



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 315

STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT

Background

Grande Yellowhead Public School Division provides a safe and caring learning environment in all of the division's schools. Part of this commitment involves being prepared to handle emergency situations appropriately and efficiently.

Grande Yellowhead Public School Division requires that all threats or threatening behaviours be treated seriously. A threat is an expression of intent to do harm or act violently against someone or something, and can be spoken, written or symbolic. Threatening behaviour include high-risk behaviours, immediate risk situations and worrisome behaviours, as defined below. All threats or threatening behaviour will be assessed and appropriate interventions and disciplinary actions taken in accordance with this administrative procedure, as well as divisional policies and procedures dealing with the safety of schools and student discipline.

Procedures

1. Fair Notice

- 1.1 Communication with school staff, students, parents and liaison groups (e.g. RCMP, Children Services) regarding this administrative procedure is essential. Prior to any threat assessment protocol being implemented, fair notice must be provided to all students, staff and parents regarding the protocol and procedures. Fair notice must indicate that threatening behaviour will not be tolerated, and that the school response may involve the division's community partners: the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Alberta Child and Family Services and Alberta Mental Health.
- 1.2 As part of the fair notice process, a letter will be sent home annually to inform parents of the Threat Assessment Protocol, and notification of the protocol may be included in printed material provided to students, such as handbooks and student agendas. Schools will also explain the protocol to all students during assemblies at the beginning of the school year.
- 1.3 Each year the liaison groups who work with the division to conduct threat assessments will also be contacted to request their continued participation in the process.

2. Reporting

- 2.1 Any student, parent or staff member who becomes aware of a threat, or has reasonable grounds to believe that there is a potential risk to students, staff or divisional property, shall notify the school principal and/or their designate.
 - 2.2 In cases where a report is made maliciously, the person shall be dealt with according to school discipline policies and the law, where applicable.
3. Duty to Respond
 - 3.1 Schools shall respond to all threat related behaviours. All threat related behaviours shall be taken seriously and assessed by the school Threat Assessment Team.
4. Immediate Risk Procedures
 - 4.1 The school principal or their designate shall immediately contact the police and take steps to protect the safety of all those in the school by activating the school evacuation or school lock down plans as per the school emergency preparedness plan.
 - 4.2 Once the police have been called and the safety of students and staff has been secured, the school principal or their designate shall implement the threat assessment protocol.
5. High Risk Behaviours
 - 5.1 The Threat Assessment Team shall be contacted by the school principal or their designate when a threat has been received and is directed towards students, staff or property of Grande Yellowhead Public School Division.
 - 5.2 In situations where the threat is believed to be a Criminal Code violation, the police officer assigned to the Threat Assessment Team has the “first call” as to whether or not charges will be laid.
 - 5.3 Regardless of whether charges are laid, the Threat Assessment Team shall complete a risk assessment and determine follow-up recommendations.
 - 5.4 The school principal shall, at the earliest opportunity, include in the Threat Assessment process the parent(s) or guardians of the student who made the threat. The parents of the student /students against whom the threat was made shall be notified as deemed appropriate. Parents are an integral part of the threat assessment process.
 - 5.5 The Threat Assessment Team shall guide the process from internal assessment, to planning interventions, to decrease risk. This includes the development of a plan for the student to re-enter school, where a suspension has occurred, that becomes a signed contract by all participants.
6. Duty to Victims and Others

- 6.1 The Threat Assessment Team Leader shall ensure that the appropriate support is provided for those against whom threats have been made.
 - 6.2 The principal or their designate shall notify school staff and parent(s) on a need-to-know basis, within a reasonable time period, when the protocol has been activated as a result of threat related behaviour.
7. Worrisome Behaviours
- 7.1 School Staff shall report all worrisome behaviours to the principal or their designate for consultation.
 - 7.2 The principal shall consult with the Threat Assessment Team and other appropriate staff as to the level of assessment that needs to be conducted. It is recognized that multi-disciplinary consultation is a critical part of the threat assessment protocol.
 - 7.3 Police may be consulted, but consultation is generally not sought as a formal complaint.
8. Threat Assessment Incident Report
- 8.1 The Principal is responsible to ensure that a Threat Assessment Incident Report is completed and kept on file.
 - 8.2 The report shall include a process for follow-up that, in the case of medium to high risk, includes a date and process for review by the Threat Assessment Team.
 - 8.3 Threat Assessment Team conclusions are to be shared with the parents or guardians of the student who made the threat.
 - 8.4 The principal shall ensure that a copy of the threat assessment is forwarded to the Superintendent.

Definitions

High-risk behaviours include, but are not limited to, possession of weapons, bomb threats, and threats to kill themselves or injure others. Threats may be written, verbal, posted on the internet, or made by gesture. They may be direct, indirect, conditional, or veiled. Most incidents meeting the above criteria would be considered offences under the *Criminal Code of Canada*.

Immediate risk situations are those involving high-risk behaviours that require immediate police intervention, such as when a student is in possession of a weapon.

Worrisome behaviours are those that cause concern for members of the school staff as they indicate that a student may be moving toward a greater risk of violent behaviour. This may include drawing pictures, writing stories, or making vague statements that do not, of themselves, constitute “uttering threats” as defined by law but are causing concern for members of the school community because of violent content.

References: Safe and Caring Schools Policy
Student Code of Conduct
Family Enhancement Act
Mental Health Act

Developed: June 21, 2006