

School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)

Riverside County's Response to
Managing Incidents of School Violence



2022

A Community Effort in Responding to a Young Person Threatening or Inflicting Violence at School

Prepared and Revised December 2021 by:



Riverside County Probation Department



Riverside County District Attorney's Office



Riverside County Sheriff's Department



Riverside County Office of Education



Riverside County Behavioral Health Services



Riverside County Department of Public Social Services

Table of Contents

I.	STAR Mission Statement and Introduction	1
II.	STAR Protocol Agreement	1
III.	STAR Protocol Responsibilities	2
IV.	High Risk Indicators	9
V.	Community Response Plan Diagram	10
VI.	Participating Agencies	11
VII.	Signature Page	14

I. School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)

STAR Mission Statement:

Protect the Safety and Welfare of Students, School Staff, and the Community Through Effective Prevention and Immediate Intervention by the Multi- Disciplinary Team Throughout Riverside County.

Introduction:

Violent threats or incidents involving students on school campuses are extremely disturbing. Early intervention is crucial to prevent potentially violent incidents on school campuses. According to a national publication by the United States Secret Service, potentially violent youth exhibit warning signs prior to acting out. The Secret Service found that in most incidents they studied, other youth knew about the attack before it occurred, and an adult had expressed concerns about the student. In more than half of the cases, more than one person had expressed concern. Over half of the attackers engaged in observable planning behaviors prior to carrying out their attack that went beyond making statements of intent, and most attackers threatened their targets or shared their intentions to carry out an attack (National Threat Assessment Center. (2019). *Protecting America's Schools: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence*. U.S. Secret Service, Department of Homeland Security). Noting the devastation and wishing to avoid the tragic experiences of other communities which have suffered senseless violence on school campuses, a Multi- Disciplinary Team (MDT) has been comprised, consisting of the Superior Court of CA in Riverside, the Riverside County Sheriff's Department and other law enforcement agencies, in conjunction with the Probation Department, the District Attorney's Office, Department of Public social Services and Riverside University Health System – Behavioral Health, the Riverside County Office of Education, and local school districts.

This Protocol is to be used in school-related incidents for prevention, threat assessment, intervention, and response to youth who are at risk to commit or have committed a violent act. Members of the MDT have agreed to the uniform implementation, enforcement, and reporting of incidents involving youth and guns/explosive devices or threat of great harm to students, schools, or school staff. Based upon law enforcement's assessment of the situation, the Protocol may also be used for other weapon or broad ranging criminal threat offenses.

II. STAR Protocol Agreement

The members of the Multi- Disciplinary Team (MDT) have agreed in principle that:

1. **Law Enforcement** will investigate and prepare a written report of the circumstances of the incident. They will expand the investigation by contacting the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) and make a home visit to conduct a safety evaluation, immediately, upon receipt of information concerning potential threat of violence involving a school-site within our communities. The Aware to Care Exchange (ACE) Information Network, coordinated and managed by the District Attorney's Office, should also be considered for the benefit of real-time information sharing across school-sites.
2. The **Probation Department (Probation)** will detain the youth at Juvenile Hall pursuant to a law violation. The Detention Control Officer will notify the Juvenile Field Intake Unit of the youth being

detained under the STAR Protocol. Information and assessment from the combined members of the team will be used to determine future intervention strategies, including continued detention.

3. The **Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE)** will make information available concerning the youth to the appropriate agencies and serve as a liaison between MAT and local school districts.
4. The **Riverside University Health System – Department of Behavioral Health (Behavioral Health)** will administer and interpret the results of the Problem Behavior Inventory assessment tool within 24 hours of the youth being booked into Juvenile Hall and complete an evaluation to determine if the youth is a danger to themselves or others. Information from other cooperating agencies will be considered while completing the assessment, which will be shared with members of the team where appropriate, pursuant to rules and regulations regarding confidentiality.
5. The **District Attorney's Office (District Attorney)** will review all reports for legal sufficiency and, where appropriate, prosecute any youth found to have threatened great harm to students, schools, or school staff, or youth in possession of a gun, explosive device, or other dangerous weapon on a school campus. Prosecution against the parent, legal guardian, or responsible party will be enforced when appropriate. The District Attorney's Office will coordinate with the MAT to ensure the interests of public safety and the youth are protected.
6. The **Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) Children's Services Division (CSD)** will respond upon request from law enforcement to conduct a family and child welfare assessment to determine the overall well-being and functioning of other children in the home. CSD will also research its database to determine if there is an open file or CSD history on the youth or their family and share the information with the MAT.
7. The STAR Protocol will be reviewed and updated biennially.

III. STAR Protocol Responsibilities

Law Enforcement

A. Dispatcher Responsibilities:

1. Assign the call utilizing existing prioritization guidelines.
2. Assign a report number to the call for documentation purposes.
3. Contact the appropriate on-duty field supervisor, if required, per department policy.
4. Assist with telephone calls to other agencies if requested by investigating officer or field supervisor.

B. Officer Responsibilities:

1. The responding officer shall make contact with the reporting party via phone or in person, whenever possible. Contact should then be made with the senior school administrator of that campus, preferably in person. Responding officer may be the School Resource Officer. Determination to initiate a "campus lock down" should be made during this initial phase.

2. Contact known suspect(s) and eliminate any potential immediate threat by searching the suspect(s) for firearms or explosives. Based upon the officer's assessment of the situation, the Protocol may also be used for other weapon offenses. If applicable, search locker, backpack, computer, tablets, cell phones & other electronic devices. Officers and deputies must take care to ensure compliance with legislative updates pertaining to California Electronic Communications Privacy Act (CalECPA) are adhered to (CA Penal Code 1546).

Juvenile suspect interview requirements have undergone significant change and restriction since 2017. As of January 1, 2021, per CA Welfare & Institutions Code (WIC) 625.6, all juveniles age 17 and under must be afforded the counsel of an attorney prior to waiving Miranda or being questioned. There are two limited scope public safety exceptions that apply:

- Immediate preservation of life.
- Information leading to the location of a weapon posing an immediate danger to others.

Police search in school requires a warrant unless:

- Probable cause exists at the inception of the search, along with exigent circumstances.
- There is a specific rule waiving the warrant requirement.
- Informed consent of the person to be searched has been obtained.
- Pursuant to a lawful arrest.
- The custodian of the place to be searched requests the search.
- A public school official does not need a warrant or "probable cause" to search a public school student, provided that the official has a *reasonable suspicion* that the student has violated either a law or a school regulation. Case law states that a school official may request a law enforcement officer to assist in or conduct the search of a student based upon the school official's reasonable suspicion that a violation has occurred.

3. Identify and interview all victims and witnesses. Assess the threat by investigating the suspect's past behavior, including police contacts and school-related problems. If possible, use school records to check student's past history and conduct checks of the internet, social media websites, cell phones, or other electronic devices. Consider need for electronic preservation letters with cell phone providers, internet service providers & social media site administrators. This list is not inclusive but intended to convey importance based on the often-limited retention of data related to electronic communication, postings, and searches.
4. Evaluate the youth for WIC 5585 72-hour hold criteria (WIC 5150 for adults).
5. Notify the youth's parent(s)/guardian(s) of the incident and inquire about the history and availability of firearms, weapons, or explosives.
6. Go to the youth's home to conduct a safety assessment. Make every effort to obtain a consent search of the youth's residence/bedroom and vehicle for firearms, weapons, or explosive devices. If the suspect is a juvenile, obtain consent from the parent(s)/guardian(s) for common areas and areas where the juvenile has ready access. If parent(s)/guardian(s) permit the youth to lock his/her bedroom door or otherwise deny access to certain areas, a search warrant may be necessary.

7. If consent cannot be obtained, advise the field supervisor of the situation and all known facts. The supervisor will provide guidance as to whether a search warrant will be sought.
8. When examining the youth's bedroom for firearms, explosive devices, threatening letters, computers, cell phones, etc., take note of the room's condition and any indicators of violent, dark or morbid themes. Ensure availability of "faraday bags" or other secure means of storing electronic devices, preventing signal transmission and/or remote wipe capability.
9. If evidence is seized, follow your department's policy with respect to documentation and proper handling. Contact the Hazardous Device Team if explosives are discovered.
10. In the event there is probable cause for arrest, complete a Juvenile Court Application for Petition (J132), a statement of probable cause, and an arrest report that fully documents your investigation. In addition to the normal investigation, the report is to include the following:
 - Reaction of youth's parent(s)/guardian(s);
 - Inquire with parent(s)/guardian(s) regarding any prior suicidal thoughts, behaviors, actions, or treatment for mental health issues on behalf of the youth;
 - Youth's access to firearms;
 - Youth's familiarity and training with firearms;
 - Description of youth's bedroom and general home environment;
 - Collection of evidence to include photographs;
 - Inform if DPSS was called to the residence to investigate;
 - Internet, computer and cell phone activity.

If there is insufficient evidence to support an arrest, an informational report should be taken to document the circumstances surrounding the incident.

11. If probable cause exists to arrest, transport youth to Juvenile Hall.
12. Notify the Juvenile Hall Detention Control Officer of the nature of the arrest and inform if DPSS was called to the residence and of the STAR Protocol requirements.

C. Field Supervisor Responsibilities:

1. Monitor status of investigation.
2. Ensure thoroughness of investigation.
3. Provide guidance to the investigative officer as needed.
4. Request assistance from follow-up detectives when necessary.
5. Review crime report for details prior to booking into juvenile hall.
6. Manage designated information to media and press. Due to adverse impact of parent/community generated social media postings, consider pre-emptive sharing of information highlighting response effort and actions being taken. Absent reliable information from regional LE agencies, these incidents may take on a false narrative very quickly, hindering investigative efforts and spreading fear and panic. Coordination with school district officials and their respective PIO's is essential.
7. Document information into supervisor's "Pass on Log."
8. Obtain a search warrant if applicable.
9. Notify Chain of Command

District Attorney's Office

- A. The District Attorney has a zero-tolerance policy for firearms on any school campus.
- B. The District Attorney's Office will review for prosecution any case where a youth is found in possession of a gun, explosive device, or other dangerous weapon on school grounds. Threats of violence against a school, its staff, or youth at the facility, made in person, by phone, or on internet or social media sites may be prosecuted accordingly.
- C. In any case wherein a youth is unlawfully found in possession of a firearm, explosive device, or other dangerous weapon not on a school campus, and there exists a direct nexus to a school or the school community, the District Attorney may designate the case a "School Threat Assessment and Response" case and prosecute accordingly.
- D. The District Attorney may enforce violations of cases where a parent or legal guardian is found not to have exercised reasonable care, supervision, protection, and control over their child. The following Penal Codes sections may apply:
 - 1. Penal Code 272 (Contributing to the Delinquency of a Youth)
 - 2. Penal Code 25100 (Criminal Storage of a Firearm)
- E. The District Attorney will coordinate and cooperate with schools, law enforcement agencies, Probation, Behavioral Health, and other county agencies in reducing and preventing illegal possession of firearms or explosive devices by youth, in the interests of public safety and the youth.

Probation Department

A. Identify as a Protocol Case:

Upon booking, law enforcement will notify the Detention Control Officer that the youth is a STAR Protocol Case.

B. Responsibilities of Detention Control Officer:

1. Review Juvenile Court Application for Petition (J132), probable cause statement, and crime report.
2. Obtain, or arrange to obtain, any additional information from the arresting officer.
3. Complete the STAR log to identify the referral as a Protocol Case; establish time frames for completing the assessment; complete the STAR profile on the youth and coordinate the assessment.
4. Conduct the intake per normal Juvenile Hall procedures and administer the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument (MAYSI). Notify Behavioral Health of the STAR case and the need for them to administer the Problem Behavior Inventory instrument (PBI) within 24 hours. A Behavioral Health clinician will interpret the results of the PBI. When indicated by the results of the PBI, Behavioral Health will complete an assessment to determine if the youth is a danger to themselves or others. The assessment will be shared with other MDT members if and when appropriate.
5. Contact parent(s)/guardian(s).
6. Contact the school authorities if not already done so by law enforcement/others.
7. Contact DPSS for any known information about the youth/family if law enforcement/others have not already done so.
8. Complete the detention process of the youth per normal Juvenile Hall procedure.
9. If the youth is determined to be "low risk" per the Intake Assessment Form, PBI, MAYSI, or supervisor override (due to circumstances of the offense), they may be released to parent(s)/guardian(s) with approval of the facility administrator. However, the PBI must be administered and the results evaluated by BHS prior to release. If a youth is released, charges may be filed out of custody. Juvenile Probation may refer the youth for diversion services through a community-based organization and/or Behavioral Health services may be initiated.
10. When the youth is released from Juvenile Hall, the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will be provided a Fact/Resource Sheet which will include information on "High Risk Indicators," and a list of available supportive services in the community.
11. Youth determined to be "at-risk," per the Intake Assessment Form, PBI, MAYSI, or supervisor override will be detained in Juvenile Hall and have a petition filed to appear in Juvenile Court.
12. Juvenile Hall staff will provide the following to the Juvenile Probation Intake Unit within legal time frames:

- The Juvenile Court Application for Petition (J132), all law enforcement reports, and probable cause statements.
- The completed Juvenile Hall STAR Protocol Log; the STAR Profile and other pertinent Juvenile Hall information.

Riverside University Health System, Department of Behavioral Health

- A. When a youth is brought to Juvenile Hall for a STAR related offense, Behavioral Health will administer screening instruments within 24 hours, and interpret the results. Based on the results of the screening tools, Behavioral Health will initiate an assessment of the youth for danger to self or others and differentiate between conduct disorder behavior and other types of mental health problems.
- B. The youth shall be advised that: 1) the youth does not have to speak with them; 2) the interview and subsequent assessment would not be confidential and would be disclosed to the probation department and the court; 3) if they choose not to participate, Behavioral Health will note that in the assessment and that fact will be disclosed to the probation department and court; 4) Behavioral Health will make every attempt to not discuss the underlying facts of the case. Any discussion about the underlying case will not be included in the assessment.
- C. When completing an assessment, Behavioral Health staff will also review information obtained from law enforcement, schools, Children’s Services Division, probation and parents for the following risk factors:
1. Response of youth;
 2. Response of parent;
 3. Suicidal ideations, behaviors, or indicators;
 4. Assessment of access to firearms, explosive devices in the home;
 5. Assessment of home and room of youth, computer, internet, text and cell phone activity.
- D. The assessment will be shared where legally and professionally appropriate with the following agencies:
1. Probation
 2. Schools
 3. Children’s Services Division (CSD)
 4. Law Enforcement
 5. The Juvenile Court Judge
- Any release of information must comply with the Welfare & Institutions Code sections 827 and 5328.
- E. Behavioral Health currently maintains staff in Riverside, Indio and Southwest Juvenile Halls. Behavioral Health clinicians will respond and complete assessments within 24 hours to STAR referrals.

Department of Public Social Services

A. Staff Responsibilities:

When a report involving youth with a STAR Protocol incident is received by Children’s Services Division (CSD), the following responses will be initiated:

1. The Central Intake Center (CIC) staff will create a referral and assess the information to determine if an "Immediate Response" or "10-Day Response" is needed.

2. If law enforcement requests assistance through CIC, and there are immediate child protection issues, a referral will be generated and assigned to an Investigative Services (IS) Social Services Practitioner (SSP) in the respective region as an "Immediate Response (IR)."
3. For cases in which child protection is not a primary concern, but law enforcement is requesting assistance in assessing overall functioning of families and children, the referral will be assigned to the respective region's ER Unit as a "10-Day Response."
4. Social workers who determine that a child has threatened to use or has access to a gun or other deadly weapons during routine home visits or investigation will assess safety issues and contact law enforcement and the CIC immediately. Per current CPS policy, the social worker will remove the child if there is imminent risk.
5. All referrals meeting the STAR Protocol criteria will be entered in CWS/CMS and coded specifically for tracking purposes by the CIC. Regardless of the action taken, relevant information regarding the youth/family in question will be shared with the MAT partners on all STAR referrals.
6. Supervisors are to consult with their Regional Manager when a member of the MDT is not in agreement with a component of the investigation.

Riverside County Office of Education/Coordinator of Student Transitions/Local School Districts

A. Coordinator of Student Transitions Responsibilities:

1. Upon notification of a STAR case, immediately contact the principal of youth's school of attendance.
 - Records will be requested by a Riverside County Office of Education Attendance Registration Technician if a student is to receive educational services through the Juvenile Hall.
 - The Coordinator of Student Transitions or Designee will access the state longitudinal database and provide information pertinent to the responsible agencies to assist in agency request for records in instances where the student does not enroll in educational services in Juvenile Hall.
2. Immediately forward information received from the school site principal to the Juvenile Hall Detention Control Officer.

B. Responsibilities of School District Personnel:

1. When school site staff initiate the STAR Protocol:
 - Detain student (only if safe to do so).
 - Contact local law enforcement or School Resource Officer.
 - Initiate Protocol.
 - Prepare assessment data and provide to Juvenile Hall.
 - Prepare suspension/expulsion paperwork.
2. When school site staff is contacted by the Coordinator of Student Transitions on a Protocol Case:
 - Give priority to request for information regarding student, i.e., discipline history, grades, health, attendance and any other information, which would assist in the assessment of the individual in custody.
 - Immediately gather information requested.
 - Provide assessment information (the form will be forwarded to you to complete) to Coordinator of Student Transitions or Riverside County Office of Education staff assigned to request records by telephone, fax, or secure mail.

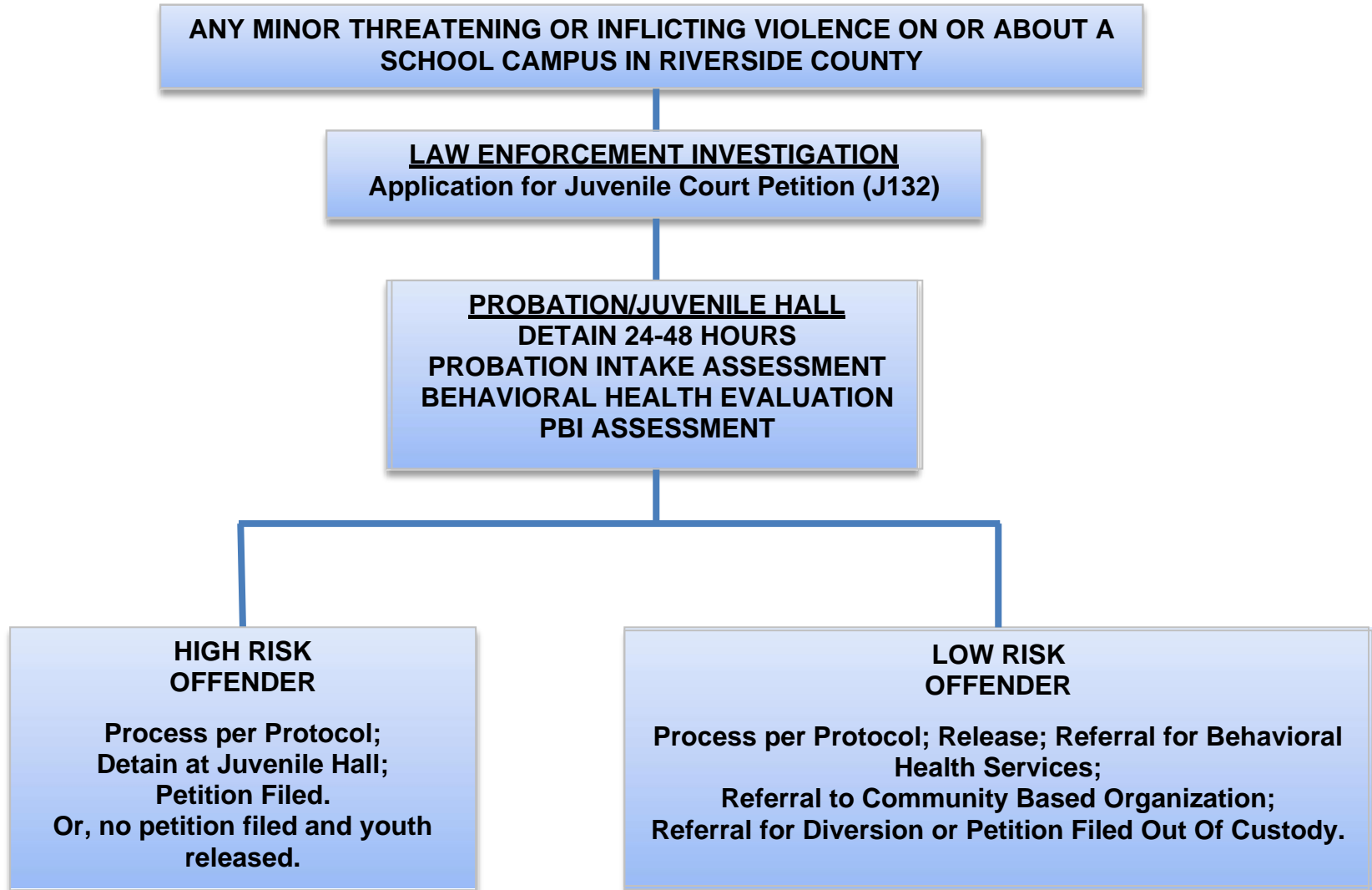
IV: HIGH RISK INDICATORS

Youth typically exhibit multiple warning signs, usually with increasing intensity over time. Prior to most incidents, friends or other students knew about the attacker's idea and/or plan to attack. Below are some "high risk" indicators that parents and all who work with youth should be aware of and consider.

- Typically between ages 11-16.
- May not have ever been arrested or been to Juvenile Court for a law violation.
- Few or no friends.
- Withdrawn, excessive feelings of rejection.
- May have moved frequently.
- Feelings of being picked on and persecuted.
- Depression.
- May have difficulty coping with significant losses or personal failures.
- May have suicidal comments or self-mutilated.
- May be a victim of violence/abuse.
- Pattern of angry behavior.
- May have history of tantrums, explosive rage.
- May have felt bullied, persecuted by others.
- Violent or dark themes.
- Discussion, drawings, writings, fantasies, video games, posters, music, computers, internet, text and cell phone activity.
- Preoccupation with guns, explosive devices or possibly other dangerous weapons.
- Animal cruelty.
- Torture or mutilation of animals in the past.
- Past history of setting fires.
- Verbal cues.
- Talks about something "big" happening.
- Talks about being noticed/becoming famous.
- Makes specific threats against a person or group.
- Access to guns and knowledge of their use.
- Parents may minimize or deny.

Note: A youth may have more than one high risk characteristic and never commit a violent offense. However, we all want to be aware and do everything possible to immediately assess a threat to prevent a tragic situation from occurring.

V: Community Response Plan Diagram



VI: PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

Alvord Unified School District
Banning Police Department
Banning Unified School District
Beaumont Police Department
Beaumont Unified School District
Blythe Police Department
Cathedral City Police Department
Coachella Valley Unified School District
Corona Police Department Services
Corona-Norco Unified School District
Desert Center Unified School District
Desert Sands Unified School District
Hemet Police Department
Hemet Unified School District
Indio Police Department
Jurupa Unified School District
Lake Elsinore Unified School District
Menifee Police Department
Menifee Union School District
Moreno Valley Unified School District
Murrieta Police Department

Murrieta Valley Unified School District
Nuvview Union School District
Palm Springs Police Department
Palm Springs Unified School District
Palo Verde Unified School District
Perris School District
Perris Union High School District
Riverside County Dept. of Public Social Services
Riverside County District Attorney
Riverside County Mental Health
Riverside County Office of Education
Riverside County Probation
Riverside County Sheriff
Riverside Police Department
Riverside Unified School District
Romoland School District
San Jacinto Unified School District
Temecula Valley Unified School District
Val Verde Unified School District
Val Verde Unified School District Police

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VII:

Signature Page

School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)

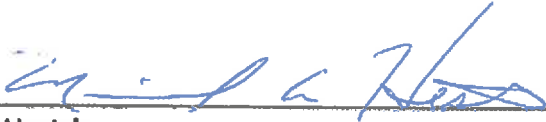


Ron Miller
Chief Probation Officer

4/11/22
Date

Signature Page

School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)



4/26/22

Michael Hestrin
District Attorney

Date

Signature Page

School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)



Chad Bianco
Riverside County Sheriff – Coroner

4/13/2022
Date

Signature Page

School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matthew Chang". The signature is stylized, with a large, sweeping initial "M" and a cursive "Chang".

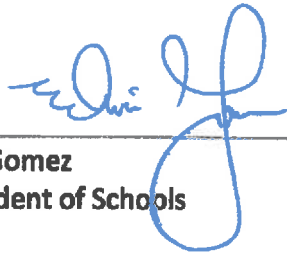
Dr. Matthew Chang, Director
Behavioral Health, RUHS

4/25/22

Date

Signature Page

School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)



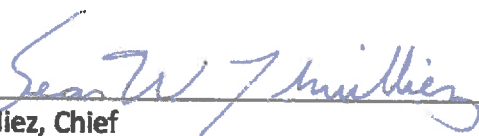
Dr. Edwin Gomez
Superintendent of Schools

4/22/2022

Date

Signature Page

School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)


Sean Thuilliez, Chief
Beaumont Police Department

4-7-2022
Date

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School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)

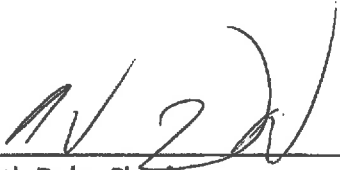


**Matthew Hamner, Chief
Banning Police Department**

4/22/2022
Date

Signature Page

School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)



Garth Dale, Chief
Blythe Police Department

4-26-2022

Date

Signature Page

School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)

George Crum

4-7-2022

George Crum, Chief
Cathedral City Police Department

Date

Signature Page

School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)



Robert Newman, Chief
Corona Police Department

4/7/2022

Date

Signature Page

School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)



Jim Henson, Chief
Desert Hot Springs Police Department

4/7/22
Date

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School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)



Eddie J. Pust, Chief
Hemet Police Department

4/7/2022
Date

Signature Page

School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)



Michael R. Washburn, Chief
Indio Police Department

4-7-22

Date

Signature Page

School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)

 249

Patrick A. Walsh, Chief
Menifee Police Department

4/7/22

Date

Signature Page

School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)



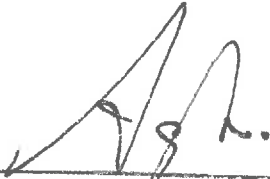
4-19-22

Anthony Conrad, Chief
Murrieta Police Department

Date

Signature Page

School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)



Andrew G. Mills, Chief
Palm Springs Police Department

04/28/2022
Date

Signature Page

School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)



Larry V. Gonzalez, Chief
Riverside Police Department

4/22/22

Date

Signature Page

School Threat Assessment and Response (STAR)

Mark Clark

04/25/2022

Mark Clark, Chief
Val Verde Unified School District Police

Date