

(Audio archived recordings of the committee meetings, corresponding to the date of the committee statement, *may possibly* be found at www.njleg.state.nj.us)

FLOOR AMENDMENT STATEMENT: No

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE: No

S2765 (SCS)

INTRODUCED BILL S2779:
(Includes sponsor(s) statement) Yes

VETO MESSAGE: No

GOVERNOR'S PRESS RELEASE ON SIGNING: Yes

FOLLOWING WERE PRINTED:

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REPORTS: No

HEARINGS: No

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES: Yes

Mary Ann Koruth, NorthJersey.com | USA TODAY NETWORK – NEW JERSEY, 'Law: Threat assessment teams required in NJ schools', Burlington County Times (online), 3 Aug 2022 A1

end

P.L. 2022, CHAPTER 83, *approved August 1, 2022*
Assembly Committee Substitute (*Second Reprint*) for
Assembly, Nos. 4075 and 3229

1 AN ACT concerning the establishment of threat assessment teams in
2 public schools and supplementing chapter 17 of Title 18A of the
3 New Jersey Statutes.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:

7
8 1. a. ¹**[Each]** The board of education of each¹ school district
9 and the board of trustees of each charter school or renaissance
10 school project¹ shall develop ²and adopt² a policy for the
11 establishment of a threat assessment team at each school ¹**[in the**
12 **district]¹**. The purpose of a threat assessment team shall be to
13 provide school teachers, administrators, and other staff with
14 assistance in identifying students ²of concern, assessing those
15 students' risk for engaging in violence or other harmful activities,
16 and delivering intervention strategies to manage the risk of harm for
17 students² who pose a potential safety risk, ²**[preventing]** to
18 prevent² targeted violence in the ¹**[district]** school¹, and
19 ²**[ensuring]** ensure² a safe and secure school environment that
20 enhances the learning experience for all members of the school
21 community.

22 b. A threat assessment team established by a board of education
23 ¹or a board of trustees¹ under subsection a. of this section shall be
24 multidisciplinary in membership and, to the extent possible, shall
25 include the following individuals:

26 (1) a school psychologist, school counselor, school social
27 worker, or other school employee with expertise in student
28 counseling;

29 (2) a teaching staff member;

30 (3) a school principal or other senior school administrator;
31 ¹**[and]¹**

32 (4) a safe schools resource officer or school employee who
33 serves as a school liaison to law enforcement ¹; and

34 (5) the school safety specialist designated pursuant to section 2
35 of P.L.2017, c.162 (C.18A:17-43.3), in the event that the school
36 safety specialist is not already a school administrator or school

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined **thus** is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Assembly floor amendments adopted June 16, 2022.

²Assembly AAP committee amendments adopted June 23, 2022.

1 employee required to be a part of the threat assessment team
2 pursuant to this section¹.

3 Additional school employees may serve as regular members of
4 the threat assessment team or may be consulted during the threat
5 assessment process, as determined to be appropriate by the team.

6 c. Nothing contained in this section shall be construed as
7 affecting the provisions of any collective bargaining agreement or
8 individual contract of employment in effect on this act's effective
9 date.

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11 2. ¹a.¹ Any policy developed by a school district ¹, charter
12 school or renaissance school project¹ concerning the establishment
13 of a threat assessment team, required pursuant to section 1 of this
14 act, shall ¹be aligned with guidelines developed by the Department
15 of Education pursuant to section 3 of this act and shall¹ include, but
16 need not be limited to:

17 ¹[a.] (1)¹ guidance for students, teachers, and all school staff
18 regarding the recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior in a
19 student that may represent a threat to the school community;

20 ¹[b.] (2)¹ the designation of members of the school community
21 to whom threatening behavior shall be reported;

22 ¹[c.] (3)¹ the development and implementation of policies
23 concerning the assessment and intervention of students whose
24 behavior poses a threat to the safety of the school community, and
25 appropriate actions to be taken, including available social,
26 developmental, and law enforcement resources, for students whose
27 behavior is identified as posing a threat to the safety of the school
28 community;

29 ¹[d.] (4)¹ coordination and consultation with the ¹[school
30 district's]¹ school safety specialist designated pursuant to section 2
31 of P.L.2017, c.162 (C.18A:17-43.3); and

32 ¹[e.] (5)¹ a policy that the threat assessment team shall not
33 disclose or disseminate any information obtained during their
34 assessment beyond the purpose for which the information was
35 provided to the threat assessment team, except that the threat
36 assessment team is authorized to disclose the information to
37 applicable agencies to pursue appropriate action pursuant to
38 ¹[subsection c.] paragraph (3)¹ of this ¹[section] subsection¹ for
39 any student whose behavior is identified as posing a threat to the
40 safety of the school community.

41 ¹b. When assessing a student whose behavior may pose a threat
42 to the safety of the school community, in the case of a student with
43 an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan, the threat
44 assessment team shall consult with the IEP team or 504 team to
45 determine whether the aberrant behavior is a threat to school safety
46 and is being properly addressed in a manner that is required by
47 N.J.A.C.6A:14 and all federal and State special education laws.

1 c. Each member of the threat assessment team shall participate
2 in training ²provided by the school safety specialist designated
3 pursuant to section 2 of P.L.2017, c.162 (C.18A:17-43.3) that is²
4 consistent with the guidelines developed by the department pursuant
5 to section 3 of this act to ensure that the threat assessment team is
6 able to accurately assess student behavior and to ensure that threat
7 assessment teams do not have a disparate impact on students based
8 on their race, ethnicity, ²homelessness status,² religious belief,
9 gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.
10 The training shall, at a minimum, include training on adverse
11 childhood experiences, childhood trauma, cultural competency, and
12 implicit bias.¹
13

14 3. The Department of Education, in consultation with State law
15 enforcement agencies and the New Jersey Office of Homeland
16 Security and Preparedness, shall develop guidelines for school
17 districts ¹, charter schools, and renaissance school projects¹
18 regarding the establishment and training of threat assessment teams
19 pursuant to this act. ²The Department of Education shall provide
20 training through the New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy
21 established pursuant to section 1 of P.L.2017, c.162 (C.18A:17-
22 43.2). The school safety specialist designated pursuant to section 2
23 of P.L.2017, c.162 (C.18A:17-43.3) shall provide training to school
24 staff consistent with the training and guidelines provided by the
25 department.²
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27 4. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to
28 the first full school year next following the date of enactment.
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Requires public schools to develop threat assessment teams.

ASSEMBLY, No. 4075

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 26, 2022

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman WILLIAM F. MOEN, JR.

District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)

SYNOPSIS

Requires school districts to develop threat assessment teams at each school in district.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning the establishment of threat assessment teams in
2 public schools and supplementing chapter 17 of Title 18A of the
3 New Jersey Statutes.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:

7
8 1. a. Each school district shall develop a policy for the
9 establishment of a threat assessment team at each school in the
10 district. The purpose of a threat assessment team shall be to
11 provide school teachers, administrators, faculty, and staff with
12 assistance in identifying, evaluating, and managing at-risk students,
13 and to ensure a safe and secure school environment that enhances
14 the learning experience for all members of the school community.

15 b. Any policy concerning the establishment of a threat
16 assessment team, required pursuant to subsection a. of this section,
17 shall include, but need not be limited to:

18 (1) guidance for students, teachers, and all school staff
19 regarding the recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior in a
20 student that may represent a threat to the school community or the
21 student;

22 (2) the designation of members of the school community to
23 whom threatening behavior shall be reported. Each threat
24 assessment team shall be composed of individuals with knowledge
25 and expertise in guidance, counseling, school administration,
26 mental health, and law enforcement;

27 (3) the development and implementation of policies concerning:

28 (a) the assessment and intervention of at-risk students whose
29 behavior poses a threat to the safety of the school community, and

30 (b) appropriate actions to be taken, including available social,
31 developmental, and law enforcement resources, for students
32 identified as at-risk;

33 (4) coordination and consultation with the school district's
34 designated school safety specialist pursuant to section 2 of
35 P.L.2017, c.162 (C.18A:17-43.3); and

36 (5) a policy that the threat assessment team shall not disclose or
37 disseminate any information obtained during their assessment
38 beyond the purpose for which the disclosure was made to the threat
39 assessment team, except that the threat assessment team is
40 authorized to disclose the information to applicable agencies to
41 pursue appropriate action pursuant to subparagraph (b) of paragraph
42 (3) of this subsection for any student determined to be at-risk.

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44 2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to
45 the first full school year next following the date of enactment.

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STATEMENT

This bill requires each school district to develop a policy for the establishment of a threat assessment team at each school in the district. The purpose of a threat assessment team is to provide school teachers, administrators, faculty, and staff with assistance in identifying, evaluating, and managing at-risk students, and to ensure a safe and secure school environment that enhances the learning experience for all members of the school community.

Under the bill, the policy is required to include:

- guidance for students, teachers, and all school staff regarding the recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior in a student that may represent a threat to the school community or the student;
- the designation of members of the school community to whom threatening behavior is to be reported. Each threat assessment team is required to be composed of individuals with knowledge and expertise in guidance, counseling, school administration, mental health, and law enforcement;
- the development and implementation of policies concerning the assessment and intervention of at-risk students whose behavior poses a threat to the safety of the school community, and appropriate actions to be taken, including available social, developmental, and law enforcement resources, for students identified as at-risk;
- coordination and consultation with the school district’s designated school safety specialist; and
- a policy that the threat assessment team will not disclose or disseminate any information obtained during their assessment beyond the purpose for which the disclosure was made to the threat assessment team, except that the threat assessment team is authorized to disclose the information to applicable agencies to pursue appropriate action for any student determined to be at-risk.

ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR ASSEMBLY, Nos. 4075 and 3229

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 9, 2022

The Assembly Education Committee reports favorably Assembly Committee Substitute for Assembly Bill Nos. 4075 and 3229.

This committee substitute requires each school district to develop a policy for the establishment of a threat assessment team at each school in the district. The purpose of a threat assessment team is to provide school teachers, administrators, and other staff with assistance in identifying students who pose a potential safety risk, preventing targeted violence in the district, and ensuring a safe and secure school environment that enhances the learning experience for all members of the school community.

A threat assessment team established by a board of education would be required to include, to the extent possible: a school psychologist, school counselor, school social worker, or other school employee with expertise in student counseling; a teaching staff member; a school principal or other senior school administrator; and a safe schools resource officer or school employee who serves as a school liaison to law enforcement. Additional school employees may serve as regular members of the threat assessment team or may be consulted during the threat assessment process, as determined to be appropriate by the team. Nothing in the bill would affect the provisions of any collective bargaining agreement or individual contract of employment in effect on this act's effective date.

Under the bill, any policy developed by a school district is required to include:

- guidance for students, teachers, and all school staff regarding the recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior in a student that may represent a threat to the school community;
- the designation of members of the school community to whom threatening behavior is to be reported;
- the development and implementation of policies concerning the assessment and intervention of students whose behavior poses a threat to the safety of the school community, and appropriate actions to be taken, including available social, developmental, and law enforcement resources, for students whose behavior is identified as posing a threat to the safety of the school community;

- coordination and consultation with the school district's designated school safety specialist; and
- a policy that the threat assessment team will not disclose or disseminate any information obtained during their assessment beyond the purpose for which the information was provided to the threat assessment team, except that the threat assessment team is authorized to disclose the information to applicable agencies to pursue appropriate action for any student whose behavior is identified as posing a threat to the safety of the school community.

The Department of Education, in consultation with State law enforcement agencies and the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, would be required to develop guidelines for school districts regarding the establishment and training of threat assessment teams.

STATEMENT TO

**ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
ASSEMBLY, Nos. 4075 and 3229**

with Assembly Floor Amendments
(Proposed by Assemblyman MOEN)

ADOPTED: JUNE 16, 2022

This floor amendment clarifies that the provisions of the bill would apply to charter school and renaissance school projects in addition to school districts and requires that any threat assessment team include, to the extent possible, the school safety specialist in addition to members previously required by the bill. The floor amendment also provides that policies adopted by a school district concerning the threat assessment team will be consistent with guidelines developed by the Department of Education. The floor amendment adds a requirement that the threat assessment team, when assessing a student whose behavior may pose a threat to the school community, in the case of a student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan, would consult with the student's IEP team or 504 team to determine whether the aberrant behavior is a threat to school safety. The floor amendment also adds a requirement that threat assessment team members undergo training consistent with guidelines developed by the department, but which would include training on adverse childhood experiences, childhood trauma, cultural competency, and implicit bias.

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR **ASSEMBLY, Nos. 4075 and 3229**

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 23, 2022

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Committee Substitute for Assembly Bill Nos. 4075 and 3229 (1R), with committee amendments.

As amended, this bill requires the board of education of each school district and the board of trustees of a charter school or renaissance school project to develop and adopt a policy for the establishment of a threat assessment team at each school. The purpose of a threat assessment team is to provide school teachers, administrators, and other staff with assistance in identifying students of concern, assessing those students' risk for engaging in violence or other harmful activities, and delivering intervention strategies to manage the risk of harm for students who pose a potential safety risk, to prevent targeted violence in the school, and ensure a safe and secure school environment that enhances the learning experience for all members of the school community.

A threat assessment team would be required to include, to the extent possible: a school psychologist, school counselor, school social worker, or other school employee with expertise in student counseling; a teaching staff member; a school principal or other senior school administrator; a safe schools resource officer or school employee who serves as a school liaison to law enforcement; and the school safety specialist. Additional school employees may serve as regular members of the threat assessment team or may be consulted during the threat assessment process, as determined to be appropriate by the team. Nothing in the bill would affect the provisions of any collective bargaining agreement or individual contract of employment in effect on this act's effective date.

Under the bill, any policy developed by a school district or charter school or renaissance school project is required to include:

- guidance for students, teachers, and all school staff regarding the recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior in a student that may represent a threat to the school community;

- the designation of members of the school community to whom threatening behavior is to be reported;
- the development and implementation of policies concerning the assessment and intervention of students whose behavior poses a threat to the safety of the school community, and appropriate actions to be taken, including available social, developmental, and law enforcement resources, for students whose behavior is identified as posing a threat to the safety of the school community;
- coordination and consultation with the designated school safety specialist; and
- a policy that the threat assessment team will not disclose or disseminate any information obtained during their assessment beyond the purpose for which the information was provided to the threat assessment team, except that the threat assessment team is authorized to disclose the information to applicable agencies to pursue appropriate action for any student whose behavior is identified as posing a threat to the safety of the school community.

The bill requires the threat assessment team, when assessing a student whose behavior may pose a threat to the school community, in the case of a student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan, to consult with the student's IEP team or 504 team to determine whether the aberrant behavior is a threat to school safety. The bill also requires the threat assessment team members to undergo training consistent with guidelines developed by the department, but which would include training on adverse childhood experiences, childhood trauma, cultural competency, and implicit bias.

The Department of Education, in consultation with State law enforcement agencies and the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, would be required to develop guidelines for school districts, charter schools, and renaissance school projects regarding the establishment and training of threat assessment teams. The Department of Education would provide training through the New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy established under current law. The school safety specialist would provide training to school staff consistent with the training and guidelines provided by the department.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to:

- clarify that the purpose of the threat assessment team is to provide school teachers, administrators, and other staff with assistance in identifying students of concern, assessing those students' risk for engaging in violence or other harmful activities, and delivering intervention strategies to manage the risk of harm for students who pose a potential safety risk, to prevent targeted violence in the school, and ensure a safe and

secure school environment that enhances the learning experience for all members of the school community;

- require that training provided to members of the threat assessment team be provided by the school safety specialist and be consistent with guidelines provided by the Department of Education;
- provide that training will ensure that threat assessment teams will not have a disparate impact on students based on their homelessness status in addition to other qualities; and
- require the Department of Education to provide training for members of the threat assessment team through the New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This bill has not been certified as requiring a fiscal note.

ASSEMBLY, No. 3229

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 7, 2022

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman PAMELA R. LAMPITT

District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

SYNOPSIS

Requires that in-service training for school employees on safety and security include component on behavioral threat assessment.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning school threat assessment and supplementing
2 chapter 41 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6

7 1. a. A board of education's in-service training program for
8 school district employees on recognizing and responding to safety
9 and security concerns shall include a component on establishing a
10 behavioral threat assessment team in each school district. The
11 purpose of a behavioral threat assessment team shall be to identify
12 students who pose a potential safety risk and prevent targeted
13 violence in the district. Training for a behavioral threat assessment
14 team shall include information on: identifying students who may
15 pose a threat to school safety; assessing the actions,
16 communications, and specific circumstances that suggest a potential
17 risk of violence; and providing appropriate resources to prevent
18 potential violent incidents.

19 b. The behavioral threat assessment team established by a
20 board of education under subsection a. of this section shall be
21 multidisciplinary in membership and, to the extent possible, shall
22 include the following individuals: (1) a school psychologist, school
23 counselor, school social worker, or other school employee with
24 expertise in student counseling; (2) a teaching staff member; (3) a
25 school principal or other senior school administrator; and (4) a safe
26 schools resource officer or school employee who serves as a school
27 liaison to law enforcement. Additional school employees may serve
28 as regular members of the team or may be consulted during the
29 threat assessment process, as determined to be appropriate by the
30 team.

31 c. The Department of Education, in consultation with State law
32 enforcement agencies and the New Jersey Office of Homeland
33 Security and Preparedness, shall develop guidelines for school
34 districts regarding the establishment and training of behavioral
35 threat assessment teams pursuant to this section.

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37 2. This act shall take effect in the first full school year
38 following the date of enactment.

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STATEMENT

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43 Under current State Board of Education regulations at
44 N.J.A.C.6A:16-5.1(d), each board of education is required to
45 provide an in-service training program for school district employees
46 to enable them to recognize and appropriately respond to safety and
47 security concerns. This bill would require that the in-service
48 training program include a component on establishing a behavioral

1 threat assessment team in each school district for the purpose of
2 identifying students who pose a potential safety risk and preventing
3 targeted violence in the district. Under the bill, the training for a
4 behavioral threat assessment team must include information on the
5 following: identifying students who may pose a threat to school
6 safety; assessing the actions, communications, and specific
7 circumstances that suggest a potential risk of violence; and
8 providing appropriate resources to prevent potential violent
9 incidents.

10 The bill provides that a behavioral threat assessment team must
11 be multidisciplinary in membership and, to the extent possible, must
12 include the following individuals: (1) a school psychologist, school
13 counselor, school social worker, or other school employee with
14 expertise in student counseling; (2) a teaching staff member; (3) a
15 school principal or other senior school administrator; and (4) a safe
16 schools resource officer or school employee who serves as a school
17 liaison to law enforcement. Additional school employees may serve
18 as regular members of the team or may be consulted during the
19 threat assessment process, as determined to be appropriate by the
20 team.

21 The bill directs the Department of Education, in consultation
22 with State law enforcement agencies and the New Jersey Office of
23 Homeland Security and Preparedness, to develop guidelines for
24 school districts regarding the establishment and training of
25 behavioral threat assessment teams.

SENATE, No. 2765

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 2, 2022

Sponsored by:

Senator JAMES BEACH

District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

SYNOPSIS

Requires school districts to develop threat assessment teams at each school in district.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/13/2022)

1 AN ACT concerning the establishment of threat assessment teams in
2 public schools and supplementing chapter 17 of Title 18A of the
3 New Jersey Statutes.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:

7
8 1. a. Each school district shall develop a policy for the
9 establishment of a threat assessment team at each school in the
10 district. The purpose of a threat assessment team shall be to
11 provide school teachers, administrators, faculty, and staff with
12 assistance in identifying, evaluating, and managing at-risk students,
13 and to ensure a safe and secure school environment that enhances
14 the learning experience for all members of the school community.

15 b. Any policy concerning the establishment of a threat
16 assessment team, required pursuant to subsection a. of this section,
17 shall include, but need not be limited to:

18 (1) guidance for students, teachers, and all school staff
19 regarding the recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior in a
20 student that may represent a threat to the school community or the
21 student;

22 (2) the designation of members of the school community to
23 whom threatening behavior shall be reported. Each threat
24 assessment team shall be composed of individuals with knowledge
25 and expertise in guidance, counseling, school administration,
26 mental health, and law enforcement;

27 (3) the development and implementation of policies concerning:

28 (a) the assessment and intervention of at-risk students whose
29 behavior poses a threat to the safety of the school community, and

30 (b) appropriate actions to be taken, including available social,
31 developmental, and law enforcement resources, for students
32 identified as at-risk;

33 (4) coordination and consultation with the school district's
34 designated school safety specialist pursuant to section 2 of
35 P.L.2017, c.162 (C.18A:17-43.3); and

36 (5) a policy that the threat assessment team shall not disclose or
37 disseminate any information obtained during their assessment
38 beyond the purpose for which the disclosure was made to the threat
39 assessment team, except that the threat assessment team is
40 authorized to disclose the information to applicable agencies to
41 pursue appropriate action pursuant to subparagraph (b) of paragraph
42 (3) of this subsection for any student determined to be at-risk.

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44 2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to
45 the first full school year next following the date of enactment.

STATEMENT

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This bill requires each school district to develop a policy for the establishment of a threat assessment team at each school in the district. The purpose of a threat assessment team is to provide school teachers, administrators, faculty, and staff with assistance in identifying, evaluating, and managing at-risk students, and to ensure a safe and secure school environment that enhances the learning experience for all members of the school community.

Under the bill, the policy is required to include:

- guidance for students, teachers, and all school staff regarding the recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior in a student that may represent a threat to the school community or the student;
- the designation of members of the school community to whom threatening behavior is to be reported. Each threat assessment team is required to be composed of individuals with knowledge and expertise in guidance, counseling, school administration, mental health, and law enforcement;
- the development and implementation of policies concerning the assessment and intervention of at-risk students whose behavior poses a threat to the safety of the school community, and appropriate actions to be taken, including available social, developmental, and law enforcement resources, for students identified as at-risk;
- coordination and consultation with the school district’s designated school safety specialist; and
- a policy that the threat assessment team will not disclose or disseminate any information obtained during their assessment beyond the purpose for which the disclosure was made to the threat assessment team, except that the threat assessment team is authorized to disclose the information to applicable agencies to pursue appropriate action for any student determined to be at-risk.

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR **SENATE, No. 2765**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 20, 2022

The Senate Education Committee favorably reports a Senate Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 2765.

This committee substitute requires the board of education of each school district and the board of trustees of a charter school or renaissance school project to develop and adopt a policy for the establishment of a threat assessment team at each school. The purpose of a threat assessment team is to provide school teachers, administrators, and other staff with assistance in identifying students of concern, assessing those students' risk for engaging in violence or other harmful activities, and delivering intervention strategies to manage the risk of harm for students who pose a potential safety risk, to prevent targeted violence in the school, and ensure a safe and secure school environment that enhances the learning experience for all members of the school community.

A threat assessment team would be required to include, to the extent possible: a school psychologist, school counselor, school social worker, or other school employee with expertise in student counseling; a teaching staff member; a school principal or other senior school administrator; a safe schools resource officer or school employee who serves as a school liaison to law enforcement; and the school safety specialist. Additional school employees may serve as regular members of the threat assessment team or may be consulted during the threat assessment process, as determined to be appropriate by the team. Nothing in the bill would affect the provisions of any collective bargaining agreement or individual contract of employment in effect on this act's effective date.

Under the bill, any policy developed by a school district or charter school or renaissance school project is required to include:

- guidance for students, teachers, and all school staff regarding the recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior in a student that may represent a threat to the school community;
- the designation of members of the school community to whom threatening behavior is to be reported;
- the development and implementation of policies concerning the assessment and intervention of students whose behavior poses a threat to the safety of the school community, and appropriate

actions to be taken, including available social, developmental, and law enforcement resources, for students whose behavior is identified as posing a threat to the safety of the school community;

- coordination and consultation with the designated school safety specialist; and
- a policy that the threat assessment team will not disclose or disseminate any information obtained during their assessment beyond the purpose for which the information was provided to the threat assessment team, except that the threat assessment team is authorized to disclose the information to applicable agencies to pursue appropriate action for any student whose behavior is identified as posing a threat to the safety of the school community.

The bill requires the threat assessment team, when assessing a student whose behavior may pose a threat to the school community, in the case of a student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan, to consult with the student's IEP team or 504 team to determine whether the aberrant behavior is a threat to school safety. The bill also requires the threat assessment team members to undergo training consistent with guidelines developed by the department, but which would include training on adverse childhood experiences, childhood trauma, cultural competency, and implicit bias.

The Department of Education, in consultation with State law enforcement agencies and the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, would be required to develop guidelines for school districts, charter schools, and renaissance school projects regarding the establishment and training of threat assessment teams. The Department of Education would provide training through the New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy established under current law. The school safety specialist would provide training to school staff consistent with the training and guidelines provided by the department.

SENATE, No. 2779

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 2, 2022

Sponsored by:

Senator DECLAN J. O'SCANLON, JR.

District 13 (Monmouth)

Senator STEVEN V. OROHO

District 24 (Morris, Sussex and Warren)

SYNOPSIS

Requires that in-service training for school employees on safety and security include component on behavioral threat assessment.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning school threat assessment and supplementing
2 chapter 41 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

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7 1. a. A board of education's in-service training program for
8 school district employees on recognizing and responding to safety
9 and security concerns shall include a component on establishing a
10 behavioral threat assessment team in each school district. The
11 purpose of a behavioral threat assessment team shall be to identify
12 students who pose a potential safety risk and prevent targeted
13 violence in the district. Training for a behavioral threat assessment
14 team shall include information on: identifying students who may
15 pose a threat to school safety; assessing the actions,
16 communications, and specific circumstances that suggest a potential
17 risk of violence; and providing appropriate resources to prevent
18 potential violent incidents.

19 b. The behavioral threat assessment team established by a
20 board of education under subsection a. of this section shall be
21 multidisciplinary in membership and, to the extent possible, shall
22 include the following individuals: (1) a school psychologist, school
23 counselor, school social worker, or other school employee with
24 expertise in student counseling; (2) a teaching staff member; (3) a
25 school principal or other senior school administrator; and (4) a safe
26 schools resource officer or school employee who serves as a school
27 liaison to law enforcement. Additional school employees may serve
28 as regular members of the team or may be consulted during the
29 threat assessment process, as determined to be appropriate by the
30 team.

31 c. The Department of Education, in consultation with State law
32 enforcement agencies and the New Jersey Office of Homeland
33 Security and Preparedness, shall develop guidelines for school
34 districts regarding the establishment and training of behavioral
35 threat assessment teams pursuant to this section.

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37 2. This act shall take effect in the first full school year
38 following the date of enactment.

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STATEMENT

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43 Under current State Board of Education regulations at
44 N.J.A.C.6A:16-5.1(d), each board of education is required to
45 provide an in-service training program for school district employees
46 to enable them to recognize and appropriately respond to safety and
47 security concerns. This bill would require that the in-service
48 training program include a component on establishing a behavioral

1 threat assessment team in each school district for the purpose of
2 identifying students who pose a potential safety risk and preventing
3 targeted violence in the district. Under the bill, the training for a
4 behavioral threat assessment team must include information on the
5 following: identifying students who may pose a threat to school
6 safety; assessing the actions, communications, and specific
7 circumstances that suggest a potential risk of violence; and
8 providing appropriate resources to prevent potential violent
9 incidents.

10 The bill provides that a behavioral threat assessment team must
11 be multidisciplinary in membership and, to the extent possible, must
12 include the following individuals: (1) a school psychologist, school
13 counselor, school social worker, or other school employee with
14 expertise in student counseling; (2) a teaching staff member; (3) a
15 school principal or other senior school administrator; and (4) a safe
16 schools resource officer or school employee who serves as a school
17 liaison to law enforcement. Additional school employees may serve
18 as regular members of the team or may be consulted during the
19 threat assessment process, as determined to be appropriate by the
20 team.

21 The bill directs the Department of Education, in consultation
22 with State law enforcement agencies and the New Jersey Office of
23 Homeland Security and Preparedness, to develop guidelines for
24 school districts regarding the establishment and training of
25 behavioral threat assessment teams.

Governor Murphy Signs Legislation Requiring NJ Public Schools to Develop Threat Assessment Teams

08/1/2022

This law will take effect immediately for the 2023-2024 school year.

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today signed [A4075/3229](#) into law, requiring the board of education in each school district and board of trustees in each charter school or renaissance school in the state to develop and adopt a policy for the establishment of a threat assessment team at their respective schools.

Threat assessment teams provide school teachers, administrators, and other staff with assistance in identifying students of concern, assessing those students' risk for engaging in violence or other harmful activities, and delivering intervention strategies to manage the risk of harm for students who pose a potential safety risk to prevent targeted violence in the school and ensuring a safe and secure school environment that enhances the learning experience for all members of the school community.

"Keeping public spaces safe from any form of violence or harmful activities, especially in our schools, is of the utmost importance to me and this administration," **said Governor Murphy**. "It is my hope that these threat assessment teams will help students and school employees feel safe and out of harm's way when they are at school, and for students who are considered to be a threat to receive the much-needed help they need at such a crucial time in their lives."

Guidelines for threat assessment teams in each school district, charter school, and renaissance school will be developed by the New Jersey Department of Education in consultation with state law enforcement agencies and the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness.

"No one better understands the vulnerabilities of New Jersey's school communities than those who work there every day, including our teachers, administrators, school counselors, school safety specialists, and resource officers," **said Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan, Acting Commissioner of Education**. "Creating comprehensive threat assessment teams, comprised of these individuals, ensures increased awareness of at-risk behaviors and informs strategic intervention for those behaviors that may pose a safety risk. The establishment of threat assessment teams will result in safer school environments."

"We are not only first responders, we are first preventers," **said Director Laurie Doran of New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness**. "The establishment of threat assessment teams in public schools will equip these communities with the resources they need to prevent violence and help ensure the safety of students and educators. NJOHSP continues to prioritize school security efforts with our law enforcement partners and the New Jersey Department of Education."

The threat assessment team, which is to be established by a board of education or board of trustees in each district, shall be multidisciplinary in membership, including:

- A school psychologist, school counselor, school social worker, or other school employee with expertise in student counseling;
- A teaching staff member;
- A school principal or other senior school administrator;
- A safe schools resource officer or school employee who serves as a school liaison to law enforcement; and
- The designated school safety specialist.

"In recent history, we have seen far too many tragic events, resulting in the loss of innocent lives," **said Senate Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz**. "Equipping adults with the tools necessary to identify students as a potential threat can enhance the ability of our districts and schools to help identify any risks before an act of violence occurs. I would like to thank the Governor for signing this critical piece of legislation into law. We must take all necessary measures, including the provision of mental health supports, services, and resources, to prevent these tragedies from happening."

"Tragically, we have seen all too many times that our students are sometimes exposed to potential dangers from fellow students. This legislation will help our schools identify students who may be considered a threat to themselves and to others before it is too late," **said Senator James Beach, sponsor of S-2765**. "Unfortunately, this is the reality of our often-violent world. As we head into a new school year in a few weeks, we want to give our schools' administrators, counselors and security teams all the tools we can to

keep our students safe.”

“I really, truly believe that if we focus on students that are in crisis before they cause harm to themselves or others, we can be the most impactful,” **said State Assembly Education Committee Chair Pamela Lampitt.** “The new law will help us determine the right people around the table to have a conversation on how to diffuse school threats when they arise.”

“One of the goals of the threat assessment teams is to avert dangerous incidents that may come from potential school threats,” **said Assemblyman William F. Moen, Jr.** “With this kind of program in place, we could address not only the larger issues facing schools but some of the smaller issues as well before they build into something more.”

“Creating a threat assessment team in each school district prepares educators and administrators to handle any concerns now and in the future,” **said Assemblywoman Gabriela Mosquera.** “A team of school psychologists, social workers, counselors, principals, safety specialists, and police liaisons will be able to pool their resources to identify students who are considered to be a threat to themselves or others. Their efforts will lend to stronger and safer school communities throughout the State.”

This law will take effect for the 2023-2024 school year.