



ASD-W

Anglophone School District West

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September 2024

Dear Families/Caregivers:

Anglophone School District West is committed to creating and maintaining an environment in schools where students, staff, and visitors feel safe. To enhance safety and security, district protocol requires Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) training of School Administrators, Education Support Services, and district staff. Further to this, partners from Policing, Public Safety, Social Development and Mental Health are also trained in this multi-disciplinary approach.

The protocol requires trained school staff and community partners, as a team, to complete an Assessment of Risk to Others (ARTO) in all cases where students make threats to harm others. The purpose of the ARTO process is to use the best knowledge, skill, and experience available to assess level of concern so that appropriate interventions can be identified to protect individuals from harm and to ensure a climate of safety in schools and the community. As noted above, a multi-disciplinary approach is used. Please be assured that the school team will be taking measures to deal with all known threats/high-risk behaviours in a positive and proactive manner. If the school team invites you to a meeting to discuss safety concerns about your child, please be assured that our protocol is being followed and that the goal is safety for all students.

Anglophone West School District will respond to all serious threats. If there is a need, a school may initiate a state of "lock down" or "hold and secure" within the facility. A principal has the authority to declare either condition and will often do so through collaboration with district office officials and/or emergency responders. Please note...a **"hold and secure"** allows those who are in the building to continue with their normal routines but calls for increased monitoring of entrances and for no one to enter or leave the building. A **"lock down"** requires all who are within the building to immediately stop what they are doing and assume a quiet, hiding position within their current space. Staff and students practice this as a drill each year. In either case, it is important for families/caregivers to know that they will not be able to retrieve their child(ren) until the "all clear" is given. The school and district will do their best to provide communication throughout the situation, although the priority will always be to ensure the safety of individuals first.

To help keep our school communities safe, there is an expectation that families/caregivers, students, and community members who have knowledge of a threat or high-risk behaviour will report this information to the principal. It would be helpful if you would discuss this protocol with your child(ren). Our goal is to respond to all threats in a professional manner that provides for a safe, healthy and caring learning environment.

We appreciate your support in helping ensure our schools are safe environments for all students and staff.

Sincerely,

David McTimoney
Superintendent