

The Board of East Central Alberta Catholic School Division is committed to creating and maintaining an environment in schools where students, staff, parents and others feel safe. The Board expects that its employees, volunteers and students shall show responsibility, understanding, sensitivity and concern for the well-being of each person and will actively participate in maintaining a safe and caring environment. The Board may mandate the use of preventative and early intervention programs in its schools as required to maintain a safe and caring environment. To this end, East Central Alberta Catholic Separate School Board has a “zero tolerance” for not responding to threat-making (or threat related) behaviors. All high-risk behaviors will be taken seriously and high-risk students assessed accordingly. The Board has developed Violence Threat/Risk Assessment procedures that the schools are required to follow.

Definitions

Assault: Any willful action that inflicts injury upon another student or staff member.

Violence: Is not limited to physical injuries or fatalities. It is recognized that any intentional words or actions meant to provoke another or to retaliate can escalate and result in injury. Suicide or threats of suicide are considered acts of violence.

Threat: A statement suggesting intent to inflict harm or injury to a student or staff member. Threats also include words or actions used to intimidate, harass or bully other persons.

High-risk behaviors: Include, but are not limited to, possession of weapons, bomb threats and threats to kill or injure others. Threats may be written, verbal, posted on the Internet or made by gesture. They may be direct, indirect, conditional or veiled. High-risk behaviors are those of students who in any manner, knowingly utter, convey or cause any person to receive a threat and/or to cause death or bodily harm.

Immediate risk situations: Are those situations involving high risks that require immediate police intervention, such as when a student is making a threat and is in possession of a weapon.

Worrisome behaviors: are those that cause concern for members of the school system indicating that a student is moving toward a greater risk of violent behavior. This may include drawing pictures, writing stories or making vague statements that do not, of themselves, constitute “uttering threats” as defined by law, but are causing concern for some members of the school community because of their violent content.

Violence Threat/Risk Assessment team (VTRAT): is composed of the Superintendent or designate, the principal, the school counselor and a police officer (when required), and may also include the classroom or consulting teacher, family school liaison counselor or others. A larger VTRAT may be used in very serious cases, and this team is expanded to include physicians, psychologists or psychiatrists, Child Welfare workers, mental health professionals or criminal profilers.

Fair Notice: Fair notice means that all parents, students, staff and community partners have been advised that all student threats/high-risk behaviors will be responded to.

Violence Threat Assessment: Occurs when there is an immediate risk situation or high-risk behaviors by a student.

Violence Risk Assessment: Risk assessment is the process of determining if a student of concern may pose a risk for violence at some unknown period in time. In most cases the student has not threatened to kill a direct target (or has not threatened recently) but has been increasing in violent ideation or behaviors that suggest the frequency or intensity of their violence or violence potential may be escalating.

Procedures

1. The Principal shall review the Violence Threat/Risk Assessment procedure at the beginning of the school year in order to ensure the safety of students and staff in the event of a situation involving high-risk behaviors
2. The superintendent shall ensure that the ECACS Violence Threat/Risk Assessment Protocol Guide is in place, annually reviewed, and revised as required.
3. Each school must have one staff member trained in the *Violence Threat/Risk Assessment Protocol Guide* in order to ensure that staff members have the skills necessary to fulfill their responsibilities.
4. All staff shall adhere to the procedures outlined in the ECACS *Violence Threat/Risk Assessment Protocol Guide*.
5. The Superintendent or designate will develop and maintain an ECACS *Violence Threat/Risk Assessment Protocol Guide*.
6. Reporting:
 - a. Any person in a school having knowledge of high-risk student behavior, immediate student risk situations, worrisome student behaviors, or having reasonable grounds to believe there is a potential for high-risk behavior, shall immediately report the information to the school principal or designate.
 - b. No action shall be taken against a person who makes a report unless it is made maliciously or without reasonable grounds.
 - c. In cases where a report is made maliciously, the person shall be dealt with according to East Central Alberta Catholic School Administrative Procedures and the law, where applicable.
7. Violence Threat/Risk Assessment: Stage I Report Form (Second Edition 2011)
 - a. The principal shall be responsible for completing a Violence Threat/Risk Assessment: Stage I Report Form (Second Edition 2011). A copy shall be forwarded to the Superintendent.
 - b. As part of the investigation, the Violence Threat/Risk Assessment: Stage I Report Form (Second Edition 2011) is completed it will be placed on the student's confidential file.
8. Parents, students, staff and appropriate community partners will be advised annually of the Violence Threat/Risk Protocol and will receive "fair notice".