

SBI I: SCHOOL SAFETY, THREAT ASSESSMENTS, AND MENTAL HEALTH

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ESC2 Health & Safety Cooperative Conference: Ready,
Set, Respond, Repeat!
February 11, 2020

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YOUR PRESENTERS

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AGENDA

Extensive PowerPoint overview of SBI I available via download from
ESC-2 Portal (or email request)

Highlight multiple components of SBI I

Threat assessment requirements under SBI I

Analyses of threat assessment before and after SBI I

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COMPONENTS OF SB 11

Trauma Care Policy
Required Additions to the District Improvement Plan
New Continuing Education for Classroom Teachers
Digital Citizenship Instruction
Student Health Advisory Committee: Additional Duties
New Training Requirements for Peace Officers & SROs

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COMPONENTS OF SB 11

Multi-Hazard EOPs: New Required Content
Public Hearings for EOP Non-Compliance
Amendments to District Safety & Security Committee
Notifications of Bomb Threats and Terroristic Threats
Emergency Evacuations and Mandatory Drills
Threat Assessment Teams and Procedure

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COMPONENTS OF SB 11

EOP Audit and Review
Operational and Instructional Time Waivers for Training Time
Facilities Standards and Safety
Mental Health Resources
Statewide Plan for Mental Health
Child Mental Health Consortium

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COMPONENTS OF SB 11

Child Mental Health Workforce Expansion
School Safety Allotment
TEA Grants for Student and School Safety
Bonds and Retrofitting Buses and Vehicles

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THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS

The board of trustees of each school district shall establish a threat assessment and safe and supportive school team to serve at each campus of the district. TEC 37.115(c)

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WHAT IS A THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

A "**Threat assessment team**" is a team that assesses and reports individuals who make threats of violence or exhibit harmful, threatening, or violent behavior and who gathers and analyzes data to determine the level of risk and appropriate intervention. The team serves as a safety net for the community and school by:

1. conducting a fact-based, investigative approach to determining how likely a person is to carry out a threat of violence;
2. identifying, assessing and managing appropriate interventions of individuals who are at risk for violence against themselves and others; and
3. providing guidance to students and school employees on recognizing harmful, threatening, or violent behavior that may pose a threat to the community, school, or individual.

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WHAT IS A THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

“When conducting this process with fidelity it leads to a positive and safe school climate. This process is not intended to be punitive or adversarial; rather, it is a way to build trust and situational awareness.”

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WHAT IS MEANT BY “THREAT”?

A “**threat**” is a concerning communication or behavior that indicates that an individual poses a danger to the safety of school staff or students through acts of violence or other behavior that would cause harm to self or others.

The threat may be communicated behaviorally, orally, visually, in writing, electronically, or through any other means, and is considered a threat regardless of whether it is observed by or communicated directly to the target of the threat or observed by or communicated to a third party, and regardless of whether the target of the threat is aware of the threat.

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WHAT IS MEANT BY “HARMFUL, THREATENING OR VIOLENT BEHAVIOR”?

“**Harmful, threatening, or violent behavior**” includes behaviors, such as verbal threats, threats of self harm, bullying, cyberbullying, fighting, the use or possession of a weapon, sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, stalking, or assault, by a student. TEC 37.115(a)(1)

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WHO SERVES ON A THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM?"

The superintendent of the district shall ensure that the members appointed to each team have expertise in counseling, behavior management, mental health and substance use, classroom instruction, special education, school administration, school safety and security, emergency management, and law enforcement. Tex. Educ. Code 37.115(d).

A team may serve more than one campus of a school district, provided that each district campus is assigned a team. Tex. Educ. Code 37.115(d).

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WHAT MUST THREAT ASSESSMENT INCLUDE?

Each team shall conduct a threat assessment that includes:

assessing and reporting individuals who make threats of violence or exhibit harmful, threatening, or violent behavior; Tex. Educ. Code 37.115(f)(1)(a);

gathering/analyzing data to determine level of risk and appropriate intervention, including referring a student for mental health assessment and implementing an escalation procedure (if appropriate) Tex. Educ. Code 37.115(f)(1)(b).

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THE THREAT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Receive report about a person of concern and screen for the following:

- 1.) imminence; and
2.) to determine need for full threat assessment.

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THE THREAT ASSESSMENT PROCESS?

If threat assessment team believes the report **does** present an imminent danger or safety concern:

immediately notify law enforcement;

once the emergency has been contained, the threat assessment team should:

complete a full threat assessment inquiry;

if report involves a student, the team should notify the superintendent, who will notify the parent/guardian, Tex. Educ. Code 37.115(h);

if report involves a student at risk of suicide, team shall conduct a full threat assessment inquiry in addition to actions taken in accordance with the district's suicide prevention program, Tex. Educ. Code TEC 37.115(i);

make other notifications (i.e., anyone that is/may be directly impacted).

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THE THREAT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

If threat assessment team **does not** believe the report presents an imminent danger or safety concern:

1. Determine if there is a need for a full threat assessment inquiry:

If no, document initial report and screening and add information to threat assessment database

If yes, proceed with a full inquiry using steps below.

2. Gather information about the person and situation from various sources, including an internet search.

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THE THREAT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

3. Organize and analyze information using the 11 Investigative Questions from the U.S. Department of Education and Secret Service threat assessment guide.

4. Make assessment about whether the individual of concern **poses** a threat of violence or self-harm, or if they are otherwise in need of assistance/intervention.

5. Develop and implement a case management plan to reduce risk.

6. As needed, refer individual of concern to local mental health authority or health care provider for evaluation/treatment AND/OR refer for a full individual and initial evaluation (FIE)/treatment for special education services.

7. Monitor, re-evaluate, and modify plan to ensure intended outcome.

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THE THREAT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Each team shall:

provide guidance to students and school employees on recognizing harmful, threatening, or violent behavior that may pose a threat to the community, school, or individual, Tex. Educ. Code 37.115(f)(2);

support the district in implementing the district's multi-hazard EOP, Tex. Educ. Code 37.115(f)(3);

report immediately to the superintendent a team's determination that a student or other individual poses a serious risk of violence to self or others, Tex. Educ. Code 37.115(h);

act in accordance with the district's suicide prevention program upon identifying a student at risk of suicide, Tex. Educ. Code 37.115(i); and

act in accordance with the district policies and procedures related to substance use prevention and intervention upon identifying a student using or possessing tobacco, drugs, or alcohol, Tex. Educ. Code 37.115(j).

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THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MENTAL HEALTH

SB 11 seeks to make mental health resources and services more widely known and available; but note:

A team may not provide a mental health care service to a student who is under 18 without written consent from the parent of or person standing in parental relation to the student. Tex. Educ. Code 37.115(g).

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THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM STANDARDS

Team members shall work collaboratively with each other, with other school staff, and (as appropriate) with community resources to support the purposes of the team and the safety of the school and its students and staff.

All team members should be involved with the assessment and intervention of individuals whose behavior poses a threat to the safety of school staff or students.

Team members shall actively, lawfully, and ethically communicate with each other; with school administrators; and with other school staff who have a need to know particular information to support the safety and well-being of the school, its students and its staff.

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REQUIRED REPORTING OF THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM ACTIVITIES

Each team must report required information regarding the team's activities to TEA. Tex. Educ. Code 37.115(k).

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OVERSIGHT OF THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS

The superintendent of a school district **may** establish a committee or assign to an existing committee established by the district, the duty to oversee the operations of teams established for the district. A committee with oversight responsibility must include members with expertise in human resources, education, special education, counseling, behavior management, school administration, mental health and substance use, school safety and security, emergency management, and law enforcement. Tex. Educ. Code 37.115(e).

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REQUIRED TRAINING FOR THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS

Each team must complete training provided by the TxSSC or a regional education service center (ESC) Tex. Educ. Code 37.115(c).

On a regular basis, each district should monitor its team membership and quickly replace and train required expertise as needed.

Districts should develop a system to ensure all stakeholders receive training on a continual basis.

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BUILDING A THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

The Texas School Safety Center's 8-Step Program

- Step One:** Create and promote safe school climates
 - Assess current school climate
 - Enhance current school climate
 - Strengthen students' connectedness

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BUILDING A THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

- Step Two:** Establish a multidisciplinary team
 - Choose a team name
 - Identify team membership
 - Designate a team leader
 - Establish team procedures and protocols
 - Meet on a regular basis and as needed

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BUILDING A THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

Step Three: Define prohibited and concerning behaviors
Establish policy defining prohibited behaviors
Identify other behaviors for screening or intervention
Define threshold for intervention

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BUILDING A THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

Step Four: Create a central reporting mechanism
Establish one or more anonymous reporting mechanisms
Provide training and guidance to encourage reporting
Ensure availability to respond
Establish trust that reports will be acted upon

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BUILDING A THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

Step Five: Determine threshold for law enforcement intervention

Most reports can be handled by school-based team
Establish which behaviors should be referred for law enforcement intervention

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BUILDING A THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

- Step Six:** Establish threat assessment procedures
 - Decide how to document cases
 - Create procedures to screen reports
 - Establish procedures for gathering information
 - Organize information around "11 Investigative Questions"
 - Make assessment and decide on intervention

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BUILDING A THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

- Step Seven:** Develop risk management options
 - Identify all available resources for creating individualized management plans
 - Identify resources to assist targets/victims
 - Establish points of contact for all resources

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BUILDING A THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

- Step Eight:** Conduct training for all stakeholders
 - Training for threat assessment team
 - Training for students, staff, and parents
 - Training for students, staff, and community stakeholders to anonymously report dangerous, violent, or unlawful activity

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THREAT ASSESSMENT BEFORE AND AFTER SBII:
HYPOTHETICAL SCENARIO #1

A student posts a video on Instagram indicating that he feels he has had enough this morning, and that he is feeling very militaristic. He appears stressed. With demonstrable angst, he says he thinks that today he is going to have to let the certain members of the student body know how much pain he has felt. He ends by saying, "Everybody has been warned."

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THREAT ASSESSMENT BEFORE AND AFTER SBII:
HYPOTHETICAL SCENARIO #2

A student has been known to have disruptive outbursts in the classroom, but the outbursts had been limited to tossing around furniture or supplies and taking a while to calm down. One day, however, while a PE the student becomes upset and tells his classmates that he wants to kill them and that he knows how to make it happen.

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THREAT ASSESSMENT BEFORE AND AFTER SBII:
HYPOTHETICAL SCENARIO #3

A campus becomes aware of student having reported to a teacher that she feels suicidal. As campus administrators look into the matter further, they discover that this student has been the victim of cyberbullying and that reportedly someone has been circulating sexually explicit photographs of this student around campus. One student tells the campus principal that he heard the photos were circulated because the victim's ex-boyfriend was mad at her for breaking up with him.

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