

2024-2025

Dear Parents/Guardians/Caregivers,

The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario and community partners are committed to making our schools safe for all. As a result, schools will respond to all student behaviours that pose a potential risk to other students, staff, and members of the community.

When school staff, students and/or community partners identify that a student(s) behaviour poses a potential threat to themselves and others, the Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol (VTRA) will be activated, so that school administration can quickly take further steps to protect the well-being of our students, staff and community. Behaviours include, but are not limited to: serious violence or violence with intent to harm, possession of a weapon/replica, making a bomb threat/plan, verbal or written threats to kill or injure, the use of technology to communicate threats to harm/kill others or cause property damage, fire setting, sexual intimidation/assault, ongoing pervasive bullying and/or harassment, gang related intimidation or violence, and hate incidents motivated by factors including, but not limited to: race, culture, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

Each school has a site-specific Violence Threat Risk Assessment Team, which is multi-disciplinary. At a minimum, the team includes the school administration, designated Board staff, including the Superintendent of Safe Schools, a Board clinician, and the police. The Violence Threat Risk Assessment team may also include other community agencies or individuals who work in collaboration to keep our schools safe such as, Family and Children Services Agencies, youth justice partners, and children's mental health agencies/practitioners.

Initial data will be collected by the Violence Threat Risk Assessment Team to:

- Determine if the threat maker actually poses a risk to the target(s) they have threatened.
- Put in place immediate risk reducing interventions.
- Determine if an Assessment of Risk to Others (ARTO) needs to be conducted to better understand the factors that contributed to the threat maker's behaviours, and to develop a trauma informed intervention plan including supportive services for all those involved and impacted by the threat.

A more comprehensive Assessment of Risk to Others may also be deemed necessary to determine if the threat maker poses a further risk to other targets beyond what initially drew the team's attention, and to consider other factors, outside of the school setting, that could be impacting on the threat maker's behaviour.

It is important for all parties to engage in the Violence Threat Risk Assessment process. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, or if they choose not to participate or provide consent, but a concern for safety still exists due to threatening behaviour, the Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol will still proceed to ensure a safe and caring environment for all.

Information shared throughout the Violence Threat Risk Assessment process will respect and balance each individuals' rights to privacy with the need to ensure the safety of all. The Intervention Plan will be developed and shared with parent(s)/guardians/caregivers, staff, and students, as required.

**DUTY TO REPORT?** Often when we hear in the media about a violent incident, we learn that the Individual of Concern had made threats in advance of acting violently. To keep our communities safe, staff community members, students, and parents all need to act responsibly and report all threat-related behaviours and high-risk activities.

**The VTRA Protocol reflects the thinking and work of J. Kevin Cameron, Executive Director of Center For Trauma Informed Practices.** See Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol at [www.cdsbeo.on.ca](http://www.cdsbeo.on.ca).