

Protocol for Handling Potential Threats:

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- Principal or Assistant Principal immediately removes student who reportedly made the threat from classroom. Principal or Assistant Principal should bring the student and the student's belongings to the Principal's or Assistant Principal's office.
- Student should not be left alone once a potential threat has been reported.
- Principal informs School Resource Officer of alleged threat. From this point on, Principal is in constant contact and collaboration with Cohasset Police.
- Principal or Assistant Principal interviews student who potentially made the threat to ascertain the scope and specifics of potential threat.
- Principal informs Superintendent and Director of Student Services.
- If circumstances establish reasonableness of a search by school officials, Principal or Designee with witness (witness can be a guidance counselor or school psychologist) conducts a search which, depending on the circumstances, may include the student, student's vehicle, student's locker, belongings and, has student empty pockets (no touching of student).
- If any weapon is found, Principal or Designee immediately call authorities. Depending on the situation, this discovery may result in school lockdown.
- If a search of the student's person is warranted and circumstances permit awaiting the arrival of police, the Administration will summon the police, alert the police to the circumstances leading to Administration's conclusion that a search of the student's person is warranted, and defer to police as to whether the police will search the student's person.
- If Principal determines that conditions set forth in 603 CMR 53.07 apply, Principal removes student from school on "emergency removal" pending suspension hearing. Principal contacts student's family and follows-up with appropriate letters / notices to student's family of emergency removal and suspension hearing. Such notices will include reference to applicable sources of authority, such as MGL Chapter 71, Section 37H, 37H ½ and/or Section 37H ¾.
- To the greatest degree possible, Principal awaits guidance from Cohasset Police on whether they are pursuing charges (to the extent possible, let them complete their investigation and provide school with clearance to complete their investigation before proceeding).
- Family of student that allegedly made the potential threat should be asked, but may not be compelled, to provide medical clearance (mental health) to return to school from a licensed physician who is competent to assess the risk posed by the student's presence to the school.
- If there is/are direct student or staff potential targets, Cohasset Police are to be informed. Principal will work with Cohasset Police to determine who will contact the potential targets. If Cohasset Police allow the Principal to contact potential targets, the Principal

will work with the Superintendent and Director of Student Services to maintain appropriate confidentiality.

- Once Cohasset Police have provided clearance for the school to investigate, the Principal will collaborate with the Threat Assessment Team to determine if threat is viable.

Threat Assessment Team at Each Building: Principal (and Assistant Principal, if there is one), School Resource Officer, School Psychologist, School Adjustment Counselor / Guidance Counselor, School Social-Worker (if there is one), BCBA (if needed), Director of Student Services, Superintendent.

- Before meeting with the Threat Assessment Team, the Principal or Designee will engage in the following:
 - Review of the threatening behavior or communication.
 - Review of school and other records for any prior history or interventions with the individual(s) involved.
 - Conducting timely and thorough interviews (as necessary) of the person(s) who reported the threat, the recipient(s) or target(s) of the threat, other witnesses who have knowledge of the threat, and where reasonable, the individual(s) who allegedly engaged in the threatening behavior or communication. (The purpose of the interviews is to evaluate the individual's threat in context, so that the meaning of the threat and intent of the student can be determined).
- Principal or Assistant Principal conducts suspension hearing.
- Principal shares results of interviews and review with the Threat Assessment Team for input.
- If it is determined by the Principal, working with the Threat Assessment Team, that the threat is not identifiable or presents a remote risk of violence or harm to self or others, and the Principal, working with the threat assessment team, determines that no further assessment, intervention, or monitoring is required at this time to prevent violence:
 - The Principal shall ensure that the incident and review is adequately documented.
 - If the individual (about whom the report was made) does not pose a threat but could benefit from or is in need of some other need of assistance, the Principal shall ensure that the individual is referred to the appropriate school or community-based resources.
 - If it cannot be determined with a reasonable degree of confidence that the alleged threat is no/low threat, then a more in-depth assessment is to be undertaken by the threat assessment team (possibly work completed by BCBA) to determine the nature and degree of any safety concerns and to develop strategies to prevent violence and reduce risk, as necessary. The

results of this work could result in a safety plan to be administered at the building level.

- The incident may still require discipline. In those cases, the student and family will be informed of the discipline (as a follow-up to the suspension hearing).

- Upon a determination by the Principal in collaboration with the Threat Assessment Team that a student poses a threat of violence or physical harm to self or others, the Principal shall immediately report this determination to the superintendent.
- Principal informs student's family of determination in writing (using appropriate letters / notices) and in a phone call, as a follow-up to suspension hearing.
- Students with disabilities must receive IDEA procedural safeguards prior to disciplinary removal of more than ten cumulative school days in a school year.

Sources

<https://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/sites/dcjs.virginia.gov/files/publications/law-enforcement/threat-assessment-model-policies-procedures-and-guidelinespdf.pdf>

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-safety-and-crisis/systems-level-prevention/threat-assessment-at-school>