activated.
- 5.2.2. The SCAS Consultant coordinates with the Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol (CTASP) partners to assemble a Stage 2 team.
- 5.2.3. The Stage 2 team conducts an in-depth risk evaluation, gathers comprehensive background information, and develops a coordinated intervention plan.
- 5.2.4. The plan is reviewed and updated at predetermined intervals until the risk is mitigated.

6. Duty to Report

- 6.1 Safe schools operate as open systems and promote the appropriate sharing of information. To keep school communities safe and caring, staff, parent/guardians/caregivers, students, and community



members must report all threat-related behaviours to the school principal or vice principal. Anyone with knowledge of high-risk student behaviour must immediately notify the principal or vice principal. This includes situations where there are reasonable grounds to believe there is a potential risk to students, staff, or division property. This responsibility applies regardless of perceived seriousness or the staff member's personal ability to assess the threat.

- 6.2 Principals will ensure that students are made aware of their role in reporting violence and threats of violence to school authorities.
- 6.3 Staff must report all worrisome behaviour to the principal or vice principal. The principal or vice principal must consult with members of the Safe School Team, Central Office personnel, and other appropriate staff as to the level of assessment that needs to be conducted.

7. Duty to Respond- Threat Assessment Process

- 7.1 The principal or vice principal will take immediate action to protect the safety of all students and staff.
- 7.2 The principal or vice principal must ensure that the appropriate notification and support has been provided for those targeted by the threatening behaviour(s).
- 7.3 The principal or vice principal must inform the school's superintendent of education of the threatening behaviour(s) and must keep the superintendent informed through the various stages of the threat assessment process.
- 7.4 The principal or vice principal must work closely with the school's superintendent of education and division's communications officer regarding internal and external communications.
- 7.5 The principal or vice principal will work with the Safe School Team to determine a course of action.
 - 7.5.1 If the behaviour is deemed to be worrisome and does not meet the threshold for a VTRA the worrisome behaviour should still be noted and monitored.
 - 7.5.2 If the behaviour is deemed to be high-risk behaviour and there is a credible potential for violence or serious harm the principal or vice principal will activate the Safe School Team and follow the VTRA protocol.
- 7.6 The principal or vice principal will share and store copies of the *VTRA Form* as per the Division's VTRA protocol.
- 7.7 As described throughout the process above, appropriate notification must be provided, whenever possible, at all stages of the VTRA process.

8. Information Sharing Protocols

- 8.1 For VTRA with an Active or Monitor status, select information from the VTRA process must be shared with staff directly working with the student to ensure safety. This includes classroom teachers, support staff, administrators, substitute staff, staff temporarily reassigned to support the student and any other personnel interacting regularly with the student. In some situations, it may be necessary for this information to be shared with all staff. Subject to privacy legislation, this information may include the



following:

- 8.1.1 Relevant past behaviour indicating risk and nature of risk
- 8.1.2 Specific safety measures and control measures in place
- 8.1.3 Supervision requirements
- 8.2 This information is stored on the School Staff Information Sharing and Intervention Plan section of the form and should be shared with identified staff at the beginning of the school year and whenever there is a change in personnel who are interacting with the student.
- 8.3 Before a student is transitioned to a new school or program, principals must confirm that all requirements from the intervention plan have been completed or are in place.

9. Incidents Occurring Outside of Regular School Hours or Settings

- 9.1 If a Saskatoon Public School employee receives information regarding serious violence, possession of a dangerous weapon, or a threat that is “clear, direct, and plausible” outside of regular school hours, police must be contacted immediately. This includes information or threats communicated through social media, text messages, or other digital platforms.
- 9.2 This information must then be provided as soon as possible to the principal or designate so the threat assessment process can be activated, and appropriate actions taken to notify and protect the target(s).

10. Incidents Involving Employees

- 10.1 The VTRA Protocol can be initiated when staff display worrisome or high-risk behaviour. See Administrative Procedure 482 – Violence Threat Risk Assessment: Employees.

Reference:

Administrative Procedure 354: Discipline
Administrative Procedure 356: Weapons
Administrative Procedure 367: Student Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying
Administrative Procedure 460: Violence (Employees)
Administrative Procedure 482: Violence Threat Risk Assessment: Employees
Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol
SPS Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol and Resource Guide
The Education Act (1995): Sections 141,150,151,152-155, 156-162, 175, 191,192, 193
Violence Threat Risk Assessment: Training Guide (5th edition) - Centre for Trauma Informed Practices (CTIP)

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