

# Manage to Your Advantage: Approaching School Management Through the Lens of Threat Assessment

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Lori Brown, Ed.D

[loribrownconsultant@gmail.com](mailto:loribrownconsultant@gmail.com)

- **Teacher**
- **Assistant Principal**
- **District Grant Writer**
- **Global Professional Learning**
- **Doctoral work – Violent Student Writing**



# QUESTIONS

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- What is “school or district management?”
- What skills or characteristics are needed to be an effective manager?
- Identify challenges/barriers you face with effective school/district management.

# SCHOOL/DISTRICT MANAGEMENT

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You are responsible for managing:  
people, processes, policies, group  
dynamics, finances, culture, climate,  
conflict, publicity, buildings, buses, etc.

## Washington Post Article

### How did nobody know? – Same Question for Management

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- *“Indeed, after Friday’s shooting in Santa Fe, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott said the suspected shooter, 17-year-old Dimitrios Pagourtzis, had journals documenting his thoughts on both his computer and his cellphone. He wrote that he wanted to commit the shooting, and that he wanted to commit suicide afterward, Abbott said. He had posted to Facebook a photo of a T-shirt with the words “Born to kill” written on it, Abbott added.”*

Quote from: May 20, 2018 article by Erahm Christopher – “Why do school shootings keep happening? We need to listen.”



# Key Terms

(From: *International Handbook of Threat Assessment*)

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## Defining Threat Assessment:

*Threat assessment is a method used by mental health and law enforcement professionals to assess the risk of intended violence toward a specific target, such as attacks and assassinations of public figures, workplace homicides, mass murders, school shootings, and acts of terrorism, both domestic and foreign.*

**Threat Management is what you do on a daily basis to manage ongoing potential red flags, etc. ---- management is ongoing – it never stops.**



## OUR GOAL AS SCHOOL OR DISTRICT MANAGERS:

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To consistently improve managerial capacity through the lens of practical, crisis-ready, and people-centric principles and practices that emerge from the field of threat and risk assessment. We must manage our buildings as well as we manage threats to our building.

# WHY?

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Because threat assessment evidences a logical approach that sharpens our thoughts, behaviors, decisions, and reactions to people, priorities, and highly unique circumstances.



# Gallery Walk

- **Visit each of the five “Principles” posters.**
- **Consider how that construct applies to your world of school/district management.**
- **Write your reflections on the chart I have provided.**

THREAT  
ASSESSMENT  
PRINCIPLE #1

- Every threat is unique and thus requires a unique response.

THREAT  
ASSESSMENT  
PRINCIPLE #2

- Targeted acts of violence are the result of an understandable pathway of thoughts and behaviors.

THREAT  
ASSESSMENT  
PRINCIPLE #3

- Effective threat assessment is based on solid, confirmable facts

THREAT  
ASSESSMENT  
PRINCIPLES  
#4

- Successful threat assessment requires an inquisitive mindset that drives toward a solid use and application of data (triangulation of data sources).

THREAT  
ASSESSMENT  
PRINCIPLE #5

- Effective threat assessment requires highly skilled and trained threat assessors who understand how to apply the process to each unique threat.

# MANAGEMENT TAKE-AWAYS

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- Each situation to manage is unique, just like your stakeholders are unique
- You will regularly face barriers to management – handle with care
- Avoid jumping to conclusions
- Ground decisions in facts – not feelings
- Make good fits for people – build their capacity
- Concerns don't suddenly become crises – see the pathway!
- Be investigative – find what works for you
- **Don't work alone**

# MANAGEMENT VS. LEADERSHIP

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You'll never "lead" well if you can't manage well, and the purpose of good management in schools and districts is to free up time to lead.

- Look at comprehensive processes
- Let people around you take leadership roles
- Remember that there is no such thing as a "sudden" act
- Avoid "one size fits all"



# ACTION PLAN

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- What do you need to do, learn, or investigate to improve your personal managerial skills?

# THANK YOU!

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Thank you for being a part of today's session. If you would like to continue this discussion or have specific questions, please reach out when you have time.

**Lori Brown --- [loribrownconsultant@gmail.com](mailto:loribrownconsultant@gmail.com)**

**Phone: 828-231-3445**