



Tredyffrin/Easttown School District

Administration Offices, West Valley Business Center
940 West Valley Road, Suite 1700, Wayne, PA 19087

Phone: 610-240-1900

August 2020

Dear Parents and/or Guardians:

The Tredyffrin/Easttown School District is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all students and staff. Protocol for responding to threats and threatening behaviors is included in District Regulation 5401: Student Discipline. The complete Policy and Regulation are available at www.tesd.net at Our District > Policies and Regulations, or through District administrative offices. The purpose of the protocol is to assess a threat or threatening behavior through the established threat assessment process.

Our teachers and administrators review student conduct and expectations with students in a developmentally appropriate manner. We remind students that their safety is our priority and that, where their safety is concerned, we take what they do and say very seriously.

Likewise, we feel it is important for parents/guardians to be aware of how school personnel respond to behaviors that may pose a threat. We ask that you take time to carefully review this protocol with your student and contact your child's building administrator if you have questions or comments. We appreciate your support in keeping our schools safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Cataldi".

Mark Cataldi
Director of Assessment and Accountability

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ellen Turk".

Ellen Turk, Ed. D.
School Safety and Security Coordinator

Protocol for Assessment of Threatening Behaviors and Threats

See Attachment A in Regulation 5401 for the decision tree that guides the following protocol:

1. Building administrator or designee conducts initial investigation to verify the incident and the probability of student involvement.
2. If the building administrator or designee cannot verify the incident, then the parent/guardian of all known students associated with the reported incident should be contacted. No further action is required.
3. If it is determined that a threat has been made, then the building administrator or designee convenes the Threat Assessment Team and serves as the designated leader. The Threat Assessment Team shall include, whenever practical, the District Safety and Security Coordinator, building administrators, a District mental health specialist, school counselor, school psychologist and, on an ad hoc basis, other District staff with relevant knowledge of the student involved with the threatening behavior or threat. If the student who made the threatening behavior or threat has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), then at least one school staff member of the student's IEP team, who is not an administrator, will serve on the Threat Assessment Team and the pertinent portions of the student's IEP will be shared and reviewed.
4. The Threat Assessment Team will take into consideration the developmental age and disability of the students involved when determining discipline measures and supports.
5. Building administrator or designee contacts parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student who engaged in threatening behaviors or threats to review these steps in the protocol, which do not necessarily need to be taken in the order listed below:
 - a. The student will be removed from class to a safe location and/or additional supervision will be assigned.
 - b. Parent(s)/guardian(s) is/are notified by the building administrator and an initial investigation is conducted by the building administrator or designee.
 - c. A clinical interview may be completed by a District mental health specialist and the results of the clinical interview will be discussed with the Threat Assessment Team and parent(s)/guardian(s).
 - d. Based upon the available information, the Threat Assessment Team will categorize the threat as transient or substantive. If the Threat Assessment Team cannot resolve the threat as transient, then they may consult with the police. In this context, "consult with" serves two purposes. Consultation allows law enforcement to participate in the threat assessment process, as contemplated by the Public School Code, to assist with the determination as to whether a threat constitutes a transient or a substantive threat. Consultation also provides the opportunity for communication between school officials and law enforcement to share information known by one agency with the other in order to best plan protective supports as appropriate. If a threat is considered a serious substantive threat, then the Threat Assessment Team will consult with the police. If the threat is a very serious substantive threat, then the building administrator or designee will contact the police to request further investigation.
 - e. The building administrator, with input from the Threat Assessment Team, will determine any disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis while considering the severity of the threatening behavior or threat and prior relevant disciplinary history of the student.
 - f. A designated member of the Threat Assessment Team will maintain contact with the family of the suspended student during the suspension.
 - g. Whether determined to be a transient or substantive threat, the student may be required to attend school-based counseling session(s).
 - h. If the Threat Assessment Team determines the threat is transient, the student may return to school pending the outcome of any disciplinary action.

i. If the Threat Assessment Team determines the threat is substantive, a mental health risk assessment (“the mental health risk assessment”) shall be required.

j. If the mental health risk assessment is required, it will be completed by a District-selected or District-approved certified child and adolescent psychiatrist or other District-selected or District-approved qualified mental health professional.

k. The Office of Individualized Student Services will schedule the mental health risk assessment, and the school administrator or designee will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss arrangements for the mental health risk assessment.

l. Signed parent/guardian consent is required for the mental health risk assessment to commence. If signed consent is not forthcoming and the family has not made arrangements with a District-approved psychiatrist or other mental health professional, then the student will be suspended, pending the development of a District-approved written plan to ensure the safety of the student and others in school.

m. If there is a delay in the completion of the mental health risk assessment beyond the length of the assigned suspension, then a District-approved written safety plan will be developed to ensure the safety of the student and others before the student is scheduled to return to school.

n. If suspension exceeds three (3) school days, the family has the right to an informal hearing. If suspension exceeds ten (10) school days, the student has the right to a formal hearing.

o. The building administrator or designee will hold a conference with a suspended student and their parent/guardian prior to readmission to school.

p. A student who is suspended or expelled for threatening behavior or making a threat is subject to random searches in accordance with Policy 5412 and applicable law.

q. Police must be notified by the building administrator in the event of a weapons offense, as defined in Policy 5410.

r. During non-school hours, such as through the state’s required anonymous reporting system (Safe2Say Something), police may be notified by a building or District administrator in situations where the health, safety or welfare of students, staff or District property are thought to be in jeopardy as determined by the building or District administrator.

6. Office of Individualized Student Services or designee prepares appropriate parent/guardian permissions for assessment and release of information for building administrator to secure parent/guardian signature.

7. Upon receipt of permission and information release from the parent(s)/guardian(s), building administrator or designee contacts the District-approved mental health professional to provide student records and information about the incident.

8. The administrator or designee makes arrangements with the mental health professional to contact the building administrator or designee immediately following the mental health risk assessment as to whether the student is safe to return to school and to make recommendations for support. Following the mental health risk assessment, the mental health professional contacts the building administrator or designee as per previous agreement. The administrator or designee contacts the parent(s)/guardian(s).

9. If the mental health risk assessment determines that the student is not considered a threat to self or others, then the student may return to school as determined by the building administrator pursuant to District disciplinary procedures.

10. Supports and services are guided by assessment data and determined by the appropriate building-based team. Building and District personnel work with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and student to discuss and implement recommendations.

11. A report from the mental health risk assessment is sent to the Office of Individualized Student Services which, in turn, will disseminate it to the building administrator and the parent(s)/guardian(s).