

Fort McMurray Public School Division is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all students, staff, school visitors, and community members. When students' behaviours pose a potential threat to safety or serious harm, the Assessment of Risk to Others (ARTO)/Violence Risk Threat Assessment (VTRA) Protocol* will be enacted to help school teams take steps to protect the safety of the school community. This team may include representatives of community agencies who work with us to keep our schools safe, such as local police or mental health organizations.

*Assessment of Risk to Others (ARTO)/Violence Risk Threat Assessment (VTRA) titles may be used interchangeably

WHAT IS A ARTO/VTRA PROTOCOL?

The protocol is designed to enhance the safety of all students. It is incumbent upon FMPSD to share necessary and appropriate information that may initiate or facilitate the ARTO/VTRA process. It is a trauma-informed and equity-inclusion guided practice that utilizes an ARTO/VTRA process to:

- ensure the safety of all individuals
- begin to understand the factors that contribute to the Individual of Concern (IOC)'s threatening or high-risk behaviour
- view the IOC as in need of intervention and support rather than discipline
- be proactive in developing an intervention plan that addresses the emotional and physical safety of the IOC. It may include disciplinary action, but will include appropriate supports to aid the IOC in developing and using more appropriate strategies
- promote the emotional and physical safety of all

WHAT IS A THREAT?

A threat is an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. Threats may be verbal, written, drawn, posted on the Internet, or made by gesture. Threats must be taken seriously, investigated, and responded to appropriately.

DUTY TO REPORT

Often, when we hear in the media about a violent incident, we learn that the Individual of Concern had made threats in advance of acting violently. To keep our communities safe, we need to act responsibly and report all threat-related behaviours and high-risk activities. This report can be made to any community partner of the FMPSD ARTO/VTRA Protocol.

When a report of a threat is received by any member of this protocol, and upon screening, it is determined that the threshold for the "Categories for Action" is met, the FMPSD ARTO/VTRA Protocol will be activated.

"Categories for Action" may include, but are not limited to:

- serious violence or violence with the intent to kill
- violence with the intent to do serious harm
- verbal/written threats to kill others (clear, direct and plausible)
- verbal/written threats to do serious bodily harm (clear, direct, and plausible)
- social media/technology-generated threats to harm/kill others
- possession of weapons (including replicas)
- bomb threats (making and/or detonating explosive devices)
- fire setting
- 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 gender diversity, or
- suicidal ideation or attempts as related to "fluidity" or "conspiracy of two or more"

CAN I REFUSE TO PARTICIPATE?

Participation in the Violence Threat Risk Assessment process is strongly encouraged. However, if the Individual of Concern or their parent/guardian chooses not to participate, the assessment will still be conducted; this is to ensure the safety and well-being of the school community.