Wisconsin School Threat Assessment and Management Protocol (WSTAMP-R 24)

A Guide for Multidisciplinary Threat Assessment Teams

Wisconsin Department of Justice Office of School Safety

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SPEAK UP OUT WISCONSIN

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This document reflects the law as of the date of its publication. It may be superseded or affected by other versions or changes in the law.

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INTRODUCTION

School violence is preventable. School-based threat assessment teams are an effective intervention practice and one of the key components to comprehensive school safety. Behavioral threat assessment and management (BTAM) is a fact-based, systematic process designed to identify, assess, and manage potentially dangerous or violent situations (NASP, 2021). Research and collective experience of experts in the field provide knowledge and best practice guidelines for conducting threat assessment in various settings, including the school environment.

Threat assessment and management are intertwined, such that one without the other will only be partially effective. Threat assessment can be defined as the process of evaluating behavior, and the circumstances surrounding the behavior, to uncover any facts or evidence that someone ***poses*** a threat to themselves or others. Often the focus can erroneously be put on trying to determine if the student ***made*** a threat when the central question for threat inquiry or assessment is whether the student ***poses*** a threat.

The process of assessing risks to a particular target, individual, or group of individuals, and designing and implementing intervention and management strategies to reduce the risk or threat is the definition of threat management. BTAM in schools is often referred to as a problem-solving approach to violence prevention. This involves assessment of students who have demonstrated a concern for violence and focuses on helping the student solve the problem with interventions and supports (Cornell, 2023).

Threat assessment scholars provide the following as considerations for what BTAM **is**:

- Systematic and fact-based
- Incorporates collection and analysis of multiple sources of information
- Focuses on the patterns of thinking and behavior
- Takes into consideration individual and dynamic factors
- Identifies escalating behaviors
- Asks the question: do they POSE a threat?
- Determines level of concern based on behaviors detected
- Based on goal of risk management (interrupt pathway to violence)
- Must measure change (progress monitor) and help individuals off the pathway to violence

They offer the following considerations for what BTAM **is not**:

- Not the same as profiling
- Not adversarial
- Not the same as a disciplinary process
- Not a panacea for safe schools
- Not an educational evaluation, special education evaluation, or a mental health evaluation.
- Not the same as a (functional) behavioral assessment

- Not the same as other types of risk assessments
- Not to be used for the sole purpose of exclusion
- Not used to predict future behavior
- Not limited to physical security measures
- Not "zero tolerance"

It is notable that BTAM is <u>not a tool for predicting future violence,</u> nor is it a foolproof method of assessing a person's risk of harm to others. Rather, this process is preventative in nature. It can help schools identify potential threats of harm or violence and assist in development of an intervention and management plan that addresses both physical and psychological safety of all students. (The above considerations are based on the work of Meloy et. al., 2011; the Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2017; and Reeves and McCarthy, 2021.)

FOUNDATIONS FOR ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING THE BTAM PROCESS

Based on 20 years of research, training, and consultation, the National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) of the United States Secret Service and Department of Homeland Security has developed best practice guidelines for a school-based threat assessment model: Enhancing School Safety using a threat assessment model: An operational guide for preventing targeted school violence (2018). The following information outlines the eight critical components recommended by NTAC to be included in a high-quality BTAM process, with additional best practice considerations for K-12 schools provided by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP, 2021).

Step 1: Multidisciplinary Team Approach

A critical feature in developing an effective, comprehensive violence prevention plan is the establishment of a multi-disciplinary BTAM team. In Wisconsin, we promote the process of threat assessment and maintaining trained threat assessment teams as a model practice, utilized to assess if a student poses a risk of harm at school. Some considerations for establishing the team include:

- Whether to have a single district team, or multiple school-based teams that serve their respective grade levels. Having both a core team at each school and a district leadership team can be valuable for sharing responsibilities. The district BTAM team can be responsible for providing ongoing training opportunities for the school-based teams; establishing protocols, procedures, and policies; planning universal instruction for all staff and students regarding the signs that someone may be planning violence; reviewing data for fidelity and serving in a consultative role when complexities arise.

- Ensuring that the BTAM team is multidisciplinary. Personnel from a variety of disciplines provide teams with varying perspectives and broader access to information and resources. Effective multidisciplinary teams are comprised of pupil service mental health team members (school psychologists, social workers, and counselors), school administrators, teachers, special education staff, mental health navigators, school nurses, school resource officers, and others.

- Specifying a designated leader to ensure documentation and process fidelity.

- Consistently using evidence-informed protocols, procedures and policies that provide the authority to act on reported behaviors, define roles and responsibilities, and provide specific tools and steps for assessment.

- Meeting whenever a concerning behavior is reported, and on a regular basis to engage in training and team building activities.

For additional information and guidance on roles and responsibilities of specific team members, refer to NASP's Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management: Best Practice Considerations.

Step 2: Prohibited and Concerning Behaviors

Behavior occurs along a continuum. Schools need to establish policies that define prohibited behaviors. Prohibited behaviors require an immediate response and might include, but are not limited to, threatening or engaging in violence, bringing a weapon to school, bullying or harassing others, and criminal behavior. Behaviors that are considered concerning, but not indicative of violence, should also be defined. Concerning behaviors that may warrant some type of intervention could include chronic absenteeism, withdrawal, isolation, marked decline in school performance, sudden or dramatic changes in appearance or behavior, and indicators of emotional or mental health symptoms (NTAC, 2018).

A key distinction for BTAM teams is understanding the difference between making a threat and posing a threat. Students may make a threat, but upon further information gathering, the evidence does not support an intent to do harm. Instead, the behavior may be related to a student's age, maturity, disability, impulse, or emotional reaction. This information can provide an opportunity for learning and early intervention. Conversely, a student can pose a threat by displaying concerning behaviors that demonstrate they pose a risk of harming themselves or others, without having made a threat. The BTAM team's assessment can help determine the level of concern a student poses, and what is needed in a plan of support and intervention to mitigate the risk and change the direction of the student's behavior. With the goal of BTAM as a preventative and problem-solving process, it is recommended that teams have a relatively low threshold for convening (NASP, 2021).

Step 3: Central Reporting Mechanism

Students, staff, parents, and other school community stakeholders are often aware when a peer is engaged in concerning behaviors, planning to commit school violence, or is unsafe. Students need a method to report their concerns, and benefit from a school climate that promotes and endorses help-seeking over secrecy.

Providing a range of options for reporting concerns, where students can choose the option that is most comfortable and accessible for them in their moment of concern, encourages bystander reporting. Ensuring that students have access to trusted adults is essential and having a method to report information anonymously or confidentially has proven to be an effective option.

A main component of an effective reporting mechanism includes providing regular and ongoing training and awareness to stakeholders about what types, how and when behaviors should be reported. The eLearning module "Foundations of Targeted Violence Prevention" is a free, self-paced course that enables participants to recognize potentially concerning behaviors and where to report them.

It is important that teams have a proactive way to receive and monitor incoming reports, so concerns are addressed efficiently, especially when they involve life safety. The success of a reporting mechanism depends largely on the confidence stakeholders have that reported concerns will be acted upon, kept confidential, and handled appropriately.

In Wisconsin, a free reporting tipline, Speak Up, Speak Out Wisconsin (SUSO), is available, providing students with immediate, accessible confidential adult support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. SUSO harnesses the power of bystanders, addresses concerns early, and provides opportunities for early intervention and harm prevention. SUSO gives students a tool to break the culture of silence and connect with adults who can help.

Additionally, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the U.S. Secret Service offer a valuable resource when considering a central reporting program: Improving School Safety Through Bystander Reporting: A Toolkit for Strengthening K-12 Reporting Programs.

Step 4: Threshold for Law Enforcement Involvement

Many incidents or concerns presented to the BTAM team can be addressed through a continuum of school resources and supports. However, when reports of concerning behavior involve weapons, threats of violence, physical violence, or concerns about a person's safety, law enforcement must be contacted immediately. Depending on the circumstances, law enforcement may take a direct or consultative role as part of the assessment team and investigation. Their role may be as a resource during the assessment portion and could be supportive as part of the management plan.

A School Resource Officer (SRO) may fill this role and be part of the BTAM Team. If an SRO is not available, teams should involve local law enforcement agencies. The SRO/local law enforcement officer needs to be well-trained in the educational BTAM process. If the law enforcement officer is not a district staff member, it is recommended that schools develop a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that outlines the relationship between the school staff and law enforcement and specifically addresses the responsibilities of law enforcement in the BTAM process.

The role of law enforcement in school-based threat assessment and management will vary, however, the goal of their involvement is not to be punitive in nature. According to NASP (2021), "when following BTAM best practices, behavior is not first reported to criminal authorities unless there is imminent risk." Rather, the first step is to engage the school/district multidisciplinary threat assessment team, which a law enforcement officer is

recommended to be part of, to conduct an assessment, identify a level of concern, and develop a support and management plan.

In Wisconsin, state statute § 175.32 on school violence applies to requirements as related to threat reporting:

> *Wis. Stat. § 175.32(2): Any person who is a mandatory reporter under the child abuse statute, such as a nurse, a medical or mental health professional, a social worker, a school teacher, a school administrator, a school counselor, or any other school employee, or a police or law enforcement officer, is required to report, as described below, if that person, in good faith, believes that there is a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a student, school employee or the public, based on a threat regarding violence in or targeted against a school made by an individual seen in the course of the mandatory reporter's professional duties. The same applies to a member of the clergy unless the member of the clergy receives the information regarding the threat privately where, under the circumstances of the religion or tradition, the communication is expected to be kept private.*

> *Wis. Stat. § 175.32(3): To "report" means, by telephone or in person, to immediately inform a law enforcement agency of the reasons why the reporter believes there is a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a student or school employee or the public.*

> *Wis. Stat. § 175.32(4): Any person or institution participating in good faith in the making of a report under this section shall have immunity from any liability, civil or criminal, that results by reason of the action. Any health care provider, as defined in s. 146.81 (1), who believes in good faith and in his or her professional judgment that a report is not required under this section shall have immunity from any civil liability or criminal penalty for not making such a report. For the purpose of any proceeding, civil or criminal, the good faith of any person reporting under this section shall be presumed.*

> *Wis. Stat. § 175.32(5): Anyone who fails to report as required by law may be fined no more than $1000 or imprisoned for no more than 6 months or both.*

Step 5: Assessment Procedures

The systematic use of threat assessment is a central component in preventing targeted school violence. The threat assessment process involves identifying, assessing, and managing individuals who might pose a risk of violence to an identified or identifiable target. Implementation of a threat assessment process is informed by six underlying principles (Fein et al, 2002):

- **Targeted violence is the end result of an understandable, and oftentimes discernible, process of thinking and behavior.** This type of violence is preventable. It

is the result of a planning and preparation that can occur over a period of days, weeks, months, or years rather than the result of someone who "just snapped." Often, students planning a targeted act, share their thoughts or intentions with others making it possible to identify and intervene prior to any violence.

- **Targeted violence stems from an interaction among the individual, the situation, the setting, and the target.** BTAM teams always consider the context of a threat or concerning behavior as this can factor into the meaning of the behavior and influence the level of concern and corresponding action steps. Teams are reminded to consider the "totality of circumstances" when assessing concerning behaviors.

- **An investigative, skeptical, inquisitive mindset is critical to successful threat assessment.** In contrast, teams should avoid quick conclusions or assumptions. Threat assessment requires thoughtful probing; viewing information with healthy skepticism; and paying attention to key points about pre-attack behaviors, while also striving to be both accurate and fair. Team members should be willing to question each other and discuss whether gathered information makes sense and supports or corroborates any hypothesis about the level of concern a student poses.

- **Effective threat assessment is based upon facts and behavior, not traits or profiles.** There is no reliable profile, or specific list of traits that defines the type of person that commits an act of violence. Teams need to focus on objective facts and behaviors rather than make speculations or draw inferences based on cognitive biases or lack of information when making decisions about whether someone poses a threat.

- **An "integrated systems approach" should guide threat assessment inquiries and investigations.** BTAM teams do not rely on a single source of information when determining the level of concern a student poses. Instead, teams gather information from multiple sources, including—but not limited to—parents, teachers, classmates, witnesses, impacted students, the student of concern, coaches, pupil service staff, records, social media and digital resources. Collaboration with other agencies such as law enforcement, social services, mental health services, or community organizations may provide valuable information as well.

- **The central question in a threat assessment inquiry or investigation is whether a student *poses* a threat, not whether the student has *made* a threat.** The threat assessment process cannot focus only on what a student said or did, rather the team must gather information to help accurately understand the situation and aid in determining whether a student has the intent, capability and means to carry out the threat. Often students make threats but relatively fewer will engage in the planning and preparation necessary to carry it out. All concerning behavior is assessed and addressed keeping in mind the key question of whether the student poses a threat, regardless of whether they made a threat. Although voicing a threat should not be used as the principal determinant in making judgments about the likelihood of a

violent act, it likewise would be a mistake to assume that individuals who make threats in every instance are unlikely to follow through on those communications.

Through decades of research, NTAC has identified themes to explore when conducting threat assessments (NTAC, 2018; NTAC, 2024). A focus on these themes will provide BTAM teams with comprehensive information to assess a level of concern. Understanding the contextual themes that may impact the individual's thinking and behavior, the behavioral themes they have exhibited, and the summative themes will result in a more complete assessment and may be helpful as the team eventually identifies potential intervention opportunities. The assessment themes identified here are not intended to be used as a checklist, nor are they individually predictors of violence, rather they are factors that should be evaluated in context when conducting a behavioral threat assessment. Further, some of the identified themes involve activities that are protected by the Constitution and should be viewed with those protections in mind. These assessment themes, outlined in the tables below, have been incorporated into the Wisconsin protocol (WSTAMP-R24) and serve as a framework to aid the BTAM team in analyzing collected information and understanding the individual's behavior, the context, and ultimately the level of concern that is posed.

Contextual Themes	
Stressors	Significant setbacks, losses and other life challenges that may be acute or chronic; may be experienced across life domains.
Home Life	Impact of family dynamics or home environments. The impact can be protective or may have a negative impact.
	Positive: supportive family, healthy relationships, other positive dynamics to support intervention efforts.
	Negative: family discord, abuse, drug use, criminality, domestic violence, mental/physical health concerns, death, dissolution of relationships.
Mental Health	Current or previous history of mental health symptoms (may or may not be formally diagnosed) that may negatively impact individual, particularly if untreated, i.e. paranoia, delusions, hallucinations, depression, suicidality.
Criminal History	History of criminal behaviors in formal records, or gathered via interviews, including arrests, convictions, legal actions, contacts with law enforcement or juvenile court; may include criminal behavior and contacts with law enforcement and the courts that have not resulted in official legal actions.

Interpersonal Difficulties	Pattern of strained or conflicted relationships with family members, romantic partners, friends, co-workers, classmates, neighbors, teachers, or other community members; inability to form or sustain positive relationships with others due to individual's inappropriate or concerning behaviors.
Lack of Consequences	Pattern of engaging in criminal or inappropriate/concerning behavior for which the consequences were either absent or not commensurate with the behavior.

Behavioral Themes	
Concerning or Threatening Communications	Any violent, threatening, or disturbing communications which may be conveyed verbally (e.g. In-person or via phone), in writing (e.g., journals or drawings), electronically (e.g. text messages or emails), online (e.g. websites, blogs or social media), or by other means.
Interest in Violent Topics	Unusual or excessive interest in weapons, violence, gore, prior attacks, notorious killers, or other concerning topics. Particular concern should arise if the individual demonstrates an idolization of or desire to emulate past attackers.
History of Violence	Prior acts of physical violence against people, animals, or property that may appear in criminal records or may be observed or experienced by others, including physical and sexual assaults, domestic/family violence, animal cruelty, aggressively menacing behaviors or arsons. A history of violence may reveal signs of an escalation in aggressive behavior.
Stalking, Harassing, or Bullying	Pattern of conduct that willfully and maliciously causes another to feel bullied, stalked, persecuted, threatened, injured, or attacked; may or may not involve a pre-existing relationship.
Extreme Beliefs	Extreme ideological, political, or conspiratorial beliefs that advocate hate or violence, form the basis of an individual's worldview or significantly influence an individual's daily life. Extreme beliefs may be based on distortion of facts or may advocate distrust, hatred, or the use of violence targeting others based on biases.
Fixations	An intense or obsessive preoccupation with a person, event, activity, or belief to the point where it negatively impacts aspects of an individual's life.

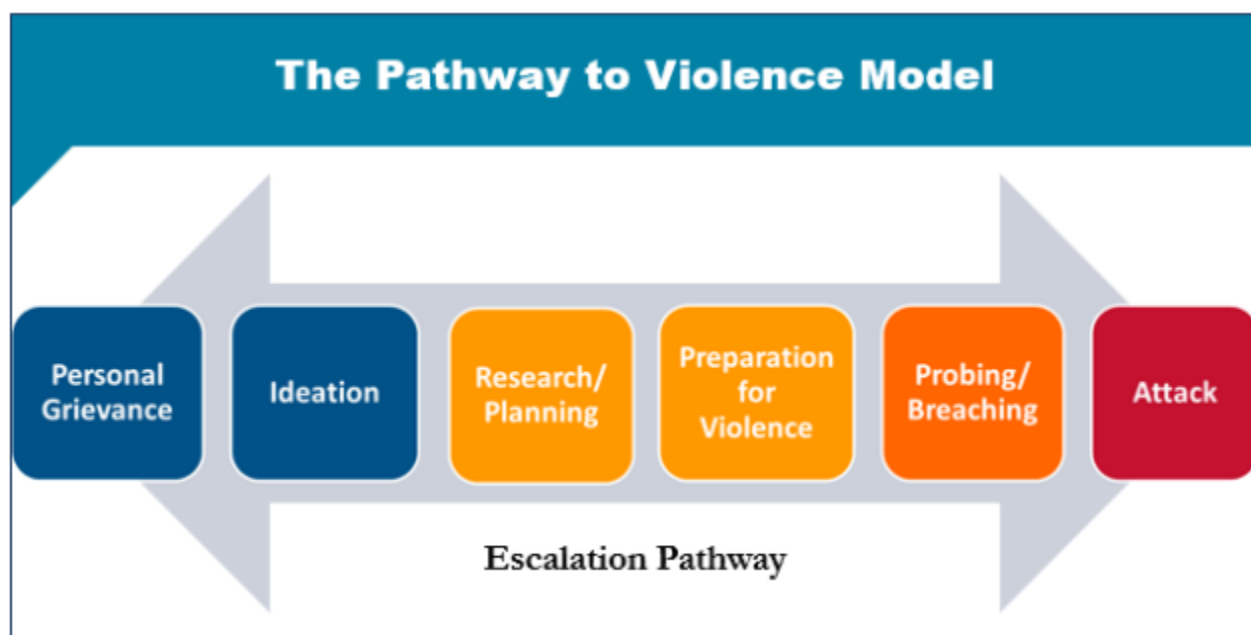|	
Behavior Changes	Changes in behavior observable to others, including notable shifts in mental, social, occupational, physical, or interpersonal functioning. May be evidenced through changes in mood, appearance or hygiene; withdrawing or isolating from others; new or increased substance abuse; sudden aggressive, violent or threatening behavior; changes in work or school attendance or performance; signs of depression or paranoia; or other uncharacteristic actions that demonstrate a distinct change from an individual's baseline behavior.
Desperation or Despair	Feeling hopeless, despondent, desperate, or out of options. An individual's inability to perceive an improvement in their situation may lead to feelings of extreme distress, depression, frustration, and the perception that violence is the only option to cope with their circumstances.
Intense Anger or Aggression	Pattern of intense or escalating anger or aggression that is observed through the individual's behavior, communication, or reported feelings. This may be marked by impulsive angry outbursts, significant overreaction to circumstances or events, or frequent episodes of verbal or physical aggression directed at others.
Inconsistency	Evidence of unusual inconsistencies in an individual's communications and behaviors that may occur across the various community systems in their lives. When inconsistencies are found, these may be indicative of efforts to conceal violent intentions or behavior.
Planning and Final Acts	Specific steps taken to prepare to carry out an act of violence, including researching, visiting, or following potential targets; researching, manufacturing, acquiring, or practicing with weapons; documenting preparations for an attack through hit lists, to-do lists, maps, or manifestos; researching prior attacks and tactics; developing attack plans; researching logistical concerns; or using deceptive practices to hide activities. Individuals may also engage in final acts intended to make a statement or to prepare for their inevitable arrest or death. These acts may include drafting a last will and testament, making financial arranges for family members, leaving farewell messages or notes, posting goodbye messages online, and selling or giving away personal possessions.

Summative Themes	
Motive	The reason(s) why the individual engaged in the behavior that elicited concern or brought them to the attention of law enforcement; includes assessing the reasons that may drive an individual to carry out an act of violence; may be multifaceted and include retaliating for grievances or perceived wrongs; furthering ideological, bias-related, or political beliefs; acting in response to psychotic symptoms; having a desire to kill; achieving fame or notoriety; or committing suicide-by-cop.
Elicited Concern in Others	The individual's behaviors or communications have caused fear, alarm, worry, or distress in those that have observed them. Particular attention should be paid to whether others are in fear for their safety as a result of the individual's behavior.
Access to Weapons	Current or future ability to access weapons that could be used to harm, including firearms, bladed weapons, explosives, chemicals or poisons. Access to weapons may include those that are readily available to the individual in their home, whether secured or unsecured, as well as those accessible in the homes of relatives or friends.

Key data sources to consider gathering information from include the following (NASP, 2021):

- Current school academic and discipline records, including previous threat and suicide assessments

- Previous school academic, mental health, and discipline records

- Interviews (student of concern, potential target/victim, parent/guardian, teachers/school staff, witnesses, classmates, friends, and others who may have information about the student or the situation)

- Law enforcement records of the student of concern

- Search of student, locker, car (if applicable) on school property, according to district policy

- Search (or search warrant) of room/home/vehicle with law enforcement, if appropriate

- Internet histories/activities; written and artistic materials, etc.

- Social media history/activity

- Information from probation, juvenile diversion, social services, or other involved agencies

- Additional information, if determined necessary/helpful

There is no one profile or checklist of a school shooter, instead we look at signs that an individual may be on the pathway to intended violence. Understanding these warning behaviors is critical to prevent violence and assist youth that are struggling to manage their emotions and social interactions. One way to conceptualize this general process is the Pathway to Intended Violence Model created by Frederick Calhoun and Steve Weston (2023), two leading experts in the field of targeted violence prevention.

The Pathway to Violence Model

| Personal Grievance | Ideation | Research/ Planning | Preparation for Violence | Probing/ Breaching | Attack |

Escalation Pathway

Pathway to Violence model, Calhoun and Weston (2023)

This model does not assert that there is only one pathway to intended violence but rather provides a conceptual framework to understand an individual's progression from thought to action. It is a model for understanding the general progression to violence. It is not an exact explanation of all possible violent acts.

The Pathway to Intended Violence Model depicts these acts as deliberate and calculated, not spontaneous. The time and manner that an individual moves up and down a pathway to violence varies from individual to individual. The Pathway to Intended Violence Model is not unidirectional. Someone who is on a pathway to violence is not destined to commit an attack. They can move backwards on a pathway and can also move off the violence pathway with intervention and strong support systems. In addition, an individual can skip steps along a pathway—the order of behaviors in a pathway are not set in stone. For example, an individual may begin research and planning for an attack, then decide not to attack because the logistics are not feasible. This could cause them to return to the ideation stage of the Pathway to Intended Violence Model, where they wish violence upon a target, but do not show the motivation to plan or prepare for an attack.

Those who plan acts of targeted violence do not suddenly "snap," instead they decide to use violence to resolve their upset. Planned, predatory acts of school violence often start with a

personal grievance, often understood only by the subject of concern. If the individual decides to use violence to resolve their grievance, they have moved down the pathway to the ideation phase. Once the decision to use violence has been made, they begin to research, plan, and prepare for violence. During these phases, others frequently observe behaviors of concern. Prior to a violent attack, the offender will attempt to circumvent security measures and breach the threshold, potentially signifying an immediate threat to public safety. The violence escalation pathway is bidirectional. Someone who is moving towards an attack can be guided off the pathway through carefully designed interventions. For more information on the Pathway to Intended Violence warning behaviors, please view the Foundations of Targeted Violence Prevention eLearning module.

BTAM teams need to proactively establish well-defined processes and procedures to guide their assessment. Of equal importance is consistent implementation of the process. When teams follow a clear process, it helps guide them through the steps of gathering data from multiple sources and analyzing the information to gain an accurate understanding of the situation, context, student's thinking, behavior, and any developmental and disability factors. Ultimately, this assessment helps the team determine the level of concern the student poses and to identify interventions to mitigate risk and support the student.

A critical component of this step is determining what tools/forms will be used to obtain information, and to document the assessment and management process. Standardization of this process increases the consistent implementation and fidelity of the process, while also decreasing the potential harmful effects of bias. The team's ability to accurately understand the concerning behavior and any subsequent decisions can be significantly helped or hindered by the quality of the data gathering. Thus, a community systems approach, using multiple sources and multiple methods to gather information, is recommended. Along with keeping the context in mind, the team should consider the student's age and their social emotional development when evaluating their communications and/or concerning behaviors. When the team demonstrates that their goal is twofold—ensuring the safety of all while providing interventions to struggling students—they build positive relationships, rapport and trust, which ultimately facilitates information gathering efforts.

Step 6: Risk Management Options

Once collected and analyzed by the multidisciplinary BTAM team, the data and relevant information are used to identify a level of concern the student poses and guide the team toward specific directive actions and supports to include in a plan of safety and intervention. It is important to note that there is not a specific formula or quantity of risk factors that point to a specific level of concern. The level of concern determined by the team is not predictive of future behavior and should not be associated with an automatic response or intervention. Rather, the team needs to consider all the gathered information—including risk factors, warning signs, situational and contextual factors—in determining the level of concern and the appropriate level of needed intervention. The higher the concern level, the more directive and intensive the safety plan must be. Conversely, lower levels of concern will have a proportionate response (NASP, 2021). The following are offered as guidance in assisting BTAM

teams to conceptualize each level of concern (FBI, 2017; Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety, 2023).

- No/Low level concern: the individual or situation appears to pose a minimal risk of engaging in violent or other harmful behavior, based on the known information. Concerns can be addressed using existing support structures.

- Moderate level concern: available information indicates the possibility of harmful outcomes if current concerning behaviors are not adequately addressed. The behaviors exhibited indicate a need for intervention.

- High level concern: the individual or situation appears to pose a risk of violence or serious harm to self or others. The behaviors exhibited may indicate a continuing intent to harm, escalation of concern, ineffective applied intervention methods, efforts to acquire the capacity to carry out the plan, or other concerning behaviors that require intervention.

- Imminent concern: the individual or situation appears to pose an immediate risk of violence toward self or others that requires immediate containment and action to prevent violence from occurring.

Once teams have completed the assessment and determined a level of concern, they can proceed to developing a risk management plan including strategies that reduce risk for engaging in violence. This plan is developed regardless of the level of concern. It is an individualized plan that includes supports and resources identified as needed through the assessment process.

Effective management plans need to be tailored to the specific themes that cause the team to be concerned that the student poses a risk of harm to themself or to others and include strategies to mitigate potential risks, focus on skill building, increase protective factors, and address safety concerns for the school community. Examples of some resources that may assist a student could include peer support programs, therapeutic counseling, life skills training, coping skill lessons, and tutoring in specific academic subjects. Teams are encouraged to discuss possible options available through the existing school programs and resources, as well as considering options available in the community.

Important to note is that while risk management may involve suspension or expulsion options, removing a student from school does not eliminate the risk to the school community. According to NTAC (2018), teams should develop strategies to stay connected to these students so there is an appropriate response to continued or escalating behaviors of concern. Other considerations for management planning include notifying law enforcement when concerns for violence are imminent; developing safety procedures for the school or individuals who may be a target of violence; creating a situation that is less prone to violence (e.g. blocking access to weapons, connecting with prosocial supports, alternate educational placement); removing or redirecting the motive for the intended violence; and reducing potential sources of stress.

Plans require regular monitoring and review with adjustments occurring when progress is not made as defined in the plan. Plans can be adjusted, lessening restrictions, when progress is demonstrated. Management plans remain in place until the team is no longer concerned about the student or risk for violence.

Step 7: Safe School Climates

Creating and promoting school climates that endorse relationships, help seeking, belonging, and connectedness are critical components of prevention and mitigation efforts. Schools with a culture built on safety, respect, trust, and social and emotional support empower students to share concerns with adults. Students are more likely to report their concerns to an adult when they have a connection to their school, peers, and classmates and they trust that the adults will be responsive.
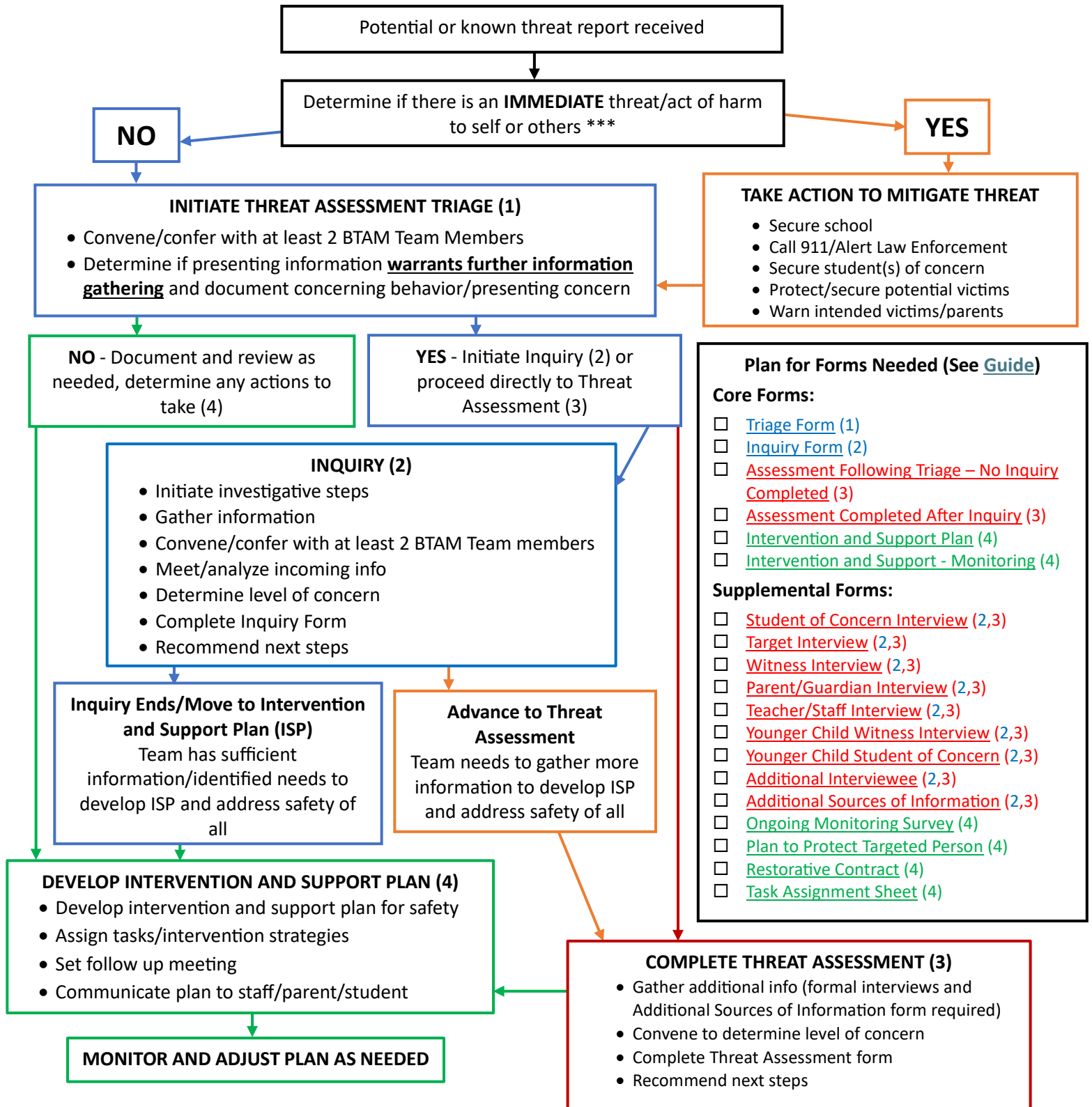
Positive strategies to promote a healthy culture and climate may include curriculum that focus on the following topics: emotional regulation, conflict resolution, problem-solving skills, bullying, suicide, and violence prevention. Schools can support positive school climates by implementing school-wide programs that teach students what appropriate and expected behavior looks like in a variety of school settings. Implementing a multi-level system of supports means providing services, practices, and resources for every learner based upon responsiveness to effective instruction and intervention. For more information, see Wisconsin's Framework for Multi-Level Systems of Supports developed by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

Step 8: Training for all Stakeholders

School safety is the responsibility of all stakeholders (students, staff, parents, community). Thus, a comprehensive School Safety Plan includes training for anyone who potentially could come forward with a concern. This essential step involves providing effective training about what type of information to report and how to report it. It is important for stakeholders to understand the process and purpose of threat assessment. Members of the BTAM teams require high-quality training that focuses on knowledge and skills that are necessary to effectively assess and manage potential risks. It is critical for teams to understand the foundational targeted violence concepts, processes, and protocol implementation, and how bias can impact decision making. Ongoing training will help teams to increase fidelity of implementation and assist the learning process.

BTAM PROCESS FLOWCHART AND PLANNING CHECKLIST

The flowchart and accompanying form checklist help BTAM teams navigate the process of assessing and managing concerning behaviors.

Potential or known threat report received

Determine if there is an **IMMEDIATE** threat/act of harm to self or others ***

NO

YES

TAKE ACTION TO MITIGATE THREAT
- Secure school
- Call 911/Alert Law Enforcement
- Secure student(s) of concern
- Protect/secure potential victims
- Warn intended victims/parents

INITIATE THREAT ASSESSMENT TRIAGE (1)
- Convene/confer with at least 2 BTAM Team Members
- Determine if presenting information **warrants further information gathering** and document concerning behavior/presenting concern

NO - Document and review as needed, determine any actions to take (4)

YES - Initiate Inquiry (2) or proceed directly to Threat Assessment (3)

Plan for Forms Needed (See Guide)

Core Forms:
- ☐ Triage Form (1)
- ☐ Inquiry Form (2)
- ☐ Assessment Following Triage – No Inquiry Completed (3)
- ☐ Assessment Completed After Inquiry (3)
- ☐ Intervention and Support Plan (4)
- ☐ Intervention and Support - Monitoring (4)

Supplemental Forms:
- ☐ Student of Concern Interview (2,3)
- ☐ Target Interview (2,3)
- ☐ Witness Interview (2,3)
- ☐ Parent/Guardian Interview (2,3)
- ☐ Teacher/Staff Interview (2,3)
- ☐ Younger Child Witness Interview (2,3)
- ☐ Younger Child Student of Concern (2,3)
- ☐ Additional Interviewee (2,3)
- ☐ Additional Sources of Information (2,3)
- ☐ Ongoing Monitoring Survey (4)
- ☐ Plan to Protect Targeted Person (4)
- ☐ Restorative Contract (4)
- ☐ Task Assignment Sheet (4)

INQUIRY (2)
- Initiate investigative steps
- Gather information
- Convene/confer with at least 2 BTAM Team members
- Meet/analyze incoming info
- Determine level of concern
- Complete Inquiry Form
- Recommend next steps

Inquiry Ends/Move to Intervention and Support Plan (ISP)
Team has sufficient information/identified needs to develop ISP and address safety of all

Advance to Threat Assessment
Team needs to gather more information to develop ISP and address safety of all

DEVELOP INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT PLAN (4)
- Develop intervention and support plan for safety
- Assign tasks/intervention strategies
- Set follow up meeting
- Communicate plan to staff/parent/student

MONITOR AND ADJUST PLAN AS NEEDED

COMPLETE THREAT ASSESSMENT (3)
- Gather additional info (formal interviews and Additional Sources of Information form required)
- Convene to determine level of concern
- Complete Threat Assessment form
- Recommend next steps

GUIDE FOR THE WISCONSIN SCHOOL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL (WSTAMP-R 2024) PROCESS

School officials should initiate the threat assessment process when information about a student's behavior and/or communications passes an agreed-upon threshold of concern. Upon receiving information concerning a potentially threatening situation, the threat assessment team must first consider: "How much time do we have?" The BTAM process should be initiated as soon as safely possible with priority consideration given to the safety of the school and community. If information concerning a threatening situation suggests that violence is imminent, Wisconsin law requires these threats be reported to law enforcement.

As noted in National Center for School Safety: School Threat Assessment Toolkit, it is important to consider that "although there is no set time frame for completing a threat assessment, they should be conducted promptly and efficiently after a report, both to assure safety and to mitigate disruption to the student and other affected individuals. Students should not be excluded from school for lengthy periods while an assessment is being conducted. If a student with a disability is being assessed, the team should take into consideration the student's disability and confer with the IEP team as appropriate."

The Wisconsin School Threat Assessment and Management Protocol (WSTAMP-R 2024) is an early intervention tool to assist BTAM-trained staff in determining appropriate intervention steps when students exhibit concerning behaviors. The BTAM process continuum includes Triage, Inquiry, Assessment and Case Management. The WSTAMP-R 2024 Process Flowchart maps out the process.

The BTAM process is case specific. Threat assessments may be brief and limited, or extensive and complex. The facts of a situation, together with information developed about a student of concern, will determine the scope of the threat assessment process. Many situations can be understood and resolved after initial information gathering and evaluation. Some cases may proceed to the Assessment process, and others may resolve with the Triage or Inquiry processes. All cases must result in a case management/response plan and need to be monitored over time. New information or failure by the student of concern to comply with the case specific management plan may result in plan adjustments or the initiation of a new Triage/Inquiry/Assessment/Case Management process.

BTAM Process Action Steps

Identify Concerning or Threatening Behavior

Personnel with knowledge of potential threat/concerning behavior must use professional discretion to determine if there is an IMMEDIATE threat/act of harm to self or others that warrants an emergency response (i.e., call 911) or a report to an administrator.

If the individual appears to pose an immediate threat of serious violence to others in the school, staff will notify law enforcement in accordance with *Wis. Stat. § 175.32*.

Take Action to Mitigate Threat

The safety of the school, the students, and the community are the priority consideration. Before activating the BTAM process, actions to mitigate harm may need to occur. Although specific actions are based on the nature and circumstances of the threat, some typical actions may include:

- Increase monitoring or supervision of the student to keep the student and others safe.

- Support and counsel the student, to de-escalate the situation and reduce risk.

- Notify law enforcement, if not already involved.

- Search the student, backpack, locker, vehicle, home, etc. for weapons, if appropriate.

- Warn and counsel any intended target, including notification of parents, if applicable.

- Notify administration and additional relevant school staff.

If at any time information suggests the need for law enforcement or medical assistance, that request should be made immediately AND prior to initiating any investigation (triage, inquiry, and/or assessment).

Initiate Threat Assessment **Triage**

Every concerning or threatening behavior warrants consideration of the context in which the behavior occurred. If there is no imminent threat present, or once such an imminent threat is contained, the threat assessment team leader shall ensure that the situation is triaged. Students make threats and engage in other risky behaviors for a range of reasons. Many threatening statements and actions do not reflect a student's actual risk of harming

themselves or others. Children occasionally say and do "outrageous" things, so a single impulsive, reactive utterance or action ought not, on its own, be seen as determinative in a threat assessment. Initiating the BTAM triage process aids in documenting behaviors, identifying patterns of repeat behavior, documenting the school response to a behavior, and systematically guiding BTAM team members through appropriate steps relevant to the specific concern.

At a minimum, two trained members of the BTAM Team should confer and determine if the available information warrants further action by the BTAM team. This decision and supporting considerations is documented on the Threat Assessment Triage form.

The table below provides specific guidance for the Triage form.

GUIDANCE FOR TRIAGE FORM	
Section Heading or Statement	**Content Directions or Example**
Demographic Information	Document the name of the student of concern (grade/DOB), date/time incident reported/who received report, and the assigned BTAM team members (at least two).
Describe the concerning behavior or give a fact-based account of the incident.	Document the concerning behavior with fact-based observations or verbatim statements including as much detail about person(s) involved, potential targets, and setting information as needed to assist in accurately understanding the situation. Teams will collect the facts that drew attention to the student, the situation, and possibly the targets. How did the student come to the attention of school officials? What behaviors and/or communications were reported, and by whom? What was the situation? Who, if anyone, witnessed the reported behavior of concern? What was the context for the reported behavior, i.e., what else was going on at the time of the reported behavior?
Additional information to aid in understanding the context.	Add information that may be known about the Student(s) of Concern (SOC) or that may help clarify the context of the statement or behavior (i.e.; the student was suspended for similar behavior last week, student experienced a recent loss, there is a known and ongoing difficulty between peers).
Team members discussed presenting information and determined a threat	If team members analyze and discuss the presenting information and any facts about the situation and determine an inquiry or assessment is **not** needed then the team will document information that supports or explains their

inquiry is not warranted at this time, given available and known information about the student and the reported situation (context).	discussion and decision. Based on information collected, the team determines what, if any, strategies or interventions (including supports and countermeasures) are warranted and creates an **Intervention and Support or Response Plan**.
Team members discussed presenting information and determined further action is warranted. An **Inquiry** or **Assessment (Completed Following Triage – No Inquiry)** will be initiated. See additional forms.	Team members analyze and discuss the presenting information and based on the potential for harm, the seriousness of the behavior, or a lack of an accurate understanding of the problem decide more information or further action is needed. This can be documented by checking the associated box and with a summary statement about the team's next steps.

If Warranted, Initiate Inquiry

According to the U.S. Secret Service/U.S. Deparment of Education report, Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates, once a decision has been made to conduct an inquiry, the threat assessment team will initiate the Inquiry process and begin further investigation, starting with development of an information gathering plan. Next steps may include:

1. **Assign tasks for collecting information and set a time for meeting to analyze it and complete the Inquiry form/process.**

2. **Complete the identifying information portion of the Inquiry form.**

3. **Review and document threatening or concerning behavior/communication.** Document the concerning behavior with fact-based observations or verbatim statements including as much detail about persons involved, potential targets, and context information as needed to assist in accurately understanding the situation. Collect the facts that drew attention to the student, the situation, and possibly the targets. How did the student come to the attention of school officials? What behaviors and/or communications were reported, and by whom? What was the situation? Who, if anyone, witnessed the reported behavior of concern? What was the context for the reported behavior, i.e., what else was going on at the time of the reported behavior?

4. **Gather information from a variety of sources.** It is recommended that teams seek information from sources that can aid in accurately understanding the student of concern's thinking, behavior, and current level of functioning. It can include collecting both current and historical data, as well as information about recent stressors, mitigating factors, attack related behaviors, motives, and potential targets.

Information gathering for the Inquiry may include formal or informal methods. The use of structured interviews and additional sources of information are **not** required, however their use may aid in the collection of specific information. The WSTAMP-R24 includes structured interview forms (student of concern, targets, witnesses and peers, staff/teachers, parents/guardians, and other individuals that may know the student); and a form for documenting other sources of information reviewed (attendance records, behavioral records, special education records, academic records, social media, technology devices, communications, BTAM history, outside agencies, law enforcement, court records, and employment records).

Common sources of information include:

- The student, family, friends that know the student well and school staff such as coaches, pupil service team members, support staff, teachers.

- Timely and thorough interviews (as necessary) of the individual(s) who reported the threat, the recipient(s) or target(s) of the threat, other witnesses who have knowledge of the threat, and the person(s) who allegedly engaged in the threatening or concerning behavior or communication may provide useful information about the student's thinking and behavior. The purpose of the interviews is to gather information that can be used to evaluate the person's behavior in context, so that the meaning of the threat and intent of the individual can be determined. The goal of rapport building interviews is to better understand the perspective and thinking of the person being interviewed. (See Interview guidance below for additional information.)

- If the student has a disability, the student's IEP/504 Plan and consultation with the associated team.

- Information about the student: identifiers, background information and the student's current life situation and circumstances.

- Review of relevant school (academic, disciplinary, 504/special ed) and other available records (e.g., law enforcement) for any prior history of concerns, prior interventions with the individual(s) involved, or changes in attendance, family circumstances, academic performance, or disciplinary actions.

- Review of student technology, social media communications, and internet activity.

- Materials in the student's locker and/or desk.

The process and plan for specific information gathering must be decided on a case-by-case basis, and at times may expand in complexity as certain information is available or comes to light. However, it is not uncommon for threat assessment teams to have difficulty accessing some information or be unable to answer all questions related to a situation. Teams should strive to collect as much information as needed to truly understand what is happening with a situation or student of concern with the understanding that there may be gaps in knowledge to be given considerations in the analysis and management steps.

Assessments must be based on facts not assumptions or speculation. If the team has known missing information, they may need to give a partial or preliminary finding acknowledging this and include a caveat about the incomplete information. As further information is found or becomes available, the assessment can be updated.

5. **Team assembles to analyze information collected.** Following information gathering, an analysis of the information will be conducted by all BTAM team members that participated in the information gathering process to determine the level of concern the student poses. BTAM team members will meet and complete the Inquiry form and make a Team recommendation about next steps.

The tables below provide guidance for the Inquiry process and completion of the corresponding Inquiry form. Space is provided below each section on the form for relevant information to be documented (information obtained from interviews, record review, and observations) when the team meets to analyze the gathered information.

GUIDANCE FOR INQUIRY FORM	
Section Heading or Statement	**Content Directions or Example**
A special note on Key Considerations	Evaluation of information gathered during a threat assessment inquiry should be guided by the following key consideration areas. *NOTE: Statements/reflection questions under some consideration areas are not intended to be a checklist, but are provided as prompts and guidance in the collection and analysis of gathered information.*
Key Consideration 1: Motive/Goal/Identified Grievance	Students make threats and engage in other risky behaviors for various reasons and potential motives. Understanding the thinking or motives of a student of concern may help in

	determining whether the student poses a threat, and how to address the problem or grievance, ultimately redirecting the student to use non-violent strategies. • What motivated the student to make the statements or take the actions that caused them to come to attention? • Does the situation or circumstance that led to these statements or actions still exist? • Does the student have a major or perceived grudge or grievance? Against whom? • What efforts have been made to resolve the problem and what has been the result? Does the student of concern feel that any part of the problem is resolved or see any alternative?
Key Consideration 2: Focus or Target of Harm/Concerning Behavior *(Note- if it is determined there is a specific target, the BTAM team should make any safety notifications as soon as this information is learned)*	Information about a student's targets may provide clues to the student's motives, planning, and attack-related behaviors, and may also inform the question of whether there are additional targets. Is there information that points to a specific target of the violence: • Specifically named individual(s)- students, school staff, others • Specific social group (i.e., jocks, stoners, a specific friend group) • School sanctioned groups or clubs • Property • Event (i.e., homecoming, prom, graduation) • Generalized threat • Location (e.g., cafeteria, gym, courtyard) • Timing (e.g., dates of previous attacks, personal meaning) • None known
Key Consideration 3: Concerning Communications Suggesting Ideas, Planning, or Intent to Harm Self or Others	Communications (concerning, unusual, bizarre, threatening, or violent) made toward self or other can be in verbal or written form, made directly or indirectly, and could be made intentionally or unintentionally. Statements could be made to classmates, peers, friends, teammates; in writing/drawing on assignments or tests; via social media, text messages, or photo or video-sharing sites. A student's communications may reveal insight into a specific grievance, intended target, or information relevant to the other key consideration areas. • What, if anything, has the student communicated to someone else (targets, friends, other students, teachers,

	family, others) or written in a diary, journal, or Web site concerning their ideas and/or intentions? • Have friends been alerted or "warned away"?
Key Consideration 4: Unusual or Concerning Interests	Gather information about whether the student has shown an inappropriate or heightened interest in concerning topics: • School attacks or attackers • Weapons (including recent acquisition of any relevant weapon) • Hate groups • Extremist ideology • Incidents of mass violence (terrorism, workplace violence, mass murderers) Consider the context of the interest to note if there is evidence of an inappropriate or unhealthy fixation on weapons.
Key Consideration 5: Capacity/Means to Carry Out Targeted Violence	A plan can be elaborate or simple. The team needs to determine if a student has organized thinking and behavior to execute a plan and has the resources to carry it out. Having access to a weapon and a plan to get it on school grounds is a significant piece of this step. • How organized is the student's thinking and behavior? • Does the student have the means, e.g., access to a weapon/target, skills, to carry out an attack? • Has the student demonstrated the interest, skills, and ability to make a plan, gather the necessary resources, and carry out the plan (e.g., time to organize, finances to support the plan, and transportation to gather the resources)? • Has the student demonstrated the ability to influence others to be part of the plan (directly or indirectly with acquiring weapons, transportation, etc.)? • Does the student lack the developmental understanding or capacity to carry out the threat due to a disability?
Key Consideration 6: Emotional Instability and Concerning Behavior	Assessing factors related to a student's emotionality and behavior can provide information about their current state of mind and thinking, including; a history of acute emotional problems, pervasive maladaptive behaviors or non-compliance, limited coping, poor distress tolerance, unhealthy conflict resolution skills, history of AODA use, history of suicidal behaviors, lack of treatment or compliance with prescribed treatment, poor social skills, evidence of past planning of targeted violence, history of criminal behavior or prior legal issues. Lack of emotional stability and prior demonstration of

	concerning behaviors, may compound or impact failed attempts to solve a problem and could lead a student to feel they are "out of options" to solve the issue in a positive way.
	• Is there information to suggest that the student is experiencing desperation and/or despair? • Has the student experienced a recent failure, loss and/or loss of status? • Is the student known to be having difficulty coping with a stressful event? • Is the student now, or has the student ever been, suicidal or "accident-prone"? • Has the student engaged in behavior that suggests that they have considered ending their life? • How has student responded to previous interventions, assistance, correction?
Key Consideration 7: Social and Home Life Factors	Many students experience significant stressors in the months, weeks, and days prior to attempting an attack. It is important to understand the student in the context of their social and home environment. Information may provide insight into existing protective factors, or areas of need to use in a plan of support, in addition to assessing a level of concern. Gathering information or asking questions about the following may be helpful: • Peer relationships; prosocial connections • History of bullying (aggressor/victim) • Parent relationship with student; home support • Home related stressors (family situation, financial concerns, physical and mental health stressors, stability, violence in home); AODA • Academic stressors
Key Consideration 8: Protective Factors/ Stabilizers/Mitigators	A comprehensive threat assessment includes accurately understanding, and accounting for a student's existing positive and prosocial influences, or protective factors. Protective factors are characteristics associated with a lower likelihood of negative outcomes or that reduce a risk factor's impact. • Does the student have a trusting relationship with at least one responsible adult? • Does the student have at least one relationship with an adult where the student feels that they can confide in the adult and believes that the adult will listen without judging or jumping to conclusions?

	• Is the student emotionally connected to–or disconnected from–other students, romantic partners, community members? • Has the student previously come to someone's attention or raised concern in a way that suggested they need intervention or supportive services? • Does the student have any family support (supports intervention, sets limits, provides positive influence, holds student accountable, positive relationship with siblings)? • Does the student have involvement in any groups, healthy activities, interests, or employment? • Are basic needs met? • Does the student feel connected to the school community? • Has positive coping mechanisms. • Has future goals that are achievable. • Is receptive to assistance.
Key Consideration 9: Academic Concerns	Information about a student's classroom performance may provide insight about mood, engagement (social and topic), and academic abilities or deficits. • How is the student performing on academic tasks? • Does the student receive intervention and support? • Are there any changes in the student's academic or behavior performance?
Options to resolve grievance/concern	A student's willingness to resolve their upset in nonviolent ways provides us with important information that can shape interventions. • Does the student see violence as an acceptable–or desirable–or the only–way to solve problems? • Has the student used violence in the past to address problems? • Has the student thought of alternative ways to address the grievances? • Does the setting around the student (friends, fellow students, parents, teachers, adults) explicitly or implicitly support or endorse violence as a way of resolving problems or disputes? • Has the student been "dared" or encouraged by others to engage in an act of violence?
Summary of additional sources of information considered.	**NOTE**: All sources and formal (structured) interviews are <u>not required</u> at the Inquiry, however, are available. The team may have gathered information from sources (interview/record review) that adds relevance for accurately understanding the

	context or student situation and that has not been included in the other Key Consideration areas. This section of the form allows for documentation of this relevant information.
BTAM Team assigns Level of Concern	When determining the level of concern associated with a threat, the central question is not whether a person made a threat, but rather if they pose a threat of harm to self or others. Team determination of the Level of Concern posed by the student occurs after information gathering has been completed. Once information has been obtained, the BTAM team members that conducted the Inquiry meet to share collected information and apply it to the key consideration sections of the form. See **Determination of Concern Level** for further information and guidance.
Administrative/Team Recommendation	The BTAM team checks the box that corresponds to the decision made about next steps. Essentially, the team decides if enough information has been collected to accurately understand the situation, determine the level of concern the student poses, and can proceed with developing an **Intervention and Support Plan** to address identified needs. **OR** The team may decide that they lack information and are not yet able to make this determination so it is recommended that they advance to the **Assessment (Completed Following Inquiry)** and begin assigning roles for additional information collection. **NOTE:** If there is uncertainty about the level of concern the individual poses, advance to an **Assessment (Completed Following Inquiry)** to gather additional information.
Documentation of Additional Steps Taken	As part of the process of gathering information, a team may take various steps or make additional considerations. This section provides space for the BTAM team to document steps that further inform the team about the concern and/or the response. The team may wish to document that potential targets have been provided warning or given plans to address safety concerns, whether law enforcement was involved and in what way, whether a suicide risk assessment was completed, or if the student's IEP/504 team has been notified and involved with the process.

Signature	To provide accountability and documentation of team members involved in the information gathering and analysis it is recommended that signatures are collected upon completion of this process.
Team either proceeds to the development of an individualized Intervention and Support Plan or to the Assessment (Completed Following Inquiry).	

Determining the Level of Concern

There is no mathematical formula or specific checklist for this analysis. The nature of having a multi-disciplinary team is that it allows for consultative discussion and more than one person's perspective and expertise. The team will analyze the information and come to consensus about the seriousness/concerning level of concern the student poses based on accurate understanding of the presenting situation, and keeping in mind the totality of circumstances. **Regardless of the Level of Concern assigned, this analysis will be used to guide the response and development of the Intervention and Support Plan.**

Behavioral threat assessment is a dynamic process that requires regular monitoring and consideration of new or changing factors that can influence the level of concern posed. BTAM teams should keep in mind that a Level of Concern classification can be amended based upon new information, mitigating circumstances, aggravating circumstances or related to non-compliance or compliance with a plan of support. It may be advisable to schedule a reassessment after a period of time to re-evaluate the situation and assess whether the situation has improved or deteriorated placing the level of concern in a different category.

If a student withdraws from a school to avoid completion of the BTAM process or expulsion for concerning behavior, it does not mean that student no longer poses a threat to the school. It is recommended that the BTAM team complete the process for the student with the available information.

The following serves as a general guide for determining a Level of Concern.
No/Low Level of Concern
Description Examples
• Gathered information suggests insufficient evidence for risk of harm to others, or the student of concern or situation appears to pose minimal concern of engaging in future violence or other harmful behavior. • Concerns that stem from misunderstandings. • False reporting by peers.

- Vague or indirect behavior concern/content.
- Information is inconsistent, implausible or lacking in realism/detail.
- Information suggests student of concern is unlikely to carry the plan out.
- Student of concern may have evidenced few to no warning behaviors.
- Student of concern may not have a significant number of risk factors.
- Evaluation of the case leads to a conclusion that mitigators far outweigh enhancers.
- No current or identified risk or threat.
- No identifiable grievance or precipitants.
- Taken out of context.

Medium Level of Concern

Description Examples

- Gathered information suggests the student of concern's exhibited behavior/the situation shows there are moderate, ongoing concerns about their motivation, continuing intent to harm, and the potential for harmful outcomes.
- Information suggests that some thought has been given to how the act will be carried out; planning seems plausible.
- Student of concern has displayed some warning signs/behaviors and risk factors.
- Evidence of research and planning found.
- Student of concern is experiencing various stressors and encountered a triggering event.
- Communications signaling increased desperation or distress.
- Evidence of depression, social withdrawal, diminished coping abilities, bullying, intimidation, harassment of others.
- Content includes veiled reference or inconclusive evidence of steps taken without specific details.
- Behaviors surpass the low level concern factors or absence of significant mitigating factors is noted.
- There may be significant information lacking from the investigation about the student of concern, the potential victim, the context of the threat, or other substantial aspects, which make pinpointing a level of concern difficult.
- Critical factors which could impact the assessment one way or another are missing.

High Level of Concern

Description Examples

- Gathered information suggests the student of concern or situation appears to pose a significant level of concern for engaging in violence or serious harm to self or others.
- Threat is direct, specific, and plausible (likely, probable, possible without appropriate intervention).
- Threat suggests concrete steps have been taken toward carrying out an attack; evidence of increased research and/or preparations.
- Communication may convey the person has the means and ability to carry out the threat.

- Student of concern has acquired or practiced with a weapon, or has had the target under surveillance.
- Student of concern has displayed significant or highly concerning early warning behaviors and risk factors.
- Student of concern experienced various stressors and encountered a triggering event.
- Communications signaling increased desperation or distress.
- Evidence of depression, social withdrawal, coping difficulties, bullying, intimidation or harassment of others.
- The student of concern has displayed few stabilizing factors.
- The student of concern may have surpassed all criteria for the low and moderate designations.

Imminent Level of Concern

Description Examples

- Gathered information suggests a targeted attack can occur at any moment (hours, days, weeks).
- The student of concern or situation appears to pose a clear and immediate threat of serious violence toward self or others.
- The communication suggests that all inhibitors to violence may be evaporating and/or previous interventions are no longer working.
- The communication suggests the student of concern perceives their window of opportunity for an attack to be rapidly closing due to any number of circumstances, stressors, or precipitating events.
- The communication itself indicates that a breach or attack has begun or been completed; appears intent on claiming credit for an attack, attempt to provide rationale for an attack, or establish a legacy.
- Some warning behaviors demonstrated by a student of high concern could be associated with possible imminence, such as energy burst behaviors, last resort behaviors, end of life planning, sudden cessation of medications or other substance use, and sudden withdrawal from life pattern.
- The student of concern may be attempting to establish a legacy by claiming credit, writing a manifesto, or attempting to provide a rationale for a violent act; communicating that a breach or attack has begun; and/or contemplating their own death during an assault.
- The student of concern has initiated a violent incident plan by beginning their travel/approach to the target.
- The student of concern warned others (directly or indirectly) to avoid the targeted person/area.

When Warranted, Advance from Inquiry to <u>Assessment</u>

If an Inquiry cannot be used to determine with a reasonable degree of confidence that the alleged behavior is not a threat, or is a low concern of violence, or the team determines further action is warranted to fully/accurately understand the concerning behavior and develop an effective intervention and support plan for safety, then a more in-depth assessment is to be undertaken by the threat assessment team.

The team will advance from the Inquiry and initiate the Assessment process to begin further investigation. Next steps may include:

1. **Assign tasks for collecting additional information and set a time for meeting to analyze additional information.** If not already utilized in the Inquiry, teams advancing to the Assessment are required to complete a record review and formal interviews (refer to Additional Sources of Information form and applicable WSTAMP-R24 interview forms). Additional tasks will be assigned to team members with a given completion timeline.

2. **Complete the identifying information portion of the Assessment (Completed Following Inquiry) form.**

3. **Summarize the findings and recommendations from the Inquiry on to the Assessment (Completed Following Inquiry) form.** Provide summary statements that includes information and/ordocumentation about the concerning behavior, data collected from multiple sources, and initial level of concern including as much detail as needed for someone unfamiliar with the event to be able to understand the situation and initial steps taken.

4. **Gather additional information utilizing applicable formal/structured WSTAMP-R24 Interviews and Additional Sources of Information forms.**

   <u>Interviews:</u>
   Interviews using the structured WSTAMP-R24 forms may require team members to interview someone a second time with more thoroughness and specific targeted questions. Using the structured format for initial interviews will widen the information gathering scope.

   The purpose of the interviews is to evaluate the reported incident in context and understand additional circumstances impacting the meaning of the concerning communication/behavior prior to determining the student of concern's intent. Rapport building interviews are encouraged to provide an environment conducive for sharing information with the goal of trying to accurately understand the perspective and thinking of the person being interviewed.

- **Interviews with the Student of Concern**
  Oftentimes, interviews with a student of concern provide critical information in a threat assessment with the primary purpose of gaining an understanding of the student's thinking, motives and behavior. The tone of the interview is intended to be professional, non-judgemental, and non-confrontational, with care and consideration given to leaving the student's dignity intact.

  Information provided in Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates advises school administrators, law enforcement members and their respective legal representatives to follow existing policies or develop policies regarding interviews with students of concern. The following are recommended considerations:

  ➢ If and when to notify parents/guardians of an interview.
  ➢ Whether or when to invite parents/guardians to be present during an interview.
  ➢ Whether and how to use information from an interview for criminal justice proceedings.
  ➢ Whether and when legal representation will be allowed, offered, or provided.
  ➢ The search of a student in any context is a sensitive and complex issue that must be examined thoroughly by school administrators and their legal counsel and addressed in school policies in accordance with law.

  While the student of concern may have been interviewed informally as part of the Triage or Inquiry process, it is important to complete a thorough review as part of the Assessment. Prior to conducting the formal student interview using the Student of Concern interview protocol, the team member should be well aware of the facts and circumstances that brought the student to the attention of others. Additionally, reviewing information concerning the student's background, interests, and behaviors may help the team judge whether the student is being forthcoming and straightforward. Generally, it is recommended that a student is asked directly about their intentions.

  Student interviews can result in obtaining information that helps the team learn about their motives and needs, better understand the situation of the student, and/or the target, as well as generate leads for further investigation. An interview can also send the message to a student that their behavior has been noticed or caused concern. Ultimately, this may help the team to assess the level of concern posed by the student, give opportunity for the student to be heard, and assist in developing a plan of support and intervention to direct the student to a more positive path.

- **Interview of Parent/Guardian**
  A student's parent(s) or guardian(s) will be interviewed in most cases. A student's parent(s)/guardian(s) are often best positioned in understanding their child's actions and interests, although they may or may not know about their student's thinking and behavior.

  It is not uncommon for adults to be protective, embarrassed, frightened, or defensive on behalf of their child about the BTAM process and potential outcomes. Therefore, the threat assessment team needs to make clear the objective of the the process is to ensure the safety of all, AND to provide assistance and support to their student. Who and where this interview is conducted warrants careful consideration of the team, recommending that a person with a positive relationship or good interviewing technique may obtain a positive outcome.

  Parent/guardian interviews should:

  - Focus on the student's behaviors and communications, especially those that might be attack related.
  - Encourage the exploration of all method's of the student's communications including internet messaging, cell phone communications, and postings on social network sites.
  - Explore the student's interest in weapons and access to weapons.
  - Emphasize the parent/guardian's role in the BTAM process with supporting interventions, assistance, and observing when behaviors change.

- **Potential Target Interview**
  Special sensitivity and care is required when conducting interviews with potential targets to gather information without causing undue alarm. The target may be informed that the primary purpose is to gather information about a possible situation of concern. If the threat assessment team believes there may be a risk of violence to a student or staff, the target must be offered assistance and support.

  Interview focus:

  - Obtain information about the relationship with the student of concern.
  - Ask about recent interactions with the student.
  - Understand potential grievances the student of concern may hold against the target or others.

- **Collateral Interviews**
  Students, witnesses, and adults (including teachers/staff) who know the subject or may have observations of or involvement in the situation will be asked about

communications or other behaviors that may give insight to the student of concern's ideas or intent.

The focus of these interviews is factual (i.e., what happened, what was said), but also includes questions about whether any of the behaviors or statements (past or present) have been concerning or worrisome, or if there have been changes in the student's behavior or state of mind. Asking whether there is anyone else that might have something to share about the student/situation, and whether there is anything else the person wants to share that was not already asked, can yield important information in understanding the context/situation.

Additional Sources of Information:
A comprehensive school threat assessment includes a review of information from various sources. While some of these sources may have been accessed informally in the Triage or Inquiry, it is important to complete a thorough review as part of the Assessment. The **Additional Sources of Information** form provides a list of multiple sources that could provide relevant background, context or insight to the process. The team can document relevant findings from the review of school and other available records for any prior history of concerns, prior interventions with the individual(s) involved, or changes in attendance, family circumstances, academic performance, or disciplinary actions. Examination of student technology, social media, student work, and information from outside agencies could provide useful to the understanding of the problem or grievance.

5. **Team gathers to analyze information collected.** Following information gathering, an analysis of the information will be conducted by all BTAM team members that participated in the information gathering process to determine the level of concern the student poses. Team members will meet and complete the Assessment (Completed Following Inquiry) form and make a Team recommendation about next steps.

The table below provides guidance for the completion of the Assessment (Completd Following Inquiry). For guidance on the process and completion of the key consideration areas corresponding to the Assessment form, **see the Key Considerations in the table above** (describing Inquiry process and form).

GUIDANCE FOR ASSESSMENT (COMPLETED FOLLOWING INQUIRY)	
Section Heading or Statement	**Content Directions or Example**
A special note on Key Considerations	Evaluation of information gathered during a threat assessment inquiry should be guided by the following key consideration areas. *NOTE: Statements/reflection questions under some consideration areas are not intended to be a*

	checklist, but are provided as prompts and guidance in the collection and analysis of gathered information.
Key Considerations: 1. **Motive/Goal/Identified Grievance** 2. **Focus or Target of Harm/Concerning Behavior** 3. **Concerning Communications Suggesting Ideas, Planning or Intent to Harm Self or Others** 4. **Concerning Interests** 5. **Capacity/Means to Carry Out Targeted Violence** 6. **Emotional Instability and Concerning Behavior** 7. **Social and Home Life Factors** 8. **Protective Factors/Stabilizers/Mitigators** 9. **Academic Concerns**	Space is provided below each area for new information obtained from Additional Sources and Formal Interviews to be documented. An additional space is also included after each key consideration area to summarize the relevance of the findings when considering both information collected during the Inquiry and newly obtained from the Assessment. **See the Key Considerations in the Inquiry table above.**
Options to resolve grievance/concern	A student's willingness to resolve their upset in nonviolent ways provides us with important information that can shape interventions. Specify any new or changed information.
BTAM Team assigns Level of Concern	Once information has been obtained, the BTAM team members that conducted the Assessment meet to share collected information and apply it to the key consideration sections of the form. Team determination of the Level of Concern posed by the student occurs after information gathering has been completed. When determining the level of concern associated with a threat, the central question is not whether a student made a threat, but rather if they pose a threat. See **Determination of Concern Level** for further information and guidance.
Signatures	To provide accountability and documentation of team members involved in the information gathering and analysis it is recommended that

	signatures are collected upon completion of this process.
Upon completion of the Assessment, proceed to the development of an individualized Intervention and Support Plan.	

Advance directly from Triage to Assessment

Teams may proceed directly from the Triage step to Assessment, without completing the Inquiry process and corresponding form.

The team will initiate the Assessment process and begin further investigation. Next steps may include:

1. **Assign tasks for collecting information and set a time for meeting to analyze it and complete the Assessment (Completed Following Triage – No Inquiry) form/process.**

2. **Complete the identifying information portion of the Assessment (Completed Following Triage – No Inquiry) form.**

3. **Review and documentation of the threatening or concerning behavior or communication.** Document the concerning behavior with fact-based observations or verbatim statements including as much detail about persons involved, potential targets, and setting information as needed to assist in accurately understanding the situation. Collect the facts that drew attention to the student, the situation, and possibly the targets. How did the student come to the attention of school officials? What behaviors and/or communications were reported, and by whom? What was the situation? Who, if anyone, witnessed the reported behavior of concern? What was the context for the reported behavior, i.e., what else was going on at the time of the reported behavior?

4. **Gather information from a variety of sources utilizing applicable formal/structured WSTAMP-R24 Interviews and Additional Sources of Information forms.** It is recommended that teams seek information from sources that can aid in accurately understanding the student of concern's thinking, behavior, and current level of functioning. It can include collecting both current and historical data, as well as information about recent stressors, mitigating factors, attack related behaviors, motives, and potential targets.

<u>Common sources of information include</u>:

- The student, family, friends that know the student well and school staff such as coaches, pupil service team members, support staff, teachers.

- Timely and thorough interviews (as necessary) of the individual(s) who reported the threat, the recipient(s) or target(s) of the threat, other witnesses who have knowledge of the threat, and the person(s) who allegedly engaged in the threatening or concerning behavior or communication may provide useful information about the student's thinking and behavior. The purpose of the interviews is to gather information that can be used to evaluate the person's behavior in context, so that the meaning of the threat and intent of the individual can be determined. The goal of rapport building interviews is to better understand the perspective and thinking of the person being interviewed. (See Interview guidance below for additional information.)

- If the student has a disability, the student's IEP/504 Plan and consultation with the associated team.

- Information about the student: identifiers, background information and the student's current life situation and circumstances.

- Review of relevant school (academic, disciplinary, 504/special ed) and other available records (e.g., law enforcement) for any prior history of concerns, prior interventions with the individual(s) involved, or changes in attendance, family circumstances, academic performance, or disciplinary actions.

- Review of student technology, social media communications, and internet activity.

- Materials in the student's locker and/or desk.

Interviews:
The student, family, school staff and friends, in addition to others directly involved, potential witnesses, or persons that know the student well. Conducting timely and thorough interviews (see available structured WSTAMP-R24 forms) of the individual(s) who reported the threat, the recipient(s) or target(s) of the threat, other witnesses who have knowledge of the threat, and the student(s) who allegedly engaged in the threatening or concerning behavior or communication may provide useful information about the student's thinking and behavior.

The purpose of the interviews is to evaluate the student's behavior in context, so that the meaning of the threat and intent of the individual can be determined. Rapport

building interviews are encouraged with the goal of trying to understand accurately the perspective and thinking of the person being interviewed.

- **Interviews with the Student of Concern**
Oftentimes, interviews with a student of concern provide critical information in a threat assessment with the primary purpose of the interview being to gain an understanding of the student's thinking, motives and behavior. The tone of the interview is professional, non-judgemental, and non-confrontational with care and consideration given to leaving the student's dignity intact.

  Information provided in Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates advises school administrators, law enforcement members and their respective legal representatives to follow existing policies or develop policies regarding interviews with students of concern.

  The following are recommended considerations:

  ➢ If and when to notify parents/guardians of an interview.
  ➢ Whether or when to invite parents/guardians to be present during an interview.
  ➢ Whether and how to use information from and interview for criminal justice proceedings.
  ➢ Whether and when legal representation will be allowed, offered, or provided.
  ➢ The search of a student in any context is a sensitive and complex issue that must be examined thoroughly by school administrators and their legal counsel and addressed in school policies in accordance with law.

  While the student of concern may have been interviewed informally as part of the Triage or Inquiry process, it is important to complete a thorough review as part of the Assessment. Prior to conducting the formal student interview using the Student of Concern interview protocol, the team member should be well aware of the facts and circumstances that brought the student to the attention of others. Additionally, reviewing information concerning the student's background, interests, and behaviors may help the team judge whether the student is being forthcoming and straightforward. Generally, it is recommended that a student is asked directly about their intentions.

  Student interviews can result in obtaining of information that helps the team better understand the situation of the student, and/or the target, as well as generate leads for further investigation. An interview can also send the message to a student that their behavior has been noticed or caused concern. Ultimately, this may help the team to assess the level of concern posed by the

student, give opportunity for the student to be heard, and assist in developing a plan of support and intervention to direct the student to a more positive path.

- **Interview of Parent/Guardian**
  A student's parent(s) or guardian(s) will be interviewed in most cases. A student's parent(s)/guardian(s) are often best positioned in understanding their child's actions and interests, although they may or may not know about their student's thinking and behavior.

  It is not uncommon for adults to be protective, embarrassed, frightened, or defensive on behalf of their child about the BTAM process and potential outcomes. Therefore, the threat assessment team needs to make clear the objective of the the process is to ensure the safety of all, AND to provide assistance and support to their student. Who and where this interview is conducted warrants careful consideration of the team, recommending that a person with a positive relationship or good interviewing technique may obtain a positive outcome.

  Parent/guardian interviews should:

  ➢ Focus on the student's behaviors and communications, especially those that might be attack related.
  ➢ Encourage the exploration of all method's of the student's communications including internet messaging, cell phone communications, and postings on social network sites.
  ➢ Explore the student's interest in weapons and access to weapons.

- **Potential Target Interview**
  Special sensitivity and care should be taken when conducting interviews with potential targets with the goal of gathering information while not causing undue alarm. The target should be informed that the primary purpose is to gather information about a possible situation of concern. If the threat assessment team believes there may be a risk of violence to a student, the target should be offered assistance and support.

  Interview focus:

  ➢ Obtain information about the relationship with the student of concern.
  ➢ Ask about recent interactions with the student.
  ➢ Understand potential grievances the student of concern may hold against the target or others.

- **Collateral Interviews**

    Students, witnesses, and adults (including teachers/staff) who know the subject or may have observations of or involvement in the situation will be asked about communications or other behaviors that may give insight to the student of concern's ideas or intent.

    The focus of these interviews is factual (i.e., what happened, what was said), but also includes questions about whether any of the behaviors or statements (past or present) have been concerning or worrisome, or if there have been changes in the student's behavior or state of mind. Asking whether there is anyone else that might have something to share about the student/situation, and whether there is anything else the person wants to share that was not already asked, can yield important information in understanding the context/situation.

Additional Sources of Information:

A comprehensive school threat assessment includes a review of information from various sources. The **Additional Sources of Information** form provides a list of multiple sources that could provide relevant background, context or insight to the process. The team can document relevant findings from the review of school and other available records for any prior history of concerns, prior interventions with the individual(s) involved, or changes in attendance, family circumstances, academic performance, or disciplinary actions. Examination of student technology, social media, student work, and information from outside agencies could provide useful to the understanding of the problem or grievance.

5. **Team gathers to analyze information collected.**

    Following information gathering, an analysis of the information will be conducted by all BTAM team members that participated in the information gathering process to determine the level of concern the student poses. Team members will meet and complete the Assessment form and make a Team recommendation about next steps.

The table below provides guidance for the completion of the Assessment (Completed Following Triage – No Inquiry). For guidance on the process and completion of the key consideration areas corresponding to the Assessment form, **see the Key Considerations in the table above** (describing Inquiry process and form).

GUIDANCE FOR ASSESSMENT (COMPLETED FOLLOWING TRIAGE – NO INQUIRY)	
Section Heading or Statement	**Content Directions or Example**
A special note on Key Considerations	Evaluation of information gathered during a threat assessment inquiry should be guided by the following key consideration areas. *NOTE: Statements/reflection questions under some consideration areas are not intended to be a*

	checklist, but are provided as prompts and guidance in the collection and analysis of gathered information.
Key Considerations: 1. **Motive/Goal/Identified Grievance** 2. **Focus or Target of Harm/Concerning Behavior** 3. **Concerning Communications Suggesting Ideas, Planning or Intent to Harm Self or Others** 4. **Concerning Interests** 5. **Capacity/Means to Carry Out Targeted Violence** 6. **Emotional Instability and Concerning Behavior** 7. **Social and Home Life Factors** 8. **Protective Factors/Stabilizers/Mitigators** 9. **Academic Concerns**	Space is provided below each area to include relevant findings from applicable interviews completed, and from records or additional sources of information. **See the Key Considerations in the Inquiry table above.**
Options to resolve grievance/concern	A student's willingness to resolve their upset in nonviolent ways provides us with important information that can shape interventions. Specify any new or changed information.
BTAM Team assigns Level of Concern	Once information has been obtained, the BTAM team members that conducted the Assessment meet to share collected information and apply it to the key consideration sections of the form. Team determination of the Level of Concern posed by the student occurs after information gathering has been completed. When determining the level of concern associated with a threat, the central question is not whether a student made a threat, but rather if they pose a threat. See **Determination of Concern Level** for further information and guidance.
Documentation of Additional Steps Taken	As part of the process of gathering information, a team may take various steps or make additional considerations. This section provides space for the BTAM team to document steps that further

	inform the team about the concern and/or the response. The team may wish to document that potential targets have been provided warning or given plans to address safety concerns, whether law enforcement was involved and in what way, whether a suicide risk assessment was completed, or if the student's IEP/504 team has been notified and involved with the process.
Signatures	To provide accountability and documentation of team members involved in the information gathering and analysis it is recommended that signatures are collected upon completion of this process.
Upon completion of the Assessment, proceed to the development of an individualized Intervention and Support Plan.	

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Develop an Intervention and Support Plan for Safety

Once a level of concern has been assigned in a case, the next step is management. As stated in the 2017 FBI report, Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing, and Managing the Threat of Targeted Attacks, "threat management is a carefully planned intervention or series of interventions focused around the student of concern, potential targets, the situation and/or the setting in which violence could occur." The team is reminded that decisions about removing a student from school, even temporarily, is based on the seriousness of the situation and the need to maintain safety. Although temporarily removing a student from the school environment might be an appropriate protective action, it is not an adequate safety measure on its own. It may also be worth noting that while consequences and other discipline measures may be appropriate as part of the response, these actions are determined by administration related to and in response to violation of a rule/code of conduct policy, and do not substitute for action steps and planning to prevent future violence.

The focus of developing an Intervention and Support Plan is to connect a student of concern with services and supports that reduce the likelihood of future concerning behavior. Thus, the BTAM process is not concluded until an Intervention and Support Plan for Safety is developed. This is strongly recommended, regardless of the identified "level of concern" obtained following the Inquiry or Assessment and it involves going past the recognition step to taking action to change the course of events.

The purpose of the plan is to provide management of the situation, to protect and help possible targets, and to provide support and intervention for the student displaying

concerning behavior(s). The information obtained as part of the assessment is used to identify potential areas of needed intervention and support for the student of concern, while keeping in mind that the safety of all stakeholders is a priority. The plan includes steps and strategies required to protect others as needed, and the entire school community (persons and property) from targeted violence and other harmful behavior. Teams should keep in mind that there is "no one size fits all" approach, and often multiple, concurrent strategies are appropriate for threat management (FBI, 2017). In addition, threat assessment teams must consider the impact of the case on the school community, for example, there may be a need to address general concern among students, parents, or staff about a threat incident.

The Intervention and Support Plan for Safety will include developed strategies and interventions to be implemented throughout the intervention process (i.e., countermeasures, mitigators, behavioral skill building, psychological interventions, discipline, positive supports), communicated to appropriate parties, and monitored (short term and long term) by the BTAM team.

The following considerations may be helpful when developing a management plan:

- Select actions and interventions related to the level of concern.
- Notify the potential target and their parents.
- Consider the history of previous actions, consequences, and interventions and evaluate their effectiveness.
- Start with as intense a plan as needed, and then adjust based on progress. Timelines for review of progress can be short, if needed.
- Specify consequences, monitoring and supervision strategies, support for skill development and relationship building.
- Maximize the resources of the student, family, community agencies, and other intervention providers, etc.
- Use community collaborative teams for intervention planning or further assessment, as indicated.
- Build in formal follow-up meetings to review progress and response to the plan.
- Adjust plans as necessary.
- If student has missed any time away from school, be sure to conduct a re-entry meeting with student, parent, and appropriate staff members.

BTAM teams may have other procedures or processes in place for behavior, intervention, or safety planning that may be used instead of the ISP. The WSTAMP-R24 ISP form was created to provide guidance and considerations on what to include or address in this type of plan.

The table below provides guidance for specific sections of the WSTAMP-R24 Intervention and Support Plan.

GUIDANCE FOR **INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT PLAN**	
Section Heading or Statement	**Content Directions or Example**
Demographic Information	Document the name of the student of concern (grade/DOB), date/time incident reported/who received report, and the assigned BTAM team members (at least two).
Description of the Concerning Behavior to Address	Based on the information obtained in the inquiry and/or assessment process, the team may identify one or more behaviors as intervention points to address as part of the plan. The team describes the behavior(s) in a fact based manner identifying some or all of the following factors: • How often (frequency) or how long (duration) a behavior occurs • Triggers or situations (something that might push a student further along the pathway toward violence) that serve as an indicator of the impending emergence of a particular behavior/response • Supports the continuation of a concerning behavior • Identifies the purpose or function a specific behavior serves for the student
Behavior Goal(s)	This section allows the team to specify individualized goals or specific outcomes for identified areas of need. Goals may include language that specifies: • A specific outcome • The purpose the behavior serves for the student and how to address it • A plan to replace or redirect an identified behavior with an appropriate one • Strategies to decrease a problem behavior, increase an alternative behavior, or teach a new skill • What will happen if the concerning behavior reoccurs/student reoffends
Intervention-Countermeasures	Countermeasures are strategies that reduce the likelihood of harm.

	Types: Limit setting, boundary setting, restrictive actions, provision of consequences, increased monitoring, and confrontation or questioning of non-compliance by the student of concern. **Examples**: Backpack searches, restricting or monitoring technology use, cellphone ban, supervision passing/hallway/unstructured times, alternate entrance, alternate arrival or dismissal time/plan, restrictions to time on school grounds, revocation of privelege.
Intervention-Stabilizing Supports	Stabilizers are also known as protective factors, buffers or inhibitors which when in place may discourage or prevent a student from thiking seriously about or completing an act of violence. These include interventions that contribute to restraining inappropriate behaviors; may increase non-violent problem-solving skills; reinforce or build upon an existing interest or positive attribute; address a missing mitigating factor; and/or teach to an identifed skill gap/deficit. **Types**: conflict resolution skills, flexible thinking strategies, positive realistic goals, supportive family, healthy social supports, positive adult connection, access and receptiveness to assistance. **Examples**: check in-check out, mentoring, involvement in extra-curriculars, targeted skill group, individualized check-ins.
Communication	This section allows for the team to document communication about the plan and assigned tasks related to the student of concern's ISP. Considerations in this section include determining which staff members need to be aware of part or all of the ISP for either intervention implementation or monitoring purposes. The BTAM team can identify specifics about which team member will provide notification and how/when this will be accomplished. It is also important to consider how new or continuing concerning behaviors will be reported back to the team.
Date for Next Review	The ISP process includes designating a date for the team to meet and review the progression of the interventions and determine if any changes are necessary. The team may also consider the cessation of current interventions or develop new strategies.

	Consideration: Teams may set individual review dates to monitor specific interventions as appropriate. The team may also need to reconvene to review and/or revise strategies based on new information/behavior or lack of compliance to interventions.
Signatures	To provide accountability and documentation of team members involved in the information gathering and analysis it is recommended that signatures are collected upon completion of this process.

Monitor Support Management Plan/Revise as Needed

Monitor Support Management Plan/Revise as Needed

The relationship between threat assessment and threat management is one of continuous reassessment and modification. Progress monitoring is a part of ongoing case management. Ongoing monitoring can inform the BTAM team of the student's readiness or need for adjustments to the plan. Through monitoring of a student's response to intervention and support, the BTAM team can determine the effectiveness of the plan. The BTAM team can consider whether the stabilizing actions and countermeasures lower the level of concern the student poses; or the concern of targeted violence remains the same or increases. It is important for teams to also examine whether the identified interventions are being implemented in the manner intended and designed as a part of the monitoring of plan effectiveness. This Ongoing Monitoring Survey is one tool that can be distributed to staff working with the identified student to gather information that provides an update about the student's progress and current functioning, as well as identify any ongoing needs related to the ISP.

The Intervention and Support Plan is a dynamic document/tool. When one strategy is not working as planned, the team can reassess and modify the plan. Revision of the plan could also be considered upon introduction of new information, failure of the plan to meet the intended safety needs, compliance/non-compliance with plan by student of concern or other reasons determined by the BTAM Team.

The ultimate goal is to enable the student to function without monitoring by responsible adult authorities. Consider the following to help decide whether a student may be discontinued from monitoring:

- Whether (and to what extent) the student has changed unacceptable thinking and behavior over time; and

- Intervention strategies have the desired effect over time, and the student has adopted healthier behavior

After a determination is made that the subject no longer poses a threat of targeted school violence, formal monitoring is ended.

GUIDANCE FOR INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT PLAN - MONITORING	
Section Heading or Statement	**Content Directions or Example**
Demographic Information	Document the name of the student of concern (grade/DOB), date/time incident reported/who received report, and the assigned BTAM team members (at least two).
Progress Monitoring Results	Document the response to interventions in this section, including both results of countermeasures and stabilizing supports. This section can include information about the student's current level of performance as related to the concerning behavior. If applicable, include any new information relevant to the case since the initial ISP was created.
Behavior Goal(s)	This section allows the team to specify individualized goals or specific outcomes for identified areas of need. Document any revisions to behavior goals as an outcome of progress monitoring results.
Intervention-Countermeasures	Countermeasures are strategies that reduce the likelihood of harm. Document revised and continuing countermeasures as an outcome of progress monitoring results.
Intervention-Stabilizing Supports	Stabilizers are also known as protective factors, buffers or inhibitors which when in place may discourage or prevent a student from thinking seriously about or completing an act of violence. Document revised and continuing countermeasures as an outcome of progress monitoring results.
Communication	This section allows for the team to document communication about the plan and assigned tasks related to the student of concern's ISP. Assign team members to update and inform those who need to be aware of revisions.
Date for Next Review	The ISP process includes designating a date for the team to meet and review the progression of the interventions and determine if any changes are necessary. The team may consider the cessation of current interventions or development of new strategies.

Signatures	To provide accountability and documentation of team members involved in the information gathering and analysis it is recommended that signatures are collected upon completion of this process.

DIGITAL THREAT ASSESSMENT

Digital threat assessment involves the analysis of themes prominent on media through open-source intelligence (OSINT). OSINT is the collection and analysis of data gathered from open sources to produce actional intelligence. The data gained from OSINT provides awareness of themes prominent on a student's social media and can help to determine a baseline for online behavior. Students frequently use platforms such as Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, and others, creating additional channels through which information may be conveyed or detected. Assessment of a student's online behavior is an important aspect of threat assessment. Online behaviors can be a tool for early intervention of a person on the pathway to violence.

After the 2021 school shooting in Oxford, Michigan, investigators and media focused on images, messages and videos the suspect left on various social media platforms. According to former FBI special agent Mary Ellen O'Toole, who studied school shootings for more than 20 years, school shooters often leak hints about their plans before they carry them out. "I've seen it in nearly every case. And leakage is very specific because it is the shooter talking about what they're going to do before they do it" (Yan, 2024).

Effective digital threat assessment requires proactive collaboration between schools and local law enforcement agencies. This partnership ensures that potentially critical information identified on social media can be promptly recognized, preserved, and investigated. School staff and law enforcement should be equipped with the knowledge of how to contact social media platforms to preserve evidence, request IP addresses associated with threatening communications, and adhere to legal protocols when handling sensitive information.

To empower schools in managing digital threats, comprehensive training programs are available at Safer Schools Together. These initiatives are supported by various organizations, including the Office of School Safety, aiming to equip educators and administrators with the skills needed to assess and mitigate digital threats effectively.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

According to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), schools must have permission to release student records. Records may be released in certain circumstances without the consent of parents or students. One of those circumstances is to, "appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies." Another is to "State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law."

Furthermore, schools can disclose information that is considered "directory" information without consent. "Directory" information is determined by school board policy and may include such information as a student's name, address, phone number, date of birth, place of birth, and dates of attendance.

Wisconsin Statute § 118.125(2) regarding confidentiality and disclosure of pupil records provides additional guidance. This statute states that, "Pupil records shall be made available to persons employed by the school district which the pupil attends who are required by the department under §115.28(7) to hold a license, law enforcement officers who are individually designated by the school board and assigned to the school district, and other school district officials who have been determined by the school board to have legitimate educational interests, including safety interests, in the pupil records."

Under FERPA 34 C.F.R. §99.31(a)(1)(B) and 99.33(a), the law enforcement officer and other school district officials designated by the school board may not redisclose the information except as otherwise authorized by statute. The U.S. Department of Education specifically lists teams performing threat assessments as eligible to view student information that would otherwise be confidential.

Annotated BTAM Resources for Teams

BEHAVIOR THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT: BEST PRACTICE CONSIDERATIONS FOR K–12 SCHOOLS. Guidance from National Association of School Psychologists. National Association of School Psychologists. https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-safety-and-crisis/systems-level-prevention/threat-assessment-at-school/behavior-threat-assessment-and-management-(btam)-best-practice-considerations-for-k%E2%80%9312-schools

ENHANCING SCHOOL SAFETY USING A THREAT ASSESSMENT MODEL: AN OPERATIONAL GUIDE FOR PREVENTING TARGETED SCHOOL VIOLENCE. Guidance from the U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center providing actionable steps schools can take to develop comprehensive targeted violence prevention plans for conducting threat assessments in schools. https://www.secretservice.gov/sites/default/files/reports/2020-10/USSS_NTAC_Enhancing_School_Safety_Guide.pdf

NATIONAL CENTER FOR SCHOOL SAFETY (NCSS). SCHOOL THREAT ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT. Guidance from NCSS, a multidisciplinary, multi-institutional training and technical assistance center focused on improving school safety and preventing school violence. https://www.nc2s.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/School-Threat-Assessment-Toolkit-Full.pdf

THE FINAL REPORT AND FINDINGS OF THE SAFE SCHOOL INITIATIVE: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PREVENTION OF SCHOOL ATTACKS IN THE UNITED STATES. This document applies the findings of the Safe School Initiative to help schools prevent targeted violence and facilitate learning through the creation of safe environments for students, faculty, and staff. https://www.secretservice.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/ssi_final_report.pdf

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