Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission

BCPS Behavioral Threat Assessment Procedures
July 10, 2018

Established 1915
BROWARD
County Public Schools

Objectives

- Background and rationale for development of Broward County Public Schools' (BCPS) threat assessment protocol

- Overview of threat assessment procedures in BCPS

- Understanding the multi-level response

What is a Threat?

- A threat is an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. A threat can be spoken, written, or symbolic.
- Threats are made for a variety of reasons:
  - A warning signal
  - A reaction to fear of punishment
  - A demand for attention
  - An effort to intimidate or punish others
  - An attempt to strike back for an injury or injustice
  - A desire to frighten or terrorize

Source: *O'Toole, M.E. FBI (2000)*

What is Threat Assessment?

- A threat assessment is a systematic collection and analysis of multiple sources of information

- Threat assessments are conducted by school-based teams with mandatory members, as outlined in the procedural manual, and led by a school-based administrator

Development of Broward's Threat Assessment Manual

- Broward County Public Schools' current procedures were developed in 2002 based upon FBI recommendations (*The School Shooter: A Threat Assessment Perspective,* Mary Ellen O'Toole, PhD., Supervisory Special Agent, FBI, 2000)

- The Threat Assessment process is comprised of three stages: (1) Initial Response, (2) Level 1 Screening, and (3) Level 2 In-Depth Assessment. The purpose is to ensure timeliness of response, safety of all in the school environment, and deployment of the school's resources in the most efficient manner

Threat Assessment Manual & Trainings

- Trainings are mandated by the district to prepare school-based teams in assessing threats, which may occur in BCPS

- The Threat Assessment Manual is provided to all participants and is also available on the BCPS Mental Health & Wellness Portal: www.bcps-mentalhealth.com

Post-Training Expectations

- Participants are expected to return to their school sites and follow the protocol as outlined in the manual when they receive a report of a threat

- The threat assessment trainers are an available resource to schools who have questions about the process

School-Based Threat Assessment Team

Mandatory members:

- ✓ Administrator (Principal/AP: Case manager)
- ✓ Mental Health Practitioner (school counselor, school social worker, school psychologist, or family counselor)
- ✓ Teacher (familiar with the student)
- ✓ School Resource Officer and/or Broward Schools Police Investigator (a.k.a. SIU)
- ✓ Security Specialist (at secondary level only)
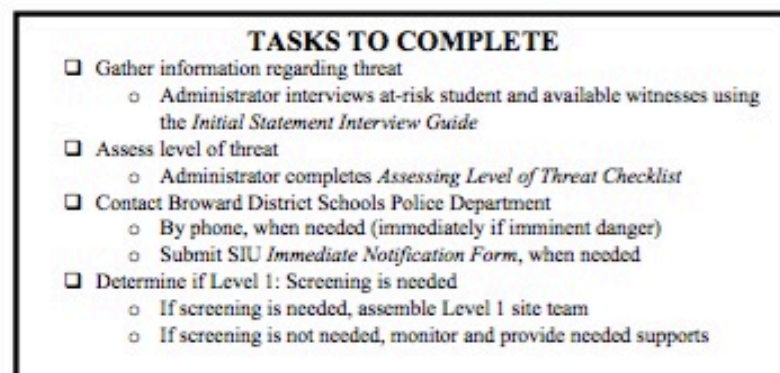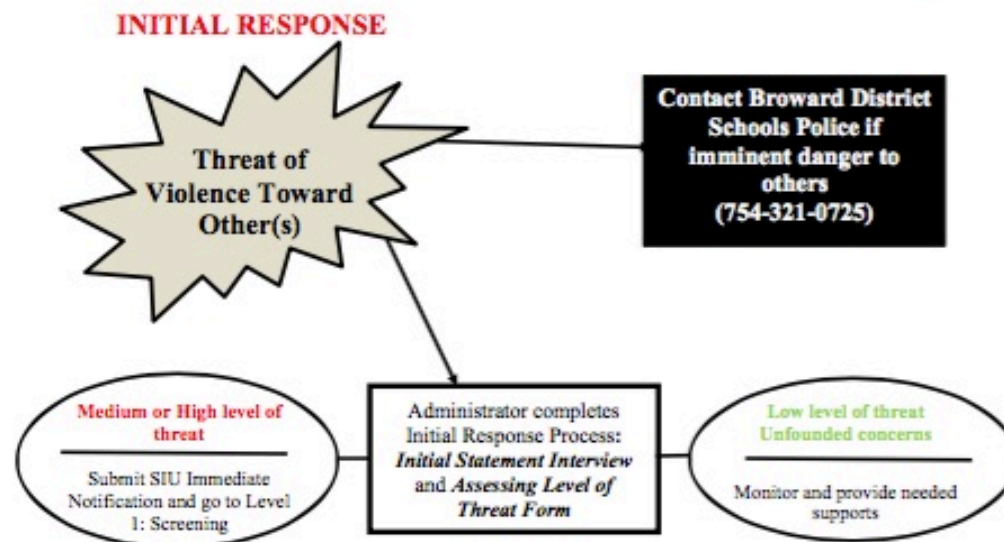
Additional team members may include:

- ✓ ESE Specialist
- ✓ Behavior Specialist
- ✓ Others who know the student

Threat Assessment Flowchart

THREAT ASSESSMENT FLOWCHART

Threat of Violence Toward Other(s)

Contact Broward District Schools Police if imminent danger to others (754-321-0725)

Administrator completes Initial Response Process: *Initial Statement Interview* and *Assessing Level of Threat Form*

Medium or High level of threat
Submit SIU Immediate Notification and go to Level 1: Screening

Low level of threat Unfounded concerns
Monitor and provide needed supports

Level 1: Screening Steps
1. Assemble Level 1: Screening site team
2. Complete *Parent Notification Checklist*
3. Complete *Data Collection Sheet*
4. Hold site team meeting, within 24 hours of threat, to complete *TRAC* and develop *Student Supervision Plan*
5. Determine if Level 2: In-Depth Assessment is warranted. If yes, proceed to Level 2. If no, proceed to plan implementation and monitoring.

SRO and/or SIU team member determines need for referrals to Law Enforcement

YES Level 2 is needed

NO Level 2 is not needed

Implement *Student Supervision Plan* and monitor

Level 2: In-Depth Assessment Steps
1. Assemble Level 2 Assessment team
2. Complete *Teacher Information Forms*
3. Give notice and conduct *Student and Parent Interviews*

File records in admin. folder

- Community Resources
- Mental Health Evaluation/Treatment

Implement *Plan of Action* and monitor

Threat Assessment Procedures Manual - 2017

Initial Response Flowchart

INITIAL RESPONSE

Threat of Violence Toward Other(s)

Contact Broward District Schools Police if imminent danger to others (754-321-0725)

Medium or High level of threat

Submit SIU Immediate Notification and go to Level 1: Screening

Administrator completes Initial Response Process: *Initial Statement Interview* and *Assessing Level of Threat Form*

Low level of threat Unfounded concerns

Monitor and provide needed supports

TASKS TO COMPLETE

☐ Gather information regarding threat
  - o Administrator interviews at-risk student and available witnesses using the *Initial Statement Interview Guide*

☐ Assess level of threat
  - o Administrator completes *Assessing Level of Threat Checklist*

☐ Contact Broward District Schools Police Department
  - o By phone, when needed (immediately if imminent danger)
  - o Submit SIU *Immediate Notification Form*, when needed

☐ Determine if Level 1: Screening is needed
  - o If screening is needed, assemble Level 1 site team
  - o If screening is not needed, monitor and provide needed supports

Initial Response Steps

School Administrator:

- Receives report of a threat and contacts Broward School's Special Investigative Unit if potential imminent danger to others

- Obtains initial statement from student who made the threat and interviews other witnesses

- Assesses the level of threat using *Assessing Level of Threat Checklist* in the manual

Low/No Risk of Harm

- Threat content is vague, lacks both detail and plausibility
- Content suggests the person is unlikely to carry out the threat
- Threat context suggests lack of access to weapons/resources, lack of motivation/intent, and does not present with a history of conflict or related violent behaviors
- False report of a threat

Medium Risk for Harm

- Threat is more direct, detailed, and concrete than a low level threat
- It could be carried out, though it does not appear entirely realistic
- Content suggests student has given at least some thought to how he/she would carry out the threat
- Context may indicate possible access to weapons/resources, has a history of conflict or violent behaviors, or an intent to carry out that particular threat

High Risk for Harm

- Threat content is direct, specific, and plausible

- Threat poses serious danger to the safety of others

- Context indicates the student has *secured* weapons/resources, has a history of conflict and previous high-risk behaviors, and has a *definite* intent to carry out that particular threat

Determining Next Steps

Low Level or False Report
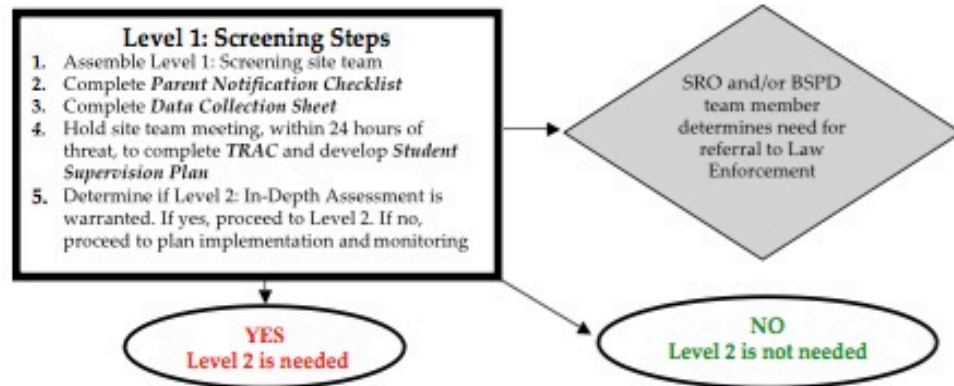- Monitor and provide supports to the student and family

Medium or High Level Threat
- Submit SIU *Immediate Notification Form*
- Convene school-based threat assessment team for immediate Level 1 screening

Level 1 Flowchart

LEVEL 1: SCREENING

Level 1: Screening Steps
1. Assemble Level 1: Screening site team
2. Complete *Parent Notification Checklist*
3. Complete *Data Collection Sheet*
4. Hold site team meeting, within 24 hours of threat, to complete *TRAC* and develop *Student Supervision Plan*
5. Determine if Level 2: In-Depth Assessment is warranted. If yes, proceed to Level 2. If no, proceed to plan implementation and monitoring

SRO and/or BSPD team member determines need for referral to Law Enforcement

YES
Level 2 is needed

NO
Level 2 is not needed

TASKS TO COMPLETE

☐ Assemble Level 1 site team and assign responsibilities
☐ Complete parent notification process
  o Use *Parent Notification Checklist* to guide you
☐ Collect pertinent background and related data
  o Use *Threat Screening Protocol Data Collection Sheet*
☐ Complete the *Threat Risk Assessment Checklist* (TRAC)
☐ Complete the *Student Supervision Plan*
  o Implement the plan with clear assignment of responsibilities for monitoring
  o Review and evaluate the effectiveness of the plan after 2 weeks, or earlier if warranted (use the *Student Supervision Plan Review Form*)
☐ Determine if Level 2: In-Depth Assessment is needed
  o If in-depth assessment is needed, assemble Level 2 site team
  o If Level 2 not needed, continue with implementation and monitoring of *Student Supervision Plan*
☐ Maintain a record of all actions and documents in secure administration file (not in the CUM file)
☐ Enter a code of 208 on L27 Panel when screening is complete

Level 1 Steps

- Assemble team and assign responsibilities for data collection
- Parent contact must be initiated
- Data collection (review of educational records)
- Complete *The Threat Risk Assessment Checklist (TRAC)*
- Develop *Student Supervision Plan*
- Determine need for Level 2 assessment

The Threat Risk Assessment Checklist (TRAC)

- The FBI recommends consideration of past/current behaviors and factors that might influence a student's decision-making
- The TRAC includes 33 questions organized into 10 categories to assist educators in evaluating threat-related behaviors

  - Aggression
  - Depression
  - Alienation
  - Narcissism
  - Family

  - School
  - Social
  - Personal
  - Coping
  - Stress

Student Supervision Plan

- The results of the TRAC may be used to develop specific interventions that are documented on a *Student Supervision Plan*
- Interventions may include (but are not limited to):
  - Immediate notification to SIU (*required*)
  - Suicide Assessment
  - Peer mediation
  - Behavior Intervention Plan
  - Counseling Referral
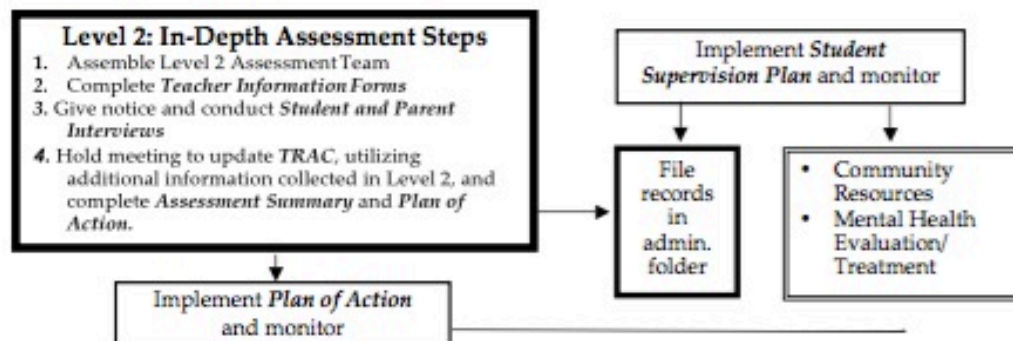
Determining Need for Level 2 Assessment

Level 2 Assessment is warranted if:

- Several concerns are identified through the data collection process
- Additional clinical information and a non-school based perspective is needed
- Further information is needed to complete the *TRAC*
- Further information needed for development or revision of the *Student Supervision Plan*

Level 2 Flowchart

LEVEL 2: IN-DEPTH ASSESSMENT

Level 2: In-Depth Assessment Steps

1. Assemble Level 2 Assessment Team
2. Complete *Teacher Information Forms*
3. Give notice and conduct *Student and Parent Interviews*
4. Hold meeting to update *TRAC*, utilizing additional information collected in Level 2, and complete *Assessment Summary* and *Plan of Action*.

Implement *Student Supervision Plan* and monitor

Implement *Plan of Action* and monitor

File records in admin. folder

- Community Resources
- Mental Health Evaluation/Treatment

TASKS TO COMPLETE

❏ Assemble Level 2 site team and assign responsibilities
❏ Notify parents of intent to complete further in-depth assessment
    o Use *Parent Notification Checklist* to document contacts
❏ Collect in-depth information and data
    o Appropriate teachers complete *Teacher Information Form*
    o Designated mental health professional completes *Student Interview*
    o Designated mental health professional completes *Parent Interview*
❏ Team updates TRAC in light of new information collected
❏ Team completes *Assessment Summary and Plan of Action*
    o Team clearly indicates which aspects of *Student Supervision Plan* are still in effect as well as new provisions on the *Plan of Action*
    o Implement *Plan of Action* and monitor effectiveness
    o After a designated period of time (e.g., 2 weeks) evaluate plan using the *Plan of Action Review Form*
❏ Maintain a record of all actions and documents in secure administration file (not in the CUM file)
❏ Enter a code of 209 on L27 Panel when in-depth assessment is complete

Components of Level 2 Assessment

- Assessment at this level requires a more clinical approach to gather information

- Involves an interview with the parent, student, and teacher(s) that leads to the identification of factors contributing to potential risk for violence, such as:
  - Behavioral/personality factors
  - School issues
  - Family issues
  - Peer related issues

Outcomes of Level 2 Assessment

- The assessment may lead to a modification of the *Student Supervision Plan* and requires the completion of the *Level 2 Assessment Summary and Plan of Action*

- Actions may include:
  - Referral to community resources
  - Development and implementation of behavior intervention plan
  - Development and implementation of Student Safety Plan
  - Increased supervision
  - Mental health evaluation
  - Disciplinary actions

Records Maintenance

- Consistent with the maintenance of disciplinary records, threat assessment records are secured by the school-based administrator
- A "flag" indicating the existence of an administrative file should be placed in the cumulative folder
- The appropriate threat assessment code is entered into the district's database

Anonymous Reporting System

While district staff are trained on the Threat Assessment Procedures, anyone within the community can make an anonymous report directly to Broward Schools' Special Investigative Unit (SIU) in multiple ways:

- **Website:** http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/siu/siunew/tipsemail.asp
- **Phone Number:** (754) 321-0911
- **Email:** school911@browardschools.com
- **Text:** Send a text to CRIMES 274637. Message MUST begin with SBBC

References

The School Shooter: A Threat Assessment Perspective (2000), O'Toole, M.E., Supervisory Special Agent, FBI.

Threat Assessment Procedures Manual (2017). The School Board of Broward County, FL: http://bcps-mentalhealth.com/downloads/Threat_Assessment_Manual_Update_2017.pdf