Needs Survey Outline | PCCD K12 Threat Assessment Technical Assistance & Training Network Project

**Introductory Statement**

**Context:** In June 2019, [Act 18 of 2019](https://www.pccd.pa.gov/schoolsafety/Pages/Threat-Assessment.aspx) amended the Public School Code of 1949 by adding [Article XIII-E, Threat Assessment](https://www.pccd.pa.gov/schoolsafety/Pages/Threat-Assessment.aspx). Among its provisions, Article XIII-E requires all school entities in Pennsylvania to establish at least one Threat Assessment Team by the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year. The teams are responsible for “the assessment of and intervention with students whose behavior may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others.” Under the new state law, members of a school entity’s Threat Assessment Team(s) must be identified by the Chief School Administrator (or designee), in consultation with the Safety and Security Coordinator. A school entity must also designate a Threat Assessment Team Leader. Teams must comprise individuals with expertise in: 1) school health; 2) counseling, school psychology, or social work; 3) special education; and 4) school administration. Teams must also include the school entity’s Safety and Security Coordinator. School entities must also identify other school staff or community resources who may serve as regular Threat Assessment Team members or be consulted during the threat assessment process, as appropriate, and as determined necessary by the Team, such as school security personnel, law enforcement agencies, behavioral health professionals, Safe2Say Program designees, Student Assistance Program (SAP) Team members, and/or juvenile probation professionals.

More information about Act 18 of 2019 as well as resources related to threat assessment are available on the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency’s website: [https://www.pccd.pa.gov/schoolsafety/Pages/Threat-Assessment.aspx](https://www.pccd.pa.gov/schoolsafety/Pages/Threat-Assessment.aspx).

**The K12 Threat Assessment Technical Assistance & Training Network Project and the Needs Survey:** The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) have been awarded a federal grant to support the state’s K-12 system in establishing and operating these multidisciplinary Threat Assessment Teams to identify threatening or at-risk behaviors and provide appropriate interventions and/or supports.

The project will develop and deliver statewide trainings to school entities and create a Training and Technical Assistance Network providing proactive and demand-led supports to School Entities on the full scope of evidence-based and applied Threat Assessment practice.

This Needs Survey is a foundation step for the project to ensure the Network’s approach and resources address your school entity’s needs as the end users.

Please answer in as much detail as you feel able to. If you feel you would be able to give a more balanced answer to individual questions by consulting with colleagues who are specialists in different subject areas, please do so.

**Disclaimer:** Survey responses are subject to the Pennsylvania [Right To Know Law](https://www.pccd.pa.gov/).
Survey Section 1 | Who, What, Where

**Question 1.1:** Please indicate which of the following best describes where you work (see the map below that shows the regions the project is breaking the state into, and their constituent Intermediate Units). *(All survey respondents)*

- School District
- Intermediate Unit
- Career and Technical Center
- Charter School
- Regional Charter School
- Cyber Charter School
- Public High School
- Public Middle School
- Public Elementary School
- Other (please specify)

**Question 1.2:** Please indicate the Region your School Entity is located in (see the map on the right that shows the regions the project is breaking the state into, and their constituent Intermediate Units and, for further help, follow this link to a map showing all IUs and their constituent School Districts). *(All survey respondents)*

- Central PA
- Northeastern PA
- Northwestern PA
- Southeastern PA
- Southwestern PA

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2 [https://www.paiu.org/Find-an-IU](https://www.paiu.org/Find-an-IU)
Question 1.3: Please provide your Primary Role Title. *(All survey respondents)*

- Administrative Director (e.g., of Career & Technical School, or Intermediate Unit)
- Administrator – Assistant Principal
- Administrator – Assistant Superintendent
- Administrator – Principal
- Administrator – District Staff
- Administrator – School-based – other (please specify)
- Administrator – Superintendent
- Certified / Licensed School Social Worker
- Certified School Counselor
- Certified School Psychologist
- Safety and Security Coordinator
- School Nurse/Health Care Professional
- School Resource Officer/School Police Officer
- School Safety Coordinator (only where this is your primary role (your main job title))
- School Security Officer
- Special Education Services
- Teacher/Instructional Staff

Question 1.4: Please indicate all applicable roles you fulfill directly or indirectly linked to Threat Assessment. *(All survey respondents) (select all that apply)*

- Crisis Response Team member/Suicide Prevention (Act 71) team member
- IEP team member
- Member of existing Threat Assessment Team
- Member of planned but not yet fully established Threat Assessment Team
- Member of team for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and/or Multi-Tiered Systems and Supports (MTSS) (including where referred to as Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII))
- Safe2Say program team member
- School Safety Coordinator
- School Safety Committee / Emergency Response Team
- Student Assistance Program (SAP) team member
- Other (please specify)
Survey Section 2 | Status of Progress toward Establishing Threat Assessment Teams (must be completed by Tier 1 school entities and electively completed by Tier 2 where TATs are established/currently in the process of being established and the survey respondent is directly involved with the TAT as a member or – as an administrator – in a supervisory oversight capacity)

Question 2.1: Does your school entity have a full multidisciplinary Threat Assessment Team currently established and operating? (All survey respondents)

- YES/NO

Question 2.2: Is your school entity planning to establish a Threat Assessment Team by the start of school year 2021-2022 (Survey respondents who have answered NO to question 1 only)? (Survey drafting note: Respondents answering NO here (question 2.2) will be those who have no mandatory requirement to have a Threat Assessment Team and, in answering NO will be confirming that they will operate under a school district or other entity’s Threat Assessment Team as permitted under the Code).

- YES/NO

Question 2.3: Looking at the statutory requirements under Article XIII-E of the Public School Code, to what extent do you feel your school entity’s existing Threat Assessment Team OR Threat Assessment Team that is planned to be established by the start of school year 2021-22 is able to meet those minimum criteria?

Note that this question refers to your technical compliance with the requirements under Article XIII-E of the PA Public School Code, and not your level of confidence to operate Threat Assessment and case management in practice. That particular aspect of readiness is addressed later in the survey, along with an explanatory note as to what, in the Threat Assessment context, we mean by case management.

Select the statement that best matches your appraisal of progress toward your Threat Assessment Team: (Survey respondents answering YES to either question 2.1 or 2.2):

- Fully aligned with the scope of statutory Threat Assessment and Case Management requirements.
- Substantively aligned with the scope of statutory Threat Assessment and Case Management requirements, with minor requirements to be fulfilled.
- Partially aligned with the scope of statutory Threat Assessment and Case Management requirements, with some major compliance requirements to be fulfilled.
- Not aligned with the scope of statutory Threat Assessment and Case Management requirements, with many major requirements yet to be fulfilled.
- We have not yet moved beyond the outline planning stage for the establishment of our school entity’s Threat Assessment Team.
Survey Section 3 | Competence

This section uses a self-assessment of your school entity’s skills and abilities to develop an understanding of current competence in operating the Threat Assessment process and subsequent case management. This will provide the state-level project team with important information on where to focus statewide training, technical assistance, and other supports.

Note that, in the context of Threat Assessment, the term case management can be understood as follows: At the point there is an intake of a report of concern, the subject of concern then constitutes a 'case' which, by planned, systematic actions of the Threat Assessment Team is assessed to determine the level of threat posed by the subject / situation. Case management then deals with the planning and implementation of interventions to mitigate that risk. Case management encompasses the full scope of reporting and notification requirements, documentation, inquiry and decision-making, referral to services and supports, and ongoing monitoring.

**Question 3:** How would you rate the current skills and abilities of your school entity to carry out the following elements of the Threat Assessment process and subsequent case management? Select the statement that best matches your appraisal of current experience, skills and abilities: *(All survey respondents answering YES to either question 2.1 or 2.2)*

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<tr>
<th>Surveyed Factor</th>
<th>Benchmarking Statements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.1.a: Development of Threat Assessment information and awareness materials for parents, students and other school community members</strong></td>
<td>Highly skilled and experienced across the full scope of the subject; fully able to carry out</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3.1.b: Launch of Threat Assessment awareness campaign to parents, students and other school community members</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3.2: Ability to identify threats that are critical and/or imminent and require notification to law enforcement and immediate protective actions to be taken</strong></td>
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<td><strong>3.3: Development and implementation of mechanisms to report potential threats [such as, but not exclusively, Safe2Say]</strong></td>
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<td><strong>3.4: Development and implementation of protocols/processes to intake an initial</strong></td>
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<td>Surveyed Factor</td>
<td>Benchmarking Statements</td>
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<tr>
<td>report of students/situations of concern and then triage</td>
<td>Highly skilled and experienced across the full scope of the subject; fully able to carry out</td>
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3.5: Clarity in identifying students/situations of concern that do not pose a serious or imminent threat as understood in terms of Threat Assessment, but which may require intervention through some other mechanism (e.g., Functional Behavioral Assessment/Behavior Intervention Plan (such as where linked to PBIS), SAP, discipline (including Manifestation Determination Reviews), etc)

3.6: Development and implementation of a system to document the full scope of threat assessment and management, from the point of identifying a potential threat through to holistic case management (e.g., system-wide services, referrals, interventions, safety / re-entry planning, etc)

3.7: Development and implementation of trauma-informed approaches to Threat Assessment and case management

3.8: Development and implementation of school-based mental health assessment as part of the Threat Assessment and case management approach

3.9: Familiarity with and use of protocols that are both federal and state compliant in information sharing

3.10: Familiarity with Threat Assessment and case management’s relationship to special education/IDEA

3.11: Development and employment of formalized relationships with non-school-based law enforcement (e.g., through
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<td><strong>Memoranda of Understanding) relevant to Threat Assessment</strong></td>
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<td>3.12: Development and employment of formalized relationships with Community-based service providers: mental health, other counseling and linked support services</td>
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<td>3.13: Implementation of protocols for early identification and intervention with those at risk for suicide (per Act 71), including evidence-based risk screening/assessment using instruments/approaches such as the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS), or SAMHSA’s SAFE-T model</td>
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<td>3.14: Familiarity with handling situations triggering the use of external referral pathways to state agencies including Child Protective Services/Child Welfare Services</td>
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<td>3.15: Familiarity with and employment of MTSS/RtI/PBIS</td>
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<td>3.16: Development and implementation of re-entry plans for students who were assessed to pose a risk for violence returning to the school environment</td>
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Survey Section 4 | Confidence

Question 4.1: How confident are you that your school entity can implement the statutory requirements related to Threat Assessment and case management established in Article XIII-E of the Public School Code in a systematic and rigorous manner? Select the statement that best matches your appraisal of confidence: *(All survey respondents answering YES to either question 2.1 or 2.2)*:

- Fully confident and ready to conduct the full scope of statutory Threat Assessment and Management requirements.
- Confident that we are ready to conduct the full scope of statutory Threat Assessment and Management requirements, but with some specific, limited concerns that may require external resources or other supports.
- Confident that we are ready to conduct much of the scope of statutory Threat Assessment and Management requirements, but with some substantive concerns that will require external resources or other supports.
- Limited confidence that we are ready to conduct many aspects of the scope of statutory Threat Assessment and Management requirements, and with substantive concerns that will require external resources or other supports.
- Not at all confident or ready to conduct the full scope of statutory Threat Assessment and Management requirements and will need extensive support and resources.

Question 4.2: Describe what factors, resources or other supports would have the greatest positive impact on your confidence related to your school entity’s ability to carry out Threat Assessment and case management responsibilities. Please provide as much detail / specificity as you are able, as responses to this question will be particularly helpful in shaping support the project and other stakeholders will provide to Threat Assessment Teams across the state: *(All survey respondents answering YES to either question 2.1 or 2.2)*:

- Additional, specialized staff
- Additional financial resourcing dedicated to Threat Assessment
- Protected 'capacity' - time, people - assignable to Threat Assessment
- Demand-led expertise / support from District / IU / State-level
- Specific training or exercising
- Other (please specify)
**Survey Section 5 | Barriers, Challenges and Enablers**

Reflecting back on the survey sections looking at progress toward establishing Threat Assessment Teams, current competence and confidence, this section examines factors in the establishment and operation of Threat Assessment Teams that you have identified as a barrier or challenge to be overcome, or that have acted as an enabler in understanding the subject area and establishing or operating a Team.

**Question 5.1:** Who or what do you perceive to be the greatest barriers or challenges to establishing competent and confident Threat Assessment Teams that meet all statutory requirements? *(All survey respondents answering YES to either question 2.1 or 2.2)*

- OPEN ENDED

**Question 5.2:** Who or what do you perceive to be the most powerful enablers in establishing competent and confident Threat Assessment Teams that meet all statutory requirements? *(All survey respondents answering YES to either question 2.1 or 2.2)*

- OPEN ENDED

**Survey Section 6 | Close and Willingness to be Re-Contacted**

A sincere thank you from PCCD and the survey team for taking the time to complete this survey, especially during these challenging times. We look forward to supporting Pennsylvania’s school entities as they work to establish and operate high-performing Threat Assessment Teams. In addition to End of School Year surveys in Summer 2021 and 2022, we will be looking to include school entities in the development of subject-specific Technical Assistance materials.

Let us know if you are happy to participate in the development of those materials and are willing to be re-contacted by the project team: *(All survey respondents)*

- I am happy to be recontacted by the project to participate in the development of Technical Assistance materials.
- I would rather not be recontacted by the project to participate in the development of Technical Assistance materials.