

MEMORANDUM TO: JIM COSTELLO, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

FROM: DAVID DOEY, SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

DATE: NOVEMBER 13, 2012

SUBJECT: VIOLENCE THREAT RISK ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL

Just over one year ago, the Lambton Kent District School Board undertook a partnership with co-terminous boards and community groups to facilitate training known as Violence Threat Risk Assessment.

Violence Threat Risk Assessment was developed by Mr. Kevin Cameron, who led the crisis response team following the 1999 school shooting in Taber, Alberta. The Taber Response Project included extensive consultation across North America with a focus on traumatic aftermath including student threat-related behaviour.

Violence Threat Risk Assessment training provides individuals with specific skills and processes to apply in situations where students may be considered dangerous to themselves or others. In a “pyramid of interventions” response model, VTRA is the highest level of response, whether it is immediate in nature, or involves planning for longer term student supports.

The assessment process relies upon data collection and multi-disciplinary involvement to determine the necessary action steps in a given situation. To facilitate the collaboration of board staff, police services, and agency personnel, among others, a protocol is being developed. The protocol outlines the processes involved in responding to a particular threat, and co-ordinates the sharing of information that allows for appropriate steps to be taken in a timely manner.

At this point, twenty-eight different institution and agency partners, including First Nations, are now co-signees on the protocol, and more are likely to be added in the lead-up to a formal announcement sometime early in 2013.

To date, over one hundred LKDSB administrators and special education staff have been trained in Violence Threat Risk Assessment, considered to be a key element of the board’s overall safe schools plan.