THREAT ASSESSMENT MANUAL
What is Threat Assessment?

Threat assessment is a structured group process used to evaluate the risk posed by a student or another person, typically as a response to an actual or perceived threat or concerning behavior. Threat assessment as a process was developed by the Secret Service as a response to incidents of school violence. Threat assessment seeks to make an informed judgment on two questions: how credible and serious is the threat itself? And to what extent does the threatener appear to have the resources, intent, and motivation to carry out the threat?

The primary purpose of a threat assessment is to prevent targeted violence. The threat assessment process is centered upon analysis of the facts and evidence of behavior in a given situation. The appraisal of risk in a threat assessment focuses on actions, communications, and specific circumstances that might suggest that an individual intends to mount an attack and is engaged in planning or preparing for that event.

In a situation that becomes the focus of a threat assessment inquiry or investigation, appropriate authorities gather information, evaluate facts, and make a determination as to whether a given student poses a threat of violence to a target. If an inquiry indicates that there is a risk of violence in a specific situation, school personnel and school resource officers conducting the threat assessment collaborate with others to develop and implement a plan to manage or reduce the threat posed by the student in that situation.

Riverside Unified utilizes a team approach, which utilizes trained site level threat assessment teams, in consultation with the District Threat Assessment Team to conduct threat assessments utilizing a standardized rating system. Based on the results of these rating, appropriate actions are taken to address the threat level which is determined by the team. These actions are taken in conjunction with collaboration from law enforcement, mental health professionals, and other relevant personnel/agencies.

Who Activates the Threat Assessment Team?

The threat assessment team is activated by a site administrator upon receiving information which indicates a threat to an individual, individuals or school site as a whole. This should be done immediately upon receiving this information in order that the threat assessment team may immediately be included in the process. This may involve coordination with law enforcement and/or mental health so that the TAT receive and document information prior to the student being removed from campus. When a threat assessment team is convened, please notify Dr. Charity Plaxton-Hennings (x83506) or Dr. Gary McGuire (x83030). They will work with the threat assessment team to determine next steps based on the information acquired by the team.
Who comprises the site level Threat Assessment Team?

Site level threat assessment teams should be comprised of individuals who have received training in Threat Assessment. Typically, team members include the school psychologist, school counselor/s, administrators, school resource officers/police and other individuals who know the student who is being assessed. It may also be important to include relevant community members including probation officers, social workers or other individuals with knowledge of a student’s behavior and social-emotional functioning. The school nurse may also be important for providing information regarding any physical conditions or medications which may impact a student’s functioning.

When designating participants to be trained and conduct site level threat assessment teams, administrators should consider the following:

The qualifications, skills, knowledge and experience of the members of the threat assessment team should include:

- a questioning, analytical, and skeptical mindset;
- an ability to relate well to parents, colleagues, other professionals, and students;
- familiarity with childhood and adolescent growth and development, the school environment, the need for safe schools, and the community;
- a reputation within the school and the community for fairness and trustworthiness;
- training in the collection and evaluation of information from multiple sources;
- discretion, and an appreciation for the importance of keeping information confidential, and of the possible harm that may result in the inappropriate release of information; and
- cognizance of the difference between harming and helping in an intervention.

For student with identified disabilities...

If the student of concern is being provided services under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA), a representative from the team that developed or manages that student’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP) also should be brought onto the threat assessment team as an ad hoc member for the inquiry regarding this particular student.
What current RUSD Board policies govern threat assessment?

RIVERSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT Rules and Regulations #0450(a)  
(Ref. Policy #0450) 
PHILOSOPHY, GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND COMPREHENSIVE PLANS 
1.0 COMPREHENSIVE SECURITY PLAN 
1.1 Advisory Committee 
1.1.1 An advisory committee may be established at the district and at each school site to provide input on the development and implementation of safety plans. The committee may be composed of the following: 
   a. Staff, including teachers, administrators, counselors, and classified employees, including maintenance workers and bus drivers. 
   b. Students. 
   c. Parents/guardians. 
   d. Community members, including representatives from the city, county, law enforcement, health and social service agencies, and local business and neighborhood groups. 
1.2Elements of the Safety Plan 
1.2.1 The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the following elements are addressed in the district and/or site safety plan: 
   a. A positive school climate that promotes respect for diversity, personal and social responsibility, effective interpersonal and communication skills, self-esteem, anger management and conflict resolution. 
   b. Disciplinary policies and procedures that contain prevention strategies as well as behavioral expectations and consequences for violations and shall ensure the effective communication of these policies to students, parents/guardians and staff. 
   c. Curriculum that emphasizes prevention and alternatives to violence. This curriculum may include multicultural education, character/values education, media analysis skills, conflict resolution and service learning. 
RIVERSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT Rules and Regulations #0450 (b)  
(Ref. Policy #0450) 
PHILOSOPHY, GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND COMPREHENSIVE PLANS 
1.0 COMPREHENSIVE SECURITY PLAN (Continued) 
   d. Parent involvement strategies, including strategies to help ensure parental support and reinforcement of the school's rules and increase the numbers of adults on campus. 
   e. Prevention and intervention strategies related to the sale or use of drugs and alcohol. These prevention efforts shall reflect expectations for drug-free schools and support for recovering students. 
   f. Collaborative relationships among the city, county, community agencies, local law enforcement, the judicial system and the schools that lead to the development of a set of common goals and community-wide strategies for violence prevention and instruction. 
   g. Assessment of the school's physical environment, including a risk management analysis and development of ground security measures. Ground security measures may include procedures for
the closing of campuses to outsiders, securing the campus perimeter, and protecting buildings against vandalism. In addition, methods for effective enforcement shall be considered, including the presence of law enforcement on campus.

h. Districtwide and school-site crisis intervention strategies, which may include the following:
1. Identification of possible crises that may occur, determination of necessary tasks that need to be addressed, and development of procedures relative to each crisis, including the involvement of law enforcement.
2. Assignment of staff members responsible for each identified task and procedure.
3. Development of an evacuation plan based on an assessment of buildings and grounds and opportunities for student and staff practice of the evacuation plan.
4. Coordination of communication to schools, Board members, parents/guardians, and the media.

RIVERSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT Rules and Regulations #0450 (c)
(Ref. Policy #0450)

PHILOSOPHY, GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

1.0 COMPREHENSIVE SECURITY PLAN (Continued)

5. Development of a districtwide method for the reporting of violent incidents.
6. Development of follow-up procedures that may be require after the crisis has occurred, such as counseling.

i. Staff training in violence prevention and intervention techniques, including preparation to implement the elements of the school's safety plan.

Presented to Board: October 11, 1996

What are the legal requirements under FERPA when conducting a threat assessment?

U. S. Department of Education:
FERPA Notification Perspective

Procedures for providing notice of threats of violence or harm . . .

This could be done without violating FERPA if school officials are careful to strictly construe the provision in FERPA allowing disclosures “in connection with a health or safety emergency” under section 99.31(a)(10) and section 99.36. That is, in order for the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student’s education records to take place under these provisions, the threat of violence or harm must be just that an actual physical threat against another student or employee. The disclosure should be made only to appropriate officials “if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.” In other words, appropriate law enforcement officials, as well as the targeted student and his parents or the targeted employee. We are not talking about minor altercations but, rather, serious threats made against a student or employee.
FERPA provides that schools may disclose information from a student’s education records in situations where there is an immediate need to share that information in order to protect the health or safety of the student or others. Under this exception, schools must define the term "health or safety emergency" narrowly and are permitted to disclose information from education records only to those individuals who need the information in order to protect the student and others.

Law Enforcement Unit Records:
FERPA regulations draw a distinction between records created by a school law enforcement unit for law enforcement purposes, such as the enforcement of a local, state, or federal law, and records created by a school law enforcement unit for non-law enforcement purposes such as the enforcement of school policies concerning behavior or disciplinary actions. FERPA also distinguishes between student information that school law enforcement unit officials gathered from education records, and student information that unit officials obtained from other sources. With respect to disclosure of student information contained in school law enforcement unit records, FERPA provides that: Personally identifiable information about a student may be disclosed by school officials if that information is held in a school law enforcement unit record that was created to enforce a federal, state, or local law.

Information in school law enforcement unit records that was not obtained from a student’s education records may also be disclosed without the consent of the student’s parents or the student. Information such as a school official’s personal observations about or interactions with a student that is not contained in education records may be disclosed.

When should a Threat Assessment be initiated?
Note: Portions of the following are taken verbatim from the monograph presented by Mary Ellen O’Toole, PhD, Supervisory Special Agent was developed from the concepts and principles developed by the FBI’s NCAVC in nearly 25 years of experience in threat assessment, ideas generated at a 1999 NCAVC symposium on school shootings, and an in-depth review of eighteen school shooting cases.

First, it should be acknowledged that knowing when to initiate a “threat assessment” versus when “a kid is just being a kid” or “joking” is a difficult decision. In all cases, it is recommended that the person who is a recipient of the potentially threatening information consult with other school professionals, preferably those with training in threat assessment in regards to whether or not to move forward with an assessment. It is best practice to document this consultation. All staff members, including certificated and classified staff members; as well as students, should be encouraged to share any information that they feel may indicate that a threat is possible. This type of information is called “leakage” and is described below:

“Leakage” occurs when a student intentionally or unintentionally reveals clues to feelings, thoughts, fantasies, attitudes, or intentions that may signal an impending violent act. These clues can take the form of subtle threats, boasts, innuendos, predictions, or ultimatums. They may be spoken or conveyed in stories, diary entries, essays, poems, letters, songs, drawings, doodles, tattoos, or videos.
Another form of leakage involves efforts to get unwitting friends or classmates to help with preparations for a violent act, at times through deception (for example, the student asks a friend to obtain ammunition for him because he is going hunting).

Leakage can be a cry for help, a sign of inner conflict, or boasts that may look empty but actually express a serious threat. Leakage is considered to be one of the most important clues that may precede an adolescent's violent act. An example of leakage could be a student who shows a recurring preoccupation with themes of violence, hopelessness, despair, hatred, isolation, loneliness, nihilism, or an "end-of-the-world" philosophy. Those themes may be expressed in conversation or in jokes or in seemingly offhand comments to friends, teachers, other school employees, parents, or siblings. Statements may be subtle, or immediately minimized by comments such as, "I was just joking," or "I didn't really mean that."

Another example of leakage could be recurrent themes of destruction or violence appearing in a student's writing or artwork. The themes may involve hatred, prejudice, death, dismemberment, mutilation of self or others, bleeding, use of excessively destructive weapons, homicide, or suicide.

Many adolescents are fascinated with violence and the macabre, and writings and drawings on these themes can be a reflection of a harmless but rich a creative fantasy life. Some adolescents, however, seem so obsessed with these themes that they emerge no matter what the subject matter, the conversation, the assignment, or the joke. In an actual case, a student was taking a home economics class and was assigned to bake something. He baked a cake in the shape of a gun. His school writings and other work also contained recurrent themes of violence.

Student Threats and Discipline

It is especially important that a school not deal with threats by simply kicking the problem out the door. Expelling or suspending a student for making a threat must not be a substitute for careful threat assessment and a considered, consistent policy of intervention. Disciplinary action alone, unaccompanied by any effort to evaluate the threat or the student's intent, may actually exacerbate the danger-- for example, if a student feels unfairly or arbitrarily treated and becomes even angrier and more bent on carrying out a violent act.
Appendix A
(Selected Portions of the Following)

PROTOCOL FOR RESPONDING TO SCHOOL VIOLENCE AND THREATS

The following is a summary checklist of general procedures for the administrator/designee to respond to any reports of violence or threats in schools, at District and school-related activities and in all areas within the District’s jurisdiction (student-to-student, student-to-adult). The urgency of the situation will dictate the order in which the subsequent steps are followed.

A. ☐ SECURE CAMPUS/OFFICE SAFETY (This may include calling law enforcement, e.g. Riverside Police Department, warning the intended victim(s), or consulting with District Crisis Team.)

B. ☐ NOTIFY –District Threat Assessment Team

C. ☐ INVESTIGATE

Prior to convening a multi-disciplinary threat assessment team, designated staff from the team should gather background information that includes:

☐ Student information (e.g., name, date of birth, address)
☐ Emergency card information (e.g., family contact, health care provider information)
☐ Attendance record
☐ Student cumulative records, including Individualized Education Program (IEP), psycho-educational assessment, prior school records
☐ Student discipline records, including any history or discipline related to the incident
☐ Student health information, including self-injurious behavior and/or suicidal ideation
☐ Review of District computers and property (e.g., desks, books, lockers), as applicable, if reasonable suspicion exists for an administrative search
☐ Personal communication devices, as applicable, if reasonable suspicion exists for an administrative search
☐ Statement from witnesses (e.g., students, teachers, other staff)
☐ Family situation information
☐ Triggering events or other personal stressors (e.g., mental/physical health, death, divorce, economic or family stressors, relationship problems)
☐ Access to weapons
☐ Other pertinent information (e.g., written material, e-mails, pictures, social network postings)
D. ☐ CONVENE A THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM. (The multi—disciplinar y team may include, but not be limited to, an Administrator, School Resource Officer, school psychologist, school counselor, nurse). Do not include: parents/guardians, union representative, team members who may have been victims of the alleged threat situation, mental health professionals who already have a therapeutic relationships with the student being assessed.

E. ☐ ASSESS FOR RISK TO SELF OR OTHERS
   ☐ Administrator/designee or designated threat assessment team member meets with the student making the threat.
   ☐ Multi-disciplinary threat assessment team determines the level of risk.

F. ☐ SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE (When reporting child abuse, include information about the student’s threat and suicide risk)

G. ☐ DETERMINE APPROPRIATE ACTION PLAN (Interventions will be based upon the severity and potential risk of the threat. The action plan determined by the team should be documented and managed by the school site administrator/designee.)

H. ☐ ADDITIONAL ACTIONS
   May be required if the behavior falls under any of the following categories:
   4. Criminal Threat (bodily harm or an immediate physical threat)
   5. Disciplinary Action
   6. Mental Health Evaluation

I. ☐ STUDENT RE-ENTRY GUIDELINES (If the student has been out of school for any length of time, including mental health hospitalization, or will be transferring to a new school, the school site administrator/designee may consider using re-entry guidelines for a successful transition. (See Attachment D.)

J. ☐ PROVIDE RESOURCES

K. ☐ MONITOR AND MANAGE (Monitor until it is determined that the individual no longer poses an immediate threat to self or others.)

L. ☐ DOCUMENT ALL ACTIONS (Maintain records, complete forms...)
### SCHOOL VIOLENCE RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

**Student Name/DOB:** ______________________  **Location:** ____________________  **Date:** __________

The administrator/designee or the designated school site crisis team member will meet with the student to complete a risk assessment. The questions below should not be read to the student, but rather should be used as a guide while assessing the student. The multi-disciplinary threat assessment team will determine the level of risk by reviewing the categories below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>*</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Motive, Justification</td>
<td>The student has motive(s) or feels justified in carrying out an act of violence</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>2. Communication of Intent</td>
<td>The student has directly or indirectly communicated ideas or intent to harm. Communications may be verbal, non-verbal, electronic, written.</td>
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<td>3. Preoccupation with Violence</td>
<td>The student has demonstrated inappropriate interest in any of the following:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>School/terrorist attacks or attackers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Incidents of mass violence such as war, terrorism, mass murderers.</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Views violence as an acceptable or only way to solve the problem.</td>
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<td>4. History of Violence/Threats</td>
<td>The student has engaged in any attack-related behaviors.</td>
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<td>5. Means and Access</td>
<td>The student has the capacity to carry out an act of targeted violence. This may include increased interest in, possession or access to weapons.</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>6. Suicidal Ideation</td>
<td>The student is experiencing hopelessness, desperation or despair. If yes, refer to Attachment B – Suicide Assessment Checklist.</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Evidence of Increasing violence Potential</td>
<td>The student’s conversation and “story” are consistent with his or her actions. Consider frequency (how often); recency (how recent); and intensity (how severe).</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>8. Impact on Others</td>
<td>Other people are concerned about the student’s potential for violence.</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Triggers</td>
<td>There are circumstances that might increase the likelihood of an attack. Examples may include bullying, suspension, expulsion, relationship problems, significant loss, or interpersonal conflict.</td>
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<td>10. Substance Use</td>
<td>The overindulgence in and dependence of a drug or other chemical leading to effects that are detrimental to the student’s physical and mental health.</td>
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<td>11. Protective Factors</td>
<td>The student has positive school, home, community or religious relationships.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The student desires a positive resolution</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The student exhibits appropriate coping and problem-solving skills.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The student understands and respects rules, guidelines and policies.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>*= NEED MORE INFORMATION</td>
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### 12. Evidence of “Leakage” - warnings, thoughts, plans, intentions reported to others, written about in documents, revealed in social media. Can be a direct or indirect statement.

**List:**

### 13. “Dark Content” Present - Video Games, Music, Web-Sites which advocate or support violence, particularly school violence. Movies such as “Elephant”, “Zero Day”, “Zero Hour”, and “States Evidence”.

**List:**

**ASSESSMENT RESULTS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RISK LEVEL</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
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Riverside Unified School District
Threat Assessment Policies and Procedures
SELPA/Pupil Services
Rev: 07/18/2016-CPH
<table>
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<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| Insignificant | Inappropriate or Immature Behaviors, non-credible threats  
Action Needed: passive monitoring for continued occurrences |
| Low Risk   | Does not pose imminent danger to self or others; insufficient evidence for violence potential. Grossly inappropriate behaviors, some risk factors present  
Action Needed: active monitoring for escalation; plateau or de-escalation of behavioral trajectory |
| Moderate Risk | May pose imminent danger to self or others, but there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate a viable plan of action to do harm. Threat posturing; preparatory behaviors and/or rehearsal fantasies, significant risk factors present  
Action Needed: mitigation/removal/isolation from target; security measures considered/engaged |
| High Risk  | Poses imminent danger to self or others with a viable plan to do harm; exhibits extreme and/or persistent inappropriate behaviors; sufficient evidence for violence potential; qualifies for immediate arrest or hospitalization.  
Action Needed: Law Enforcement and Security Measures Engaged |
| Critical   | On his way, in adjacent area or critical incident occurring now; evacuation/active shooter plan activated |
Appendix C
(Selected Portions of the Following)

SCHOOL THREAT ASSESSMENTS:
GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE THREAT MANAGEMENT

The primary purpose of a threat assessment is to prevent targeted violence. The threat assessment process is centered upon analysis of the facts and evidence of behavior in a given situation. The appraisal of risk in a threat assessment focuses on actions, communications, and specific circumstances that might suggest that an individual intends to mount an attack and is engaged in planning or preparing for that event. In a situation that becomes the focus of a threat assessment inquiry or investigation, appropriate authorities gather information, evaluate facts, and make a determination as to whether a given student poses a threat of violence to a target. If an inquiry indicates that there is a risk of violence in a specific situation, authorities conducting the threat assessment collaborate with others to develop and implement a plan to manage or reduce the threat posed by the student in that situation.

Six principles form the foundation of the threat assessment process. These principles are:
• Targeted violence is the end result of an understandable, and oftentimes discernible, process of thinking and behavior.
• Targeted violence stems from an interaction among the individual, the situation, the setting, and the target.
• An investigative, skeptical, inquisitive mindset is critical to successful threat assessment.
• Effective threat assessment is based upon facts, rather than on characteristics or "traits."
• An "integrated systems approach" should guide threat assessment inquiries and investigations.
• 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.

Principles of the Threat Assessment Process
This Guide is about the systematic use of threat assessment as 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.

Principle 1: Targeted violence is the end result of an understandable, and oftentimes discernible, process of thinking and behavior.

Findings of the Safe School Initiative indicate that students and former students who committed targeted attacks at schools almost always thought about their attacks in advance, and did not "just
snap* suddenly. These findings suggest that students who carry out school attacks may consider possible targets; talk with others about their ideas and intentions; and record their thinking in diaries and journals or on a Website. They may seek out weapons to use in the attack, and they may practice with these weapons in preparation for the attack. The actions of these attackers may be deliberate and occur over days and weeks, months or years.

**Principle 2: Targeted violence stems from an interaction among the person, the situation, the setting, and the target. Understanding and preventing acts of targeted violence require a focus on these four component parts and their interaction: The individual, the situation, the setting, and the target.**

- **The potential attacker.**
  To determine the risk of targeted violence, a threat assessor must gather information about the potential attacker. In a threat assessment inquiry or investigation, a major question is: How has this student dealt with situations that have led him or her to see life as unbearably stressful? Individuals who in times of great stress have considered or acted upon ideas of suicide or violence toward others, or both, should be considered persons of increased concern.

- **The situation.**
  Investigators should examine circumstances and significant events in the life of the individual, especially recent events that have been overwhelmingly stressful. For students who engaged in school-based attacks, those events included having been bullied and humiliated, especially in public; loss of significant relationships; and perceived failures or loss of status. Almost all school shooters experienced some major situational stress at some point before their attack.

- **The setting:**
  The third factor to consider is the specific setting at the time that the student came to authorities’ attention as possibly posing a threat of targeted school violence. Do fellow students, friends, or others say directly or indirectly that violence is not a solution to problems? Do these people suggest ways to get help and assistance? In a school, are there respectful connections among students and adults, networks of trusting relationships that facilitate non-violent problem-solving? Or is the idea of violence proposed, supported, accepted, or ignored by those who know the potential attacker? In many school shootings, other young persons knew about the shooter’s interest in mounting an attack. In some cases, clear warnings were dismissed or ignored. In others, friends and fellow students of the shooter encouraged or helped the attacker in his pursuit of violence. Messages about the acceptability of violence that are communicated directly or subtly to a potential attacker by students and/or adults in his or her environment may facilitate, or alternatively help to prevent, an attack.

- **The target:**
  When assessing the risk of an attack at school, investigators and others with protective responsibilities also must pay attention to the individual’s choice of a potential target. The attacker may target a particular individual or group of individuals over some perceived injury or loss. In
some cases, attackers chose a specific target, such as a particular student or teacher. In other instances, the target was more general: the school, "jocks," or "kids in the cafeteria." It should be emphasized again that many young people experience losses, failures, humiliations, and other kinds of situational stressors, and that few become school shooters.

Principle 3: An investigative, skeptical, inquisitive mindset is critical to successful threat assessment.

An investigative mindset is central to successful application of the threat assessment process. Threat assessment requires thoughtful probing; viewing information with healthy skepticism; and paying attention to key points about pre-attack behaviors. Authorities who carry out threat assessments must strive to be both accurate and fair. Moreover, threat assessors should question the information in front of them continuously. Ideally, there should be credible verification of all essential "facts". Information about a potential attacker’s interests, statements, and actions should be corroborated, wherever possible.

The investigative mindset and perspective also rely on common sense. Threat assessors working to understand a given situation should step back periodically from the individual details of an inquiry or investigation and ask whether information gathered makes sense and supports any hypothesis developed concerning the risk posed by the subject of the threat assessment inquiry.

Principle 4: Effective threat assessment is based on facts, rather than characteristics or "traits."

A major principle of threat assessment is that each investigation stands on its own. Inferences and conclusions about risk should be guided by an analysis of facts and behaviors specific to the person of concern and the given situation. Any student with the motive, intent, and ability potentially is capable of mounting a targeted attack at school. Judgments about a student’s risk of violence should be based upon analysis of behaviorally relevant facts, not on "traits" or "characteristics" of a given individual or of a class of individuals.

In the climate of fear that followed recent attacks, students in high schools across the country who appeared angry and wore trench coats were marked as possible school attackers. They were so labeled because of appearance and demeanor. Blanket characterizations, or student "profiles," do not provide a reliable basis for making judgments of the threat posed by a particular student. Even worse, the use of profiles can shift attention away from more reliable facts and evidence about a student’s behavior and communications.

Principle 5: An "integrated systems approach" should guide threat assessment investigations.

In a threat assessment, bits of information might be viewed as pieces of a puzzle. Each bit may appear inconsequential or only slightly worrisome by itself. But, when the pieces are put together as oftentimes has occurred in "after the fact" analyses of school attacks the behaviors and communications of a student may coalesce into a discernible pattern that indicates a threat
of violence. In many school attacks, information existed within the school and community that might have alerted authorities to the risk of attack posed by a particular student. Relationships with agencies and service systems within the school and the surrounding community are critical to identifying, assessing, and managing students who are on a path toward carrying out a school attack. An integrated systems approach recognizes the necessity of cooperation and partnerships between schools and systems outside of the school. These may include law enforcement, social services and mental health providers, the courts, community agencies, families, worksites, religious organizations, and others.

**Principle 6: The central question of a threat assessment is whether a student a poses a threat, not whether the student is a threat.**

Although some individuals who threaten harm may pose a real threat of targeted violence, many do not. The Safe School Initiative found that fewer than 20 percent of school shooters communicated a direct or conditional threat to their target before the attack. By contrast, individuals who are found to pose threats of violence frequently do not make threats to their targets. The study found that in more than 80 percent of the cases, school shooters did not threaten their targets directly, but they did communicate their intent and/or plans to others before the attack. These findings underscore the importance of making judgments in threat assessment investigations based upon a student’s behaviors and communications, rather than upon whether or not that student threatened his or her target. Authorities conducting threat assessment investigations must distinguish between making a threat, e.g., telling a potential target that he or she may or will be harmed, and posing a threat, e.g., engaging in behavior that indicates furthering a plan or building capacity for a violent act. Nevertheless, threats of violence should not be dismissed out of hand. Students may make threats with a variety of intents and for a wide range of reasons, e.g., to get attention; to express anger or frustration; to frighten or coerce their peers; as a part of joking or “playing around”; or, in some cases, to communicate intent to attack. Consequently, every threat should receive prompt attention. Although voicing a threat should not be used as the principle determinant in making judgments about the likelihood of a school attack, it likewise would be a mistake to assume that individuals who make threats in every instance are unlikely to follow through on those communications.
Appendix D

STUDENT RE-ENTRY GUIDELINES

Student Name/DOB: ___________________________ Location: ______________ Date: ____________

In planning for the re-entry of a student who has been out of school for any length of time, including mental health hospitalization, or if the student will be transferring to a new school, the school site administrator/designee may consider any of the following action items:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Returning Day</td>
<td>Have parent escort student on first day back. Develop a re-entry communication and safety plan in the event of future emergencies. (See safety plan in Suicide Intervention Handbook).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Discharge Documents</td>
<td>Request discharge documents from hospital or Medical Clearance for Return to School from parent on first day back. Obtain Authorization or Exchange/Release Information for relevant providers including psychiatrist, treating physician, psychologist etc...Update medication list.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Meeting with Parents                | Engage parents, school support staff, teachers, and student, as appropriate in a Re-Entry Planning Meeting.  
  |                                       | • Identify on-going mental health resources in school and/or in the community.  
  |                                       | • Modify academic programming, as appropriate.  
  |                                       | • Consider an assessment for special education for a student whose behavioral and emotional needs effect their ability to benefit from their educational If the student is prescribed medication, monitor with parent consent.  
  |                                       | • Offer suggestions to parents regarding monitoring personal communication devices, including social networking sites, as needed.  
  |                                       | • Notify student’s teachers, as appropriate. |
| Identify Supports                   | Assist the student in identifying adults they trust and can go to for assistance at school and at home. |
| Address Bullying, Harassment,       | As needed, ensure that any bullying, harassment, discrimination is being addressed. |
| Discrimination                      |                                                                         |
| Designate Staff                     | Designate staff (e.g., Academic Counselor, School Psychologist, School Nurse, et cetera) to check in with the student during the first couple weeks periodically. |
| Release of Information              | Obtain consent by the parent to discuss student information with outside providers using the Parent Authorization for Release/Exchange of Information. |
| Manage and Monitor                  | Case management and monitoring – ensure the student is receiving and accessing the proper mental health and educational services needed. |
Riverside Unified School District
Medical Clearance for Returning School
Following Mental Health Intervention Service or Hospitalization

Date: __________________________

Dear Doctor:

The student named below was either hospitalized or received mental health services recently for being a danger to himself/herself, danger to others and/or gravely disabled. Medical information from you is essential in planning for the student’s safety, educational and health needs.

Student: ___________________________ DOB: ___________ Grade: ________

Please complete the following information and return to school nurse. Your cooperation is much appreciated.

Diagnosis/description of problem:

____________________________________________________________________________________

Please indicate any prescribed medications and dosages:

________________________________________________________________________________________

If the student no longer poses a threat to self or others at the time of discharge and can return to school, please sign below and indicate restrictions, if any.

The above named student does not pose a threat to self and/or others at the time of discharge and may return to school:

☐ without restrictions ☐ with the following modifications/restrictions (indicate below)

Restrictions:

________________________________________________________________________________________

Doctor’s Name (print) ___________________________ Doctor’s Signature ______________________

Return to School Nurse: ___________________________ Contact Number: ______________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________

AUTHORIZATION TO RECEIVE/RELEASE MEDICAL INFORMATION

Practitioner/Agency/Clinic Re: ___________________________ Last Name First Name

Name (Last, First) Student Address: Street, City, Zip

Agency/Practitioner Address: Street, City, Zip Chart # DOB

Purpose for which information may be used:

________________________________________________________________________________________

School/Office Address City Zip

This authorization shall be valid until ___________________________ unless revoked earlier.

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature Date
Note: This information will become part of the pupil's educational records and shall be made available, upon request, to the parent or pupil age 18 or older.