

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Threat Assessments in Wichita Public Schools

What is a threat assessment?

It is a process that identifies the precursors of violence. Also, it initiates an intervention process to stop violent acts before they erupt. The goal of a threat assessment is to help determine how credible and serious the threat is and to what extent does the person making the threat appear to have the resources, intent, and motivation to carry out the threat.

What is the threat assessment process based on?

Research conducted by the Secret Service, the FBI, and the U.S. Department of Education. Findings from their research have been published in a guide entitled "Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates."

What is the definition of a threat?

It is an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. A threat can be spoken, written, or symbolic.

Who conducts the actual threat assessment?

Only Drug and Violence Prevention Specialists with the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools who have been extensively trained and inserviced on the current threat assessment protocol may conduct threat assessments.

Should discipline decisions be based on the information gained in the threat assessment?

The threat assessment is not punitive and should not be considered part of the disciplinary process. It should be used to determine the likelihood that a threat will be carried out. While it is not a diagnostic tool, it can assist schools in information gathering to initiate an intervention process to stop violent acts before they erupt.

Can a parent be present for during the threat assessment interview?

Having other individuals present during the assessment interview tends to inhibit the process. If requested, the assessor can be available to answer questions and provide feedback to the parent following the assessment.

When will I receive a final threat assessment report?

Immediately following the assessment, the threat assessor will meet with the administrator (and other key staff i.e. SRO, counselor, social worker) to share information gathered during the assessment. Within five days the assessor will also provide the administrator with a written summary and a list of suggested follow-up recommendations. Parents may request a copy of the threat assessment summary via written request only. Requests should be submitted in writing to:

Safety Services Department
Wichita Public Schools
3850 N. Hydraulic
Wichita KS, 67219