

ARTS ACADEMY ELEMENTARY CHARTER SCHOOL
Board Policy

CATEGORY: General

POLICY NUMBER: 321

TITLE: Threat Assessment

ADOPTED: November 16, 2023

REVISED:

Purpose

The Board is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its students and the school community and providing the resources and support to address identified student needs. The Board adopts this policy to address student behavior that may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community and others.

Authority

The Board directs the Chief Executive Officer or designee to establish a threat assessment team and develop procedures for assessing and intervening with students whose behavior may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community and others.

Definitions

Behavioral service providers – includes, but is not limited to, a state, county or local behavioral health service provider, crisis intervention center or psychiatric hospital. The term includes a private service provider which contracts with a state, county or local government to act as a behavioral health agency.

Bias – the attitudes or beliefs we have about a person or group that affects our understanding, actions and decisions in a conscious or subconscious manner.

Individualized Management Plan – a plan developed for a student who is referred to the threat assessment team that documents the concerns that brought a student to the team’s attention, as well as the resources and supports a student might need based on the information gathered during the assessment.

Threat assessment – a fact-based process for the assessment of and intervention with students whose behaviors may indicate a threat to the safety of the student other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Chief Executive Officer or designee, shall appoint the Charter School’s Student Services Team to serve as the threat assessment team.

The Chief Executive Officer or designee shall designate a member of the team as team leader for the threat assessment team.

If not already members of the Student Services Team, the threat assessment team may include

individuals with expertise in school health; counseling, school psychology or social work; special education and school administration.

The Chief Executive Officer or designee may also assign additional staff members or designated community resources to the threat assessment team for assessment and response support.

The Chief Executive Officer or designee shall develop and implement administrative regulations to support the threat assessment process.

Guidelines

The Chief Executive Officer or designee shall insure that threat assessment team members are provided individual and/or group training on:

1. Responsibilities of threat assessment team members
2. Process of identifying, reporting, assessing, responding to and intervening with threats
3. Identifying and avoiding racial, cultural or disability bias
4. Confidentiality requirements under state and federal laws and regulations, and Board policies
5. Student Assistance Program process
6. Youth suicide awareness, prevention and response
7. Trauma-informed approach
8. Safe2Say Something procedures
9. Multi-tiered systems of support
10. Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support

Threat assessment team training shall be credited toward professional education requirements and school safety and security training requirements for staff, in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.

Information for Students, Parents/Guardians and Staff

The Charter School shall notify students, staff and parents/guardians about the existence and purpose of the threat assessment team through posting information on the Charter School website, publishing in handbooks and through other appropriate methods.

The threat assessment team shall make available age-appropriate informational materials to students regarding recognition of threatening or at-risk behavior that may present a threat to the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others and how to report concerns. Informational materials shall be available for review by parents/guardians.

The threat assessment team shall make available informational materials for school employees regarding recognition of threatening or at-risk behavior that may present a threat to the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others and how to report concerns, including through the Safe2Say Something program and other Charter School reporting hotlines or methods.

Information for school employees shall include a list of the staff members who have been appointed to the threat assessment team.

Reporting and Identification

The threat assessment team shall document, assess and respond to reports received regarding students whose behavior may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others.

The threat assessment team shall assist in assessing and responding to reports that are received through the Safe2Say Something Program identifying students who may be a threat to themselves or others.

The threat assessment team shall assist in assessing and responding to reports of students exhibiting self-harm or suicide risk factors or warning signs, as identified in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.

When the threat assessment team has made a preliminary determination that a student's reported behavior may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others, the team shall immediately take the following steps:

1. Notify the Chief Executive Officer or designee of the reported threat;
2. Notify the building principal of the reported threat, who shall notify the student's parent/guardian of the reported threat.

When a reported student's behavior indicates that there may be an imminent threat to the safety of the student or others, or an emergency situation, a threat assessment team member shall take immediate action, which may include promptly reporting to the appropriate law enforcement agency and school administration.

Where a threat assessment team member has reasonable cause to suspect that a reported situation indicates that a student may be a victim of child abuse, the member shall make a report of suspected child abuse in accordance with law and Board policy.

Inquiry and Assessment

In investigating, assessing and responding to threat reports, the threat assessment team shall make a determination if the report should be addressed under one or more specific Board policies or administrative regulations, based on the subject matter of the report and the requirements of law, regulations and Board policy, including, but not limited to, reports involving:

1. Discrimination/Title IX Sexual Harassment;
2. Bullying/Cyberbullying;
3. Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Response.

Members of the threat assessment team shall engage in an assessment of the reported student behavior that may indicate a threat, in accordance with training and established procedures. This process may include, but is not limited to:

1. Interviewing the student, other students, staff, parents/guardians or others regarding the subject(s) of the reported threat;
2. Reviewing existing academic, health and disciplinary records and assignments, as appropriate, regarding the subject(s) of the report;
3. Conducting searches of lockers, storage spaces, and other possessions on school property as applicable, in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy;
4. Examining outside resources such as social media sites, in coordination with law enforcement, or contacting law enforcement, juvenile probation, or community agencies to request additional information about the subject(s) of the report, in accordance with law, regulations and Board policies;

5. Where appropriate, convening the appropriate team to assess and/or address the situation that is the subject of the report, such as the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, Section 504 Team, Behavior Support team, Student Assistance Program team, or others.

The threat assessment team shall establish and implement procedures, in accordance with the Charter School's Memorandum of Understanding, to address situations where the investigation of a reported threat shall be transferred to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

The threat assessment team may request that the county agency or juvenile probation department consult and cooperate with the team in assessing the student who is the subject of a preliminary determination regarding a threat.

When assessment of a student's behavior determines that it is not a threat to the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others, the threat assessment team shall document the assessment and may refer the student to other appropriate resources such as a child study team, the Student Assistance Program team, an IEP or Section 504 Team or other Charter School supports and services.

Response and Intervention

The threat assessment team shall develop an Individualized Management Plan for each student identified and assessed as posing a threat to the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others. The plan should document the team's evaluation of the threat and recommendations for disposition of the threat, including the information gathered during the assessment and recommendations for response and intervention.

Following notification to the student's parent/guardian, the threat assessment team may refer the student to an appropriate program or take action to address the reported situation in accordance with applicable Board policy, which may include, but is not limited to:

1. A referral to the Student Assistance Program;
2. A referral to the appropriate law enforcement agency;
3. An appropriate evaluation to determine whether the student is a qualified student with a disability in need of a Section 504 Service Agreement or in need of special education services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP), in accordance with applicable law and Board policy;
4. A referral to the student's IEP Team to review and address the student's IEP and/or Positive Behavior Support Plan This could include, but is not limited to, a manifestation determination or functional behavioral assessment in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy;
5. A referral to the student's Section 504 Team to review and address the student's Section 504 Service Agreement and/or Positive Behavior Support Plan;
6. With prior parental consent, a referral to a behavioral service provider, health care provider or county agency;
7. Addressing behavior in accordance with applicable discipline policies and the Code of Student Conduct;

8. Ongoing monitoring of the student by the threat assessment team, a child study team, Student Assistance Program team or other appropriate school personnel;
9. Taking steps to address the safety of any potential targets identified by the reported threat.

Safe Schools Incident Reporting

For Safe Schools reporting purposes, the term **incident** means an instance involving an act of violence; the possession of a weapon; the possession, use, or sale of a controlled substance or drug paraphernalia as defined in the Pennsylvania Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act; the possession, use, or sale of alcohol or tobacco; or conduct that constitutes an offense listed under the Safe Schools Act.

When a reported threat also meets the definition of an incident under the Safe Schools Act, in accordance with reporting requirements, the Chief Executive Officer or designee shall immediately report required incidents, if not previously reported by Charter School staff, and may report discretionary incidents committed by students on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies

The Chief Executive Officer or designee shall notify the parent/guardian, if not previously notified by Charter School staff, of any student directly involved in an incident on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity, who is a victim or suspect, immediately, as soon as practicable. The Chief Executive Officer or designee will inform the parent/guardian whether or not the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Chief Executive Officer or designee will document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.

Students With Disabilities

When reporting an incident committed by a student with a disability or referring a student with a disability to a law enforcement agency, the Charter School shall provide the information required by state and federal laws and regulations and shall ensure that copies of the special education and disciplinary records of the student are transmitted for consideration by these authorities. The Charter School shall ensure compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act when transmitting copies of the student's special education and disciplinary records.

Monitoring and Management

If a student has an Individualized Management Plan, the threat assessment team shall monitor the Individualized Management Plan and coordinate with the designated team or resource to provide support and follow-up assessment as necessary. Follow-up assessments, referrals, re-entry plans and other supports shall be documented as part of the student's Individualized Management Plan.

The threat assessment team, in coordination with other appropriate teams and supports, shall determine when the student's Individualized Management Plan is no longer needed for disposition of the threat(s), and may transfer appropriate information in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.

Records Access and Confidentiality

In order to carry out their duties and facilitate the timely assessment of and intervention with students

whose behavior may indicate a threat, the threat assessment team shall have access to the following student information to the extent permitted under applicable law and regulations:

1. Student health records;
2. Prior school disciplinary records;
3. Records related to adjudication under applicable law and regulations;
4. Records of prior behavioral or mental health or psychological evaluations or screenings maintained by the Charter School;
5. Other records or information that may be relevant to evaluating a threat or determining treatment or referral options for a student that are maintained by the Charter School.

The threat assessment team shall use all information or records obtained in fulfilling the team's duty in accordance with law to evaluate a threat or to recommend disposition of a threat. Team members shall not redisclose any record or information obtained or otherwise use any record of a student beyond the purpose for which the disclosure was made to the team, in accordance with law.

The threat assessment team shall maintain confidentiality and handle all student records in accordance with applicable law, regulations, Board policy, the Student Records Plan and the Charter School's legal and investigative obligations.

Threat assessment members whose other assignments and roles require confidentiality of specific student communications, in accordance with law, shall ensure that all confidential communications and information are addressed in accordance with applicable law, regulations, Board policy and administrative regulations.

Annual Board Report

The threat assessment team shall provide the required information to the Chief Executive Officer who shall annually develop and present to the Board, at an executive session, a report outlining the Charter School's approach to threat assessment, which shall include:

1. Verification that the Charter School's threat assessment team and process complies with applicable law and regulations;
2. The number of threat assessment teams assigned in the Charter School, and their composition;
3. The total number of threats assessed that year;
4. A summary of interactions with outside law enforcement agencies, juvenile probation and behavioral service providers;
5. An assessment of the Charter School's threat assessment team(s) operation;
6. Recommendations for improvement of the Charter School's threat assessment processes;
7. Any additional information required by the Chief Executive Officer or designee.

The annual threat assessment report shall be presented as part of the annual report to the Board by the School Safety and Security Coordinator on Charter School safety and security practices.