

Broward County Public Schools, Fort Lauderdale, Florida



Case Study

The Client

Broward County Public Schools, Fort Lauderdale, Florida

The Project

Online Behavioral Threat Assessment Solution

The Challenge

Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) encompass the sixth largest school district in the U.S., serving over 270,000 students in 241 schools and 89 charter schools in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Following the tragic events at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in February 2018 in Parkland, Florida, Broward sought an online threat assessment solution to better track and manage threat assessments. BCPS worked directly with Public Consulting Group, Inc. (PCG) to configure and customize a case management-enabled Behavioral Threat Assessment solution to meet their needs. The solution helps school personnel to identify students who are exhibiting behaviors along the pathway to violence, and intervene with supports designed to de-escalate those behaviors, to mitigate risk.

BCPS had a threat assessment process and protocol in place since 2002, but it was paper-based, which resulted in a lack of transparency and fidelity. Threat assessment documents were stored in a file cabinet at each school's administrative office, and school staff were depended upon to know when a student transferred in order to send the files to the next school. There was also not a consistent or reliable way to follow up on monitoring plans that had been established. In addition, data was not easily reportable; there was no way to efficiently pull threat assessment data and tie it to other aspects of a student's record, such as an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or attendance record. In order to comply with the recommendations of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Commission and to satisfy the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) statutory requirements of SB 7026, BCPS needed an on-demand, real-time solution that ensured a consistent process, immediate accessibility of data, and effective monitoring of plans and interventions.

6th

Largest School District in U.S.

241

Schools

89

Charter Schools

270,000

Enrollment

32,967

Total Permanent Staff

PCG Solutions:

- ✓ Behavioral Threat Assessment
- ✓ Suicide Risk Assessment
- ✓ Eligibility and Individualized Education Program (IEP) Processes
- ✓ Gifted Education Plans
- ✓ Private School Service Plans
- ✓ Advanced Reporting
- ✓ EdPlan Connect - Parent Portal
- ✓ Paperless Solutions
- ✓ Student Impacts Integration with Campus

Results

- ✓ Increased Fidelity and Collaboration
- ✓ Enhanced Transparency, Security, and Compliance
- ✓ Proactive Interventions
- ✓ Improved Threat Monitoring and Supervision of Student Supports

Assessments completed during the 2019-2020 school year

78%

Threats determined to be either low/transient or unfounded

17%

threats posed by a student with a previous threat assessment

The PCG Approach

Using this evidence-based platform as a baseline, in February 2019, PCG began working with BCPS to design, develop, and configure, a threat assessment solution to meet their needs and comply with state and federal best practices. PCG had previously collaborated with Prince William County Schools in Virginia to create an evidence-based threat assessment solution, which was deployed in January 2018. This system was modified to BCPS requirements and implemented in August 2019, with PCG assisting in the training of over 500 school-based administrators and mental health professionals.

During the process of building this Behavioral Threat Assessment (BTA) solution, BCPS identified the need to also track and document assessments related to threats-to-self. This led to the design and development of a parallel Suicide Risk Assessment pathway within the module. This configurable process uses the Columbia Suicide screener and other analytical questions to determine the level of risk for a student and then provide the ability to create and monitor a safety and support plan for the student.

The Results

For BCPS, EdPlan's Behavioral Threat Assessment (BTA) tool is now an integrated solution for tracking ALL student risk assessments, both for threats-to-others and threats-to-self, in one comprehensive module. The solution provides greater visibility and transparency within the district, from site-based teams to central administration. The online process is streamlined and easy for staff to use. It includes dashboards, alerts, and reminders, to ensure that staff are following prescribed district guidelines. During the 2019-2020 school year, 265 of the 330 total schools in the district completed at least one threat assessment. As students transfer to new schools, site administrators are notified of an existing student threat case. Most importantly, students who pose a threat risk receive the attention and support they need to address underlying issues.

Of all the threat assessments completed during the 2019-2020 school year, approximately 78 percent were determined to be either low/transient or unfounded. 17 percent of threats were posed by a student with a previous threat assessment completed during the same school year.

To learn more, contact us today.

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