



# FAIR NOTICE ASSESSMENT OF RISK TO OTHERS (ARTO) STUDENT THREATS, VIOLENCE AND RISK

Hanover School Division is committed to creating and maintaining school environments where students, staff, parents/caregivers, and others feel safe. This document represents fair notice to our communities that HSD will address all student threats to self or others. Schools cannot ignore any threat of violence or violent acts.

## WHAT IS A THREAT OR WORRISOME BEHAVIOUR?

**A threat** is an expression of intent to do harm or act violently against someone or something. Threats may be verbal, written, drawn, posted online, or made by gesture.

**A worrisome behaviour** is any action, communication, or gesture that causes concern about a person's safety or the safety of others, even if it does not meet the level of a direct threat.

**Both threats and worrisome behaviours** will be taken seriously, assessed, and responded to with the goal of ensuring safety and providing appropriate supports.

## WHAT IS MY DUTY TO REPORT?

To keep school communities safe, staff, parents/caregivers, students, and community members must report all threat-related and violent behaviours to the school principal. If there is potential for immediate danger, call 911.

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF AN ASSESSMENT OF RISK TO OTHERS?

The purpose of an ARTO is to identify risk factors that may increase the likelihood of an individual becoming violent to self or others. The intention of this process is to support the student through providing recommendations to address issues contributing to high-risk behaviour. The goal of the process is to develop an intervention plan that focuses on the emotional and physical safety of all those involved.

## WHAT BEHAVIOURS WARRANT AN ASSESSMENT OF RISK TO OTHERS?

AN ASSESSMENT OF RISK TO OTHERS (ARTO) may be initiated when behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- Serious violence or violence with intent to harm or kill
- Verbal/written threats to harm or kill others (clear, direct, and plausible)
- Online threats to harm or kill others
- Possession of weapons, including replicas
- Bomb threats (making or detonating explosive devices) or fire-starting
- Sexual intimidation or assault
- Ongoing pervasive and targeted bullying and/or harassment
- Gang-related intimidation and violence
- Hate incidents motivated by factors including, but not limited to, race, culture, religion, and/or sexual and/or gender diversity

**Parents/Caregivers are encouraged to contact the school principal if they have any questions or concerns regarding the ARTO protocol.**



## WHAT HAPPENS IN AN ASSESSMENT OF RISK TO OTHERS?

Each school has a team that has received ARTO protocol training. The ARTO team may include a principal, vice-principal, clinician, social worker, school psychologist, designated staff member, and/or community partners. Team members are tasked with determining the level of risk and recommending appropriate responses.

Members of the ARTO team interview students and adults who may have information about the threat or violent act. The ARTO process may require locker or personal property searches and may involve the police or other community agencies. Parents/Caregivers and legal guardians will be notified if their children are directly involved. If parents/caregivers and legal guardians cannot be reached, the threat assessment may still proceed.

Intervention and support plans may be developed for any student involved to ensure all students feel safe and supported in the school environment. The goal of an ARTO is safety for all.

As part of the assessment process, members of the ARTO team may consult with community partners, including RCMP, Centre for Trauma-Informed Practices, Child & Family Services, Southern Health, Shared Health, and Justice/Probation.

## THE FAIR NOTICE

As part of Hanover School Division's commitment to student safety and well-being, qualified school support professionals, including school social workers and school psychologists, may provide brief crisis response services to students following critical incidents

or traumatic events that affect the school community. Students may participate in individual or group debriefing or supportive conversations aimed at reducing distress, promoting healthy coping, and identifying any immediate support needs. These services are short-term and focused on supporting students' immediate well-being. They do not replace ongoing mental health treatment or counselling provided by community agencies.

Parents/guardians will be informed of significant school-wide critical incidents as appropriate. When ongoing counselling, assessment, or longer-term intervention is recommended, parent/guardian consent will be obtained in accordance with Hanover School Division policy and procedures.

## PRIVACY - PERSONAL INFORMATION

Personal information collected during the ARTO will comply with the provincial Protecting and Supporting Children (Information Sharing) Act. The Act allows government departments, organizations and others who provide services to at-risk and vulnerable children to collect, use and share personal information, including personal health information, about supported children and their parents or legal guardians. Personal information can only be shared under the Act if it is believed by the service provider to be in the supported child's best interests.

The authority to share personal information is in addition to that already found in The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) and The Personal Health Information Act (PHIA).



*The HSD ARTO protocol has been adapted from the work of J. Kevin Cameron, Director of the Canadian Centre for Trauma Informed Practices.*