



AP 331 – Physical Restraint and Seclusion of Students

Purpose

This Administrative Procedure for the physical restraint and seclusion of students is aligned with the BC Ministry of Education *Provincial Guidelines for Physical Restraint and Seclusion in School Settings*, June 2015. The Board of Education does not support the use of seclusion.

Procedure

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe, caring and inclusive learning environment for students and employees. It is essential to maintain an environment which respects each student's right to an educational program and ensures that each and every intervention is carried out in a manner that maintains the student's dignity and the safety of all involved.

All students and employees are expected to contribute to and maintain this environment. Safety is compromised when a student's behaviour puts themselves or others in harm's way.

The definitions used in this AP align with the B.C. Ministry of Education *Provincial Guidelines for Physical Restraint and Seclusion of Students in School Settings* (June, 2015).

According to the Ministry of Education (June 2015) "physical restraint is a method of restricting another person's freedom of movement or ability in order to secure and maintain the safety of the person or the safety of others."

Educative and preventative methods of maintaining a safe, caring and inclusive learning environment are to be provided to students routinely. All interventions are designed to preserve the safety and dignity of students and staff.

Board employees routinely use a variety of educative, preventative and restorative interventions to respond to a range of complex student behaviours and every effort will be made by employees to use such actions that preclude the need to use physical restraint.

In exceptional circumstances when student behaviour presents an imminent danger to self or others, including school employees, and where less restrictive interventions have been ineffective in ending imminent danger of serious physical harm, it may be necessary for employees to use reasonable physical restraint. Restraint is never to be used as punishment, discipline, or to force compliance with respect to educational learning outcomes.

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The decision to use reasonable physical restraint is guided by the professional judgement of Board employees. Employees will have the full support of the Board in their efforts to maintain a safe learning environment to the extent that their actions comply with relevant legislation and district policy and procedures governing the physical restraint of students.

A. Definitions

Physical Guidance – involves guiding or physically leading a student to support the teaching of a skill, redirecting attention and/or appropriately providing comfort. It does not constitute physical restraint.

Physical Escort/Assistance – involves temporary, physical contact that may include holding a student’s hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back, for the purpose of accompanying a student to a safe location.

Physical Restraint – is a method of restricting another person’s freedom of movement or mobility in order to secure and maintain the safety of the person or the safety of others.

Seclusion - is the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room, enclosure, or space which the student is physically prevented from leaving, even where an adult is present. Behavioural strategies such as removal from a location as outlined in an individualized student plan is not considered seclusion. Further, the term seclusion does not apply where a student has personally requested to be in a different/secluded location or space.

Imminent Danger – situations with a high likelihood of immediate and substantial physical or bodily injury to self or others. Immediate harm to the environment (e.g. furniture or belongings), or the student’s elopement from an environment (e.g. running around the school), are not situations of imminent danger.

RSP – A Regulation Support Plan is collaboratively developed to teach the student the desired behaviour(s) and to adapt the environment to promote the learning of the new behaviour(s).

ESP – An Employee Safety Plan is collaboratively developed to instruct staff on procedures and strategies to keep themselves safe when interacting with a specific student who presents with challenging behaviours.

Response Plan – a Response plan is collaboratively developed to instruct staff on procedures and strategies to keep students safe, when peers are potentially at risk when interacting with a specific student who presents with challenging behaviours.

B. Guidelines for Physical Escort/Assistance

1. Physical Guidance may be used to support the teaching of a skill, redirecting attention and/or appropriately providing comfort. It does not constitute physical restraint.
2. Physical escort/assistance may be used to support a student who is of elementary age (4-13 years old) and is not able to safely navigate the school environment without support. In these instances, the use of physical escort/assistance shall be planned in advance, in consultation with the student's parent/guardian, and explicitly documented in the student's plan. Additionally, written, informed consent has been obtained from the parent
3. Use of a supportive tool, such as a transfer belt, may only be utilized under the supervision of an occupational or physical therapist from the district's School-Aged Therapy Program, and with prior approval of the Department of Learning Services.
 - Use of these tools must be reviewed at least 3 times each school year, to ensure they are still a necessary support for the student.
 - The parameters and purpose of the use of this tool must be documented in the student's IEP or other supportive plan. The plan must identify:
 - Specific criteria for the use of the tool
 - Data collection methods for evaluating the continued need for its use
 - A specific goal, with related strategies and objectives, to assist the student with developing the skills and capacities needed to discontinue its use

C. Guidelines For Restraint

1. In cases where an individual student could potentially cause harm to self or others the appropriate plans should be collaboratively developed with the principal, teachers, support staff, parents/guardians and, when appropriate, the student.
2. These plans should be based on the data from a Risk Assessment, based on the principles of Non-violent Crisis Intervention (NCI). Plans must include:
 - An understanding of the student's baseline behaviours
 - Relevant historical information regarding the student's school and medical history
 - Specific, observable behavioural indications related to the antecedents, setting events and triggers for the student's behaviours
 - An understanding of situational considerations which may contribute to the student's escalated behaviours
 - Specific de-escalation strategies and interventions to support the student
 - Specific response protocols for staff working with the student
3. Circumstances where the team identifies the potential for increased likelihood or severity of a student's response to a specific trigger or setting event should be identified as part of the student's plan. Additionally, the plan should include

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strategies for supporting the student in developing the skills and capacities necessary for safe participation at school, to prevent the need for restraint as much as possible.

4. It is the principal's responsibility to ensure that staff such as teachers, education assistants, bus drivers, clerical, custodians and any on-call staff read the relevant individualized student plan and understand the importance of adhering to these plans for their own safety and the safety of others.
5. Physical restraint will be used only as a last resort. Last resort is defined as a circumstance where there is a high likelihood of **immediate and substantial** physical or bodily injury to self or others. Restraint should not be used as a regular strategy or intervention as part of a student's program. As such, these measures should not be listed as strategies or responses as part of plans.
6. Situations where restraint may be required include:
 - if a student is in the process of actively pursuing others, or preventing the evacuation of others from an environment, in a manner that creates a high likelihood of immediate and substantial physical or bodily injury to self or others, and a safe perimeter cannot be established between the student and the others who are at risk.
 - if a student is engaging in self-injurious behaviour that constitutes an imminent risk of immediate and substantial harm to self.
 - if the student is experiencing a medical emergency that requires immediate intervention from staff. Where this potential is known in advance (i.e., in the case of a diagnosed medical condition such as a seizure disorder), staff will collaborate with the student's family and medical team as appropriate, and clearly outline the necessary response procedure in a medical care plan.
7. Physical Restraint will only be utilized until the imminent danger of serious harm to self or others has dissipated.
8. Any time physical restraint is necessary the Physical Restraint / Seclusion Report
9. Form must immediately be filed with the Principal, the Occupational Safety and Wellness Manager, and the Assistant Superintendent. Parents/Guardians must also be immediately informed about the incident and receive a copy of the form.
10. Physical Restraint is always conducted in a safe manner by a person who is trained in the proper methods of physical restraint as taught through Non-violent Crisis Intervention. This training will ensure that:
 - Trained staff are aware of less restrictive means of restraint, and are fully aware of the risk associated with each intervention
 - Staff have familiarized themselves with any known vulnerabilities for students with Response Plans
 - Staff monitor the individual's safety and well-being at all times, are able to identify signs of distress, and know how to respond to medical emergencies resulting from restraint techniques

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- The students' breathing is not restricted, in order to prevent positional asphyxia
- The student is not in a prone position (facing down on their stomach)
- In an emergency where an individual is held on the floor, a supine (face up) position should be used
- School administrators will review these expectations with staff annually, and will ensure that all staff who are not trained in restraint techniques understand they should not be engaging in these interventions.

D. Guidelines for Seclusion

1. The space used for seclusion must not jeopardize the students' health and safety – emotionally or physically. Seclusion should only be employed in exceptional circumstances where a student is in imminent danger of causing serious harm to self or others.
 - Seclusion will only be employed until the imminent danger of serious harm to self or others has dissipated.
 - Any time seclusion is necessary a Physical Restraint / Seclusion Report Form must be filed with the Principal, the Occupational Safety and Wellness Manager, and the Assistant Superintendent. Parents/Guardians must also be immediately informed about the incident and receive a copy of the form.
 - Any room that is to be used for seclusion must have an observation window and the secluded student must be under continuous visual observation. The student's behaviour is recorded at regular intervals by the observing adult throughout the period of seclusion.
 - A student must never be locked into any room in the school and/or the door must never be held shut.

E. Methods

Training, consultation and materials are to be obtained from specialized NLPS support staff to ensure that physical intervention is only conducted by supervising adult(s) who:

- Are knowledgeable in the area of interventions designed to diffuse potentially violent situations in a way that reduces or eliminates the need for physical restraint;
- Are competent in the use of safe, non-harmful restraint techniques which ensure the care, welfare, safety and security of restrainer and restrainee;
- Are sensitive to the dignity of the student and aware of the possible impact of restraint on student, staff and witnesses; and • Work as a cooperative team in carrying out all aspects of the physical restraint.

Debriefing and Restorative Practice:

Debriefing will occur:

- with the student to support and assist the student and adults in developing a plan to manage behaviour in such a way that future physical restraint will not be required; and
- among supervising adults in order to ensure that best practices are being followed.

Debriefing with students with diverse abilities and disabilities will be conducted by persons who are the most skilled in communicating with the student.

Debriefing provides an opportunity to work toward change and growth for individuals who have acted out, as well as for staff members. A debriefing process that offers restorative practices after a crisis has a much higher likelihood of reducing a recurrence of the behaviour.

Restorative practices return control to the student who has acted-out, giving back the responsibility regarding their own behaviour along with adult support and encouragement. This gives the student a sense that someone is on their side, they are not alone, that their dignity is protected, re-establishes communication, and helps to build coping strategies.

Documentation

A supervising adult will complete the Physical Restraint / Seclusion Report Form. The principal will review the information on the form. Copies of the form and debriefing summary will be sent to the Assistant Superintendent, parent/guardian, and filed in the school office as well as the student's designation folder or confidential file.

A WorkSafe BC report form must also be completed if appropriate.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT / SECLUSION REPORT FORM

Name of Student:		Date of Restraint:	
Date of Birth:	Age	Gender <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> _____	Grade:
Does the student currently receive special education services?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Site of restraint:			
This report prepared by:		Position:	
Staff member administering restraint:		Position:	
		NVCI:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Staff member administering restraint:		Position:	
		NVCI:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Observer(s):		Position:	
Observer(s):		Position:	
Administrator who was verbally informed following the restraint:		Position:	

PRECIPITATING ACTIVITY:

Thorough description of activity in which the restrained and/or other students were engaged immediately preceding use of physical restraint:

Behaviour that prompted and justified the restraint:

Thorough description of efforts made to deescalate and alternatives to restraint that were attempted:

DESCRIPTION OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT:

Justification for initiating physical restraint (check all that apply):

- To protect the student from imminent, serious, physical harm.
- To protect other student(s)/staff from imminent, serious, physical harm.

Student’s behaviour and reaction during restraint:

Time restraint began: _____ Time restraint ended: _____

RESTRAINT END:

How restraint ended (check all that apply):

- Student was calm and no longer a risk to self or others.
- Intervention by other(s) to facilitate de-escalation.
- Other:

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Description of any injury to student and/or staff and any medical or first aid care provided:

Incident report was filed with WorkSafe BC:		
FURTHER ACTION TO BE TAKEN: (Attach separate page if necessary.)		
The school will take the following action and/or disciplinary sanctions (check as many as apply):		
<input type="checkbox"/> Review incident with student to address behaviour that precipitated the restraint.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Review incident with staff to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Consider a local investigation of any complaint regarding this restraint.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Disciplinary actions/sanctions taken.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact with parents, staff, district administration, Ministries, or community agencies. <input type="checkbox"/>		
Other:		
Parent who was informed of the restraint:	Phone:	Date:
The date that this report was provided to the parent:	Date:	
Name of person who informed the parent:	Position:	
Was debriefing with the student possible?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Name of person who debriefed with the student:		
Explain when this occurred and the outcome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the student to state what happened. • Encourage the student to state an understanding of the school rule. • Assist the student to develop a more appropriate behavioural plan. <input type="checkbox"/> Debriefing and Restorative Practice 		
Comments:		

p.c. Assistant Superintendent, Principal; Designation/Cumulative File; Parent/Guardian

Adopted: February 23, 2000

Amended: July 2, 2008; October 10th, 2017; January 26, 2022; May 11, 2022; January 8, 2023