

FAIR NOTICE

Fair Notice Process and Violence Threat Risk Assessment-(VTRA)

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Within the Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education, the safety of our children is a top priority. Along with our community partners, we are committed to keeping our schools safe for students and staff. The District has developed a plan for responding to all situations in which students may be posing a threat to themselves or others, which includes all staff must report all threat related behaviours.

What is the purpose of a Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA)?

The Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) is designed to be proactive in developing intervention plans that address the emotional and physical safety of those involved; to ensure a full understanding of the context of the threat; and to begin to understand the factors that contribute to the threat-maker's behaviour.

What behaviours warrant a Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) to be initiated?

A threat is an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. Threats may be verbal, written, drawn, posted on the Internet, or made by gesture. Every threat must be taken seriously, thoroughly investigated and a response and follow through completed.

What is a Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Team?

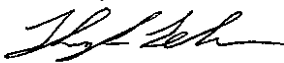
Each school has a multi-disciplinary VTRA team that includes the school administration, school based counselors and support staff, and may also include district resource staff and community partners (i.e. police, mental health practitioners). It is important for all parties to engage in the VTRA process. If for some reason there is reluctance to participate in the process, by the threat-maker or the parent/guardian, the threat assessment will still continue to ensure a safe and caring learning environment for all.

What happens in a Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA)?

The process of a VTRA begins when threat making behaviours are reported. The VTRA protocol is then activated. Interviews will be held with the student(s), the threat-maker, parents, and staff to determine the level of risk and develop an appropriate response to the incident. An intervention plan will be developed and follow-up meetings will occur, as deemed necessary, to ensure that interventions are supporting all those involved.

This letter is intended to serve our community with fair notice that we, as a school district, will not accept a "no response" to a threat in our schools. Further information about this protocol is detailed in ***Administrative Procedure 355-Assessing Violence Potential of Threat Making and High-Risk Student Behaviours*** available at www.mhcbe.ab.ca under the Board Portal. We are proud to provide this level of support to our school communities and we are fortunate to have the commitment of our community partners. Please direct any questions you might have to your School Administrator.

Sincerely,



Hugh Lehr
Associate Superintendent Learning Services

The model presented reflects the thinking and work of J. Kevin Cameron, Director of the Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response www.cctatr.com.