

## Threats are taken seriously

Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools (NLPS) are committed to a safe and supportive environment for all – students, parents and staff.

We take all threatening comments and behaviours seriously. Parents and students should be aware of the district's threat / violence risk assessment protocol.

## What is a threat?

- A threat is an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something.
- A threat may be verbal, written, drawn, posted on the Internet or made by gesture.

In Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools, all threats will be taken seriously, investigated and a response provided.

## What is threat assessment?

Threat assessment is the process that is followed when a school becomes aware of a threat made against a student, staff member or the safety of the school building and its occupants.

Threats may be made in many different ways – via graffiti written on a wall; through interaction on social media; in an essay written by a student at school; through an anonymous telephone call; or directly to the individual being threatened. Whatever the form of the threat, a threat assessment team will investigate and appropriately address the threatening behaviour.

## Who is on a threat assessment team?

The threat assessment team at a school is made up of individuals who have received formal threat assessment training. Members of the team may include the school principal, vice-principal, counsellors, teachers, and representatives of the police, social services and mental health professionals.

## Everyone has a duty to report

Often when we read in the media about a violent incident, we learn that the threat-maker had made threats in advance of acting violently, but the threats were not taken seriously.

To keep school communities safe, students, parents, staff and community members must report all threat-related behaviours. Every threat must be taken seriously, thoroughly investigated and a response and follow-through completed.

## Importance of safe school culture

Pro-social school programs and/or safe school culture are acknowledged to be imperative and the only way to effectively reduce school violence. Healthy, safe school cultures offer students clearly articulated proactive and pro-social standards of conduct to which all parties are held accountable and are environments where positive interactions and social responsibility are actively promoted and valued.

## What do parents and students need to know?

Students and parents need to be aware of the steps the school district will take in responding to a threat.

- Any threats must be reported to the school principal, counsellor or some other responsible adult.
- NLPS will follow up on every reported threat.
- Follow-up may involve the police.
- Interviews will be held with the threat-maker and any other students who may have information about the threat.
- Threatening behaviour may result in discipline for a student.
- Intervention plans may be developed for the student making the threat and a support plan developed for any students who are the target of threats.

***Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools will follow up on every reported threat.***

## The purpose of threat assessment

Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools use the student threat / violence risk assessment process in order to:

- Ensure the safety of students, staff, parents, and members of the public.
- Ensure a full understanding of the context of any threats that are made.
- Begin to understand the factors that contribute to the threat-maker's behaviour.
- Be proactive in developing an intervention plan that addresses the emotional and physical safety of the threat-maker and others.

## Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools

- High ethical standards and mutual respect.
- Collaborative planning, committed action, accountability for results, and celebration of success.
- Diversity of opinion, creativity and innovation.
- Student-centered, principled and informed decision making.
- Compassionate, inclusive, safe and caring schools
- Engaging learning environments that are responsive to unique student strengths and capabilities.
- The courage and conviction to achieve our goals.
- Fair and inclusive education policies, instructional practices and allocation of resources.

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**Important information that every student and parent needs to know.**

