

POLICY

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School Threat Assessment Teams (M)

[See POLICY ALERT No. 231]

2419 SCHOOL THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS (M)

The Board of Education shall establish a threat assessment team at each school in the district pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.4. The purpose of a threat assessment team shall be to provide school teachers, administrators, and other staff with assistance in identifying students of concern, assessing those students' risk for engaging in violence or other harmful activities, and delivering intervention strategies to manage the risk of harm for students who pose a potential safety risk, to prevent targeted violence in the school, and ensure a safe and secure school environment that enhances the learning experience for all members of the school community.

Threat assessment teams established pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.4.a., ~~and~~ this Policy, **and Regulation 2419** must be multidisciplinary in membership and, to the extent possible, ~~shall~~ **must** include the following individuals:

1. A school psychologist, school counselor, school social worker, or other school employee with expertise in student counseling;
2. A teaching staff member;
3. A ~~school~~ Principal or other senior school administrator;
4. A safe schools resource officer or school employee who serves as a school liaison to law enforcement; and
5. The school safety specialist designated pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.3. and Policy 7440, in the event that the school safety specialist is not already a school administrator or school employee required to be a part of the threat assessment team pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.4.~~b.(5)~~.



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Additional school employees may serve as regular members of the threat assessment team or may be consulted during the threat assessment process, as determined to be appropriate by the team.

Nothing contained in N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.4 shall be construed as affecting the provisions of any collective bargaining agreement or individual contract of employment in effect on the effective date pursuant to N.J.S.A. ~~18A:17-43.3~~ ~~18A:14-43.4~~ (August 1, 2022).

This Policy and Regulation 2419, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.5, are **required pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.4, shall be** aligned with the Guidance on the Establishment of Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Teams (BTAM) 2023 (Guidance) **guidelines** developed by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.6. ~~and shall include, but need not be limited to:~~

1. ~~Guidance for students, teaching staff members, and all school staff members regarding the recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior in a student that may represent a threat to the school community;~~
2. ~~The designation of members of the school community to whom threatening behavior shall be reported;~~
3. ~~The development and implementation of policies concerning the assessment and intervention of students whose behavior poses a threat to the safety of the school community, and appropriate actions to be taken, including available social, developmental, and law enforcement resources, for students whose behavior is identified as posing a threat to the safety of the school community;~~



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~~4. Coordination and consultation with the school safety specialist designated pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.3, and Policy 7440; and~~

~~5. The threat assessment team shall not disclose or disseminate any information obtained during their assessment beyond the purpose for which the information was provided to the threat assessment team, except that the threat assessment team is authorized to disclose the information to applicable agencies to pursue appropriate action pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.5.a.(3) for any student whose behavior is identified as posing a threat to the safety of the school community.~~

The school district shall structure the threat assessment teams to best meet the needs and resources available, which may include school-based teams and/or district-level teams.

The Superintendent or designee will build a behavioral threat assessment and management program that will: establish a multi-disciplinary team; define prohibited and concerning behaviors; create a central reporting mechanism; define a threshold for law enforcement intervention; establish threat assessment procedures; develop risk management options; create and promote safe school climates; and conduct training for all stakeholders.

The threat assessment and management process will include: the threat assessment team's actions when first learning of a new report or threat; screening the case; gathering information; organizing and analyzing information; making the assessment; developing and implementing a case management/intervention plan; re-assessing and case monitoring; and documenting and closing the case.



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When assessing a student whose behavior may pose a threat to the safety of the school community, in the case of a student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan, the threat assessment team shall consult with the IEP team or 504 team to determine whether the aberrant behavior is a threat to school safety and is being properly addressed in a manner that is required by N.J.A.C. 6A:14 and all Federal and State special education laws.

Each member of the threat assessment team ~~must attend shall participate in~~ training ~~in accordance with provided by the school safety specialist designated pursuant to~~ N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.4~~3~~, ~~this and~~ Policy, and Regulation 7440 that is consistent with the ~~Guidance guidelines~~ developed by the NJDOE pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.6. ~~Training must be coordinated with the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning (OSPEP).~~ The training shall ensure the threat assessment team is able to accurately assess student behavior and to ensure that threat assessment teams do not have a disparate impact on students based on their race, ethnicity, homelessness status, religious belief, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status. The training shall, at a minimum, include training on adverse childhood experiences, childhood trauma, cultural competency, and implicit bias.

~~The NJDOE, in consultation with State law enforcement agencies and the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, shall develop guidelines for school districts regarding the establishment and training of threat assessment teams pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.4 et seq. The NJDOE shall provide training through the New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy established pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.2. The school safety specialist designated pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.3. and Policy 7440 shall provide training to school staff consistent with the training and guidelines provided by the NJDOE.~~

~~Should a threat assessment team become aware of an allegation of HIB when considering or conducting assessments, they must follow Policy 5512 – Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying for addressing allegations of HIB in alignment with the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act.~~



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Should a threat assessment team become aware of a bias-related act, the team should implement Policy and Regulation 8465 – Bias Crimes and Bias-Related Acts on reporting bias-related acts to law enforcement in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials and Policy and Regulation 9320 – Cooperation With Law Enforcement Agencies.

Questions and concerns about Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) protections often arise as part of the threat assessment planning process. The threat assessment teams must understand how to balance the safety of the school with the privacy of individual students. These laws should not be an impediment to threat assessment and management.

N.J.S.A. 18A:17-43.3; 18A:17-43.4; 18A:17-43.5; 18A:17-43.6

Guidance on the Establishment of Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Teams (BTAM) 2023

First and Second Reading and Adopted: August 17, 2023

Revised and First Reading: **May 22, 2024**

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