

## Maine Association of School Psychologists

# Assessing Threats of Violence and Suicide in Schools: Legal Issues and Case Review

Presented By:  
Scott Poland, PhD

**Friday, May 15, 2020**  
**8:30am to 4:00pm**

Harraseeket Inn  
Freeport, Maine

## Presenter:

Dr. Scott Poland is a Professor at the College of Psychology and the Co-Director of the Suicide and Violence Prevention Office at Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He is an internationally recognized expert on youth suicide, school crisis and prevention and has authored or co-authored five books on these subjects. He previously directed psychological services for a large Texas school system for 24 years and is a past President of the National Association of School Psychologists and a past Prevention Division Director of American Association of Suicidology. He is very dedicated to prevention and has testified about the mental health needs of children before the U.S. Congress on four occasions. He is a founding member of the National Emergency Assistance Team and has personally assisted school communities after 16 school shootings and numerous suicide clusters. He is the co-author with his partner who is a retired school principal of the Suicide Safer School Plan for Texas, the Crisis Action School Toolkit on Suicide for Montana and the New Jersey School Guide to Prevent Suicide. He previously was selected as the outstanding psychologist in Texas and was a recipient of the Houston Wage Peace Award and the Helping Parkland Heal Award.

## Registration Information

Tuition includes continental breakfast, lunch, and afternoon refreshments

**MASP Member = \$175**

**MASP Non-Member = \$200**

**Student/Retired = \$80**

- **Online registration only. Register online at [masponline.net](http://masponline.net)**
- Payment or Purchase Order **must** accompany registration.
- Upload POs when you register or email them to [maineasp@gmail.com](mailto:maineasp@gmail.com)
- Payments for Purchase Orders must be received by the day of the conference.
- **Registration closes on May 7th**

## Cancellation Policy

If you need to cancel, you must submit written notification to MASP at least 10 days in advance for a full refund.

**Cancellations with less than 10 days notice will receive a refund less the cost of food (typically \$50) and a \$25 processing fee.** Please email your request to [maineasp@gmail.com](mailto:maineasp@gmail.com).

## Schedule

**Registration: 8:00**

**Workshop: 8:30 to 12:00**

**Lunch: 12:00 to 1:00**

**Workshop: 1:00 to 4:00**

## Learning Objectives:

- Identify key factors that were involved in legal cases that questioned the assessment of threats of violence done by school personnel.
- Learn the lessons from several legal cases after student suicides pertaining to parent notification and the suicide assessment conducted at school and whether when a student is 18 years or older parent notification is or is not required.
- Understand the complex relationship between bullying and suicide and the outcome of numerous lawsuits filed against schools after students died by suicide and parents were critical of the schools' role in preventing bullying.
- Understand best postvention practices in schools after a suicide in light of a lawsuit filed against a school district by parents after the second suicide of their children.
- Become familiar with a lawsuit brought against school personnel for failure to notify parents of a student who engaged in NSSI.

## Workshop Description:

The incidence of threats of violence and suicide requires that schools have well trained threat assessment teams. Many questions have been raised about the ethical and legal responsibilities for school psychologists in threat assessment. The presenter has been an expert witness in more than a dozen cases where schools were sued after a tragedy and will share the outcome of those cases and the lessons learned for prevention and intervention. Several of those cases questioned the competency of the suicide and/or violent assessment done by school personnel. Practical best practices for school psychologists in conducting thorough assessments of threats and how to avoid liability will be outlined.

## Important Information

### Directions:

**From the North:** Take I-295 South to Exit 22. Take a right off the exit. Follow 1/2 mile to to stop light. The Harraseeket Inn will be directly in front of you.

**From the South:** Take I-95 North to Exit 52 Falmouth. Go through the tollbooth and take the exit for I-295 North. Take Exit 22. Take a left off the exit. Follow 1/2 mile to the stop light. The Harraseeket Inn will be in front of you.

**Accommodations:** Persons with physical disabilities who need accommodations should contact MASP [maineasp@gmail.com](mailto:maineasp@gmail.com) for assistance so accommodations can be arranged.

**CE Hours:** The Maine Association of School Psychologists is approved by the National Association of School Psychologists and the Maine Board of Examiners of Psychologists to sponsor continuing education (CE) for psychologists. This activity provided **6** continuing education contact hours. In keeping with requirements, CE is awarded in contact hours only and is awarded at the close of the day.