Forming a School Behavioral Threat Assessment Team
1. Introduction to Threat Assessments in Schools

2. Common Elements of an Effective Threat Assessment

3. Q&A Session
Threat Assessment Definition

A fact-based investigative and analytical approach that:

- focuses on what a particular student is doing and saying, and;
- not on whether the student "looks like" those who have attacked schools in the past.

Threat assessment emphasizes the importance of such behavior and communications for identifying, evaluating and reducing the risk posed by a student who may be thinking about or planning for a school-based attack.

(The Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative, p. 41)
The Safe School Initiative (SSI)

Examined targeted violence from

- 41 attackers
- in 37 incidents
- between 1974 and 2000
The primary purpose of a threat assessment is to **prevent targeted violence in schools** by students.

Additional considerations include:

1. **Type of threat(s):** Targeted violence and bullying, self-harm, fighting, etc.?
2. **Population:** Students and adults?
What is a Threat Assessment?

Threat assessment is a multi-step process that is designed to:

1. Gather information
2. Evaluate facts
3. Determine threat
4. Manage threat
Threat Assessments and the Six-Step Planning Process

**STEP 1**
Form a Collaborative Planning Team
- Identify Core Planning Team
- Form a Common Framework
- Define and Assign Roles and Responsibilities
- Determine a Regular Schedule of Meetings

**STEP 2**
Understand the Situation
- Identify Threats and Hazards
- Assess Risk
- Prioritize Threats and Hazards

**STEP 3**
Determine Goals and Objectives
- Develop Goals
- Develop Objectives

**STEP 4**
Plan Development (Identifying Courses of Action)

**STEP 5**
Plan Preparation, Review, & Approval
- Format the Plan
- Write the Plan
- Review the Plan
- Approve and Share the Plan

**STEP 6**
Plan Implementation & Maintenance
- Train Stakeholders
- Exercise the Plan
- Review, Revise, and Maintain the Plan
Traditional EOP Format

- SCHOOL EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN
  - BASIC PLAN
  - FUNCTIONAL ANNEXES
  - THREAT AND HAZARD-SPECIFIC ANNEXES
Inclusion in EOP

Behavioral Threat Assessment Annex
- Identify team representatives
- Comply with applicable laws

Public Health, Medical, and Mental/Behavioral Health Annex
- Support the needs of identified students

Security Annex
- Respond to threats
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Identification of Elements

Elements are based on:

• A comprehensive literature review of:
  – Findings from the SSI
  – Existing threat assessment approaches and their impacts on school climate and school violence
  – Lessons learned

• Subject matter expertise of the REMS team.
Common Elements

1. Integrated into a K-12 school safety and emergency management framework
2. Supported by mandates, laws, and partners
3. Defined with clear policies, purpose, roles and responsibilities
4. Conducted with a collaborative process
Common Elements

5. Performed by a trained, multidisciplinary team

6. Conducted along a continuum

7. Supportive of the student(s) posing the threat and target(s)

8. Continually evaluated and adjusted, if needed
1. Integrated into K-12 school safety and emergency management framework

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<tr>
<th>May be one tool to help improve school climate</th>
<th>Included in an EOP</th>
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**Common Elements**

2. Supported by mandates, laws, and partners

| Mandates or laws | Partners |
3. Defined with clear policies, purpose, roles and responsibilities

- Policies
- Purpose
- Roles and Responsibilities
Common Elements

4. Conducted with a collaborative process with information coming from various sources

Internally | Externally
5. Performed by a trained, multidisciplinary team
Common Elements

6. Conducted along a continuum

School Enquiry

Law Enforcement Investigation
Common Elements

7. Supportive of the student(s) posing the threat and target(s)

Student(s) posing threat

Target(s) of threat
Common Elements

8. Continually evaluated and adjusted, if needed

Evaluation

Adjustment
Agenda

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2. Common Elements of an Effective Threat Assessment
3. Q&A Session
Q&A Session
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