



Threats Policy

Policy Number 5106

I. Purpose

This policy's primary goals are to prevent violence and resolve conflicts or problems that influence threatening behavior. School threat assessment guidelines allow a multi-disciplinary team to distinguish non-serious threats (transient) from serious (substantive) and very serious (substantive) threats and to resolve threats appropriately.

A multi-disciplinary team approach uses an evidence-based school threat assessment process consistent with the following Utah State Board of Education (USBE) rules:

- **R277-400** School Facility Emergency and Safety
- **R277-736** Juvenile Court or Law Enforcement Notice and Information Dissemination

II. Definitions

A. "Evidence-based" is defined in **Utah Code 53G-18-211** as a program or practice that has:

- a. had multiple randomized control studies or a meta-analysis demonstrating that the program or practice is effective for a specific population;
- b. been rated as effective by a standardized program evaluation tool; or
- c. been approved by the state board.

B. "Multi-disciplinary team" means a group of professionals from multiple disciplines who meet to pursue the common goal of evaluating and triaging the academic, social, emotional, physical, and/or behavioral needs of a student or a group of students; creating individualized strategies and interventions to address the identified needs. This policy uses a multi-disciplinary team named the Threat Assessment Team to complete the threat assessment process.

C. Threat Assessment Team is a multi-disciplinary team that works collaboratively with each other, the school staff, and community agencies (as appropriate) to support the team's purposes and maintain safety for all students and staff members.

D. "Threat" means an expression of intent to harm someone that is direct, indirect, or implied and may be spoken, written, or expressed in some other way; and is considered a threat regardless of whether it is observed or communicated directly to the target of the threat or observed by or communicated to a third party.

E. "Student Threat Assessment" means a prevention strategy that involves:

1. identifying student threats to commit a hostile or violent act,
2. determining the seriousness of the threat, and



3. developing intervention plans that protect potential victims and address the underlying problem or conflict that stimulated the threatening behavior.

III. Threat Assessment Team

The Summit Academy Threat Assessment Team is a multi-disciplinary team that works collaboratively with each other, the school staff, and community agencies (as appropriate) to support the team's purposes and maintain safety for all students and staff members. The team includes the following individuals:

- School Principal or another designated administrator
- Summit Academy Director of Safety
- Summit Academy counselor, psychologist, or social worker
- General or special education teacher
- Director of Special Education or their designee (optional based on the threat)
- Local law enforcement officer (optional based on the threat)

Roles and Responsibilities

A. School Principal or Designee

1. Serves as the designated team leader or assigns another team member to be the leader.
2. Supports and holds team members accountable for roles and responsibilities.
3. Supports parents, teachers, and other staff members regarding the threat assessment process.
4. Oversees the team's documentation of the threat assessment.
5. Ensures that all documentation is consistent with FERPA and Summit Academy policies.

B. Director of Safety

1. Provides training to the Threat Assessment Team on the process of completing a threat assessment.
2. Supports the school principal throughout the process.
3. Serves as the team leader in the absence of the school principal.
4. Works with the Summit Academy Public Information Officer to draft any communication sent to Summit Academy families or the general public.

C. Counselor, Psychologist, or Social Worker

1. Considers any mental health issues that may arise.
2. Provides mental health supports based on their credentials.
3. Links the team to community resources to support the parent(s) and student(s)

D. General or Special Education Teacher

1. Supports the team with understanding academic and social-emotional data and needs.

E. Director of Special Education

1. Assures that the individual's rights are maintained throughout the process.
2. Interprets any IEP or 504 accommodations of all students involved.



F. Law Enforcement Officer

1. Determines if a threat constitutes a criminal offense.
2. Addresses the threat(s) that require immediate notification to law enforcement agencies.
3. Assists in monitoring and supervising the subject while determining the need for law enforcement action.

IV. Threat Assessment Process

All threats should be reported to a responsible administrator as soon as the threat is made, received, or discovered. Students are encouraged to report any threat to a responsible adult who will then report that threat to the administrator. Threats received from anonymous sources or through the SafeUT system will be considered serious until determined otherwise.

When communicating a reported threat, all known details should be included. At a minimum the communication should include:

- The name of the complainant;
- The name of the alleged offender (if known);
- The date and location of the threat(s); and
- A statement describing the details of the threat(s), including names of witnesses (in known).

Once a threat is received, the administrator will promptly investigate and triage the threat by completing the following steps:

Step 1: EVALUATE THE THREAT

1. Obtain a specific account of the threat by interviewing the person who made the threat (offender), the recipient of the threat, and other witnesses.
2. Document the exact content of the threat and statements made by each party.
3. Consider the circumstances in which the threat was made and the offender's intentions.
4. Decide if the threat is a threat to self, a threat to others, or both. If it involves both a threat to self and a threat to others, the threat toward others will be considered the priority. Once the threat towards others is deemed transient or has been resolved, the offender will begin the steps to address the threat to themselves.

Step 2: DECIDE WHETHER THE THREAT IS CLEARLY TRANSIENT OR SUBSTANTIVE

1. Using the 11 Key Areas on the Threat to Others Assessment, determine if the threat is clearly transient or substantive.
2. Consider the student's age, credibility, and previous behavior history when completing the threat assessment.



To be considered a TRANSIENT THREAT, the threat must be one of the following:

- A non-genuine expression or is intended as a joke or figure of speech.
- A non-sustainable intent to harm or is temporary anger that is resolved.
- A threat that is resolved on the scene or by the administrator.
- A conflict that is resolved and ends with an apology, retraction, or clarification.
- When in doubt, consider the threat to be substantive and assess further.

If a threat is clearly transient:

1. You do not need to assemble the Threat Assessment Team.
2. Respond appropriately considering the nature of the threat. Typical responses for students may include reprimands, parental notification, or other disciplinary action. Students may be required to make amends or work with a school counselor.
3. The incident should be documented and maintained in a student's file, as appropriate.
4. If the threat is considered SUBSTANTIVE or clearly cannot be seen as transient, notify the Threat Assessment Team and invite them to participate in the remaining process and continue on to Step 3.

Step 3: DECIDE WHETHER THE SUBSTANTIVE THREAT IS SERIOUS OR VERY SERIOUS

1. A SUBSTANTIVE THREAT includes one or more of the following:
 - There are specific and plausible details such as a specific victim, time, place, and method.
 - The threat has been repeated or planning has taken place.
 - There has been an effort to recruit accomplices or invite an audience.
 - There is physical evidence of an intent to carry out the threat. (Lists, drawings, written plans, etc.)
 - The student is capable of carrying out the threat.
 - The student has a history of aggressive behavior.
 - Witness accounts of the threat are credible.
2. A SERIOUS THREAT is a threat to assault someone or cause mass destruction.
3. A VERY SERIOUS THREAT involves the use of a weapon or is a threat to kill, rape, or inflict severe injury.

Step 4: RESPOND TO THE THREAT

The goal of the Threat Assessment Team is to eliminate the threat or potential for violence. Additionally, the team should support all students involved by:



- (a) De-escalating and redirecting the student away from plans and thoughts of violence; and
- (b) Supporting the student with skills to engage with others, problem-solve, adapt, and improve coping skills and well-being.

Actions to take for a SERIOUS THREAT

1. Notify the parents of the student who made the threat.
2. Protect and notify the intended victim(s) and the parents of the victims.
3. Caution the student about the consequences of carrying out the threat.
4. Provide direct supervision of the student until parents assume control.
5. Consult with law enforcement, if necessary.
6. Follow discipline procedures, which may involve removing the student from access to other students or the school.
7. Before the student returns to normal school attendance, complete a Corrective Action Plan.
8. Maintain all documentation of the threat assessment and outcomes in the student's file.

Very Serious Threat – In addition to the steps listed for Serious Threat, consider the following:

1. Contact law enforcement and report the threat.
2. Provide direct supervision of the student until parents or law enforcement assume control, which may require restraint and seclusion until help can be provided.
3. Notify the Director of Summit Academy.
4. Notify parents of the need for a mental health assessment. A completed mental health assessment should be required before a student is allowed to return to school.
5. Follow discipline procedures, which should include suspension until the threat is no longer considered serious.

V. References

N/A

VI. Attachments

Utah Code R277-400

Utah Code R277-736

Utah Code 53G-18-211

- a. Threat to Others Assessment – 11 Key Areas

VII. Revision History and Approval Date

Version 1: June 2018: Effective

Version 2: November 17 2022: Policy rewrite to align to State standards