

POLICY 3.11 PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AND/OR SECLUSION

The Board of Education believes that learning and working environments are to be as safe as possible for all children and adults. The Board also seeks to protect the dignity and psychological safety of students who are experiencing challenges related to their behaviour.

Safety is compromised when a student's behaviour is dangerous to self or others. Prevention is the best method for maintaining a safe environment. However, in emergency circumstances, a supervisory adult may find it necessary to apply physical restraint and/or seclusion. The District is committed to ensuring that the guidelines for physical restraint and/or seclusion in school settings, as set out by the Ministry of Education and Child Care, are followed.

Principles

- Every effort will be made to structure learning environments and provide learning supports that make physical restraint and/or seclusion unnecessary and school personnel will implement evidenced based effective supports and interventions to prevent and de-escalate potentially unsafe situations.
- Physical restraint and/or seclusion may only occur when the behavior of a student poses imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others, including school personnel, and where verbal and non-verbal de-escalation techniques have not been successful.
- School staff members will be offered opportunities to be trained in implementing positive behaviour interventions, other types of supports, de-escalation and re-establishing therapeutic rapport.
- Parents and, where appropriate, students are provided opportunities to be consulted in the development of positive behaviour supports and interventions, behaviour plans, or safety plans. Review or revision of such plans will occur if there is repeated use of physical restraint and/or seclusion for an individual student.

It is expected that school personnel are always looking for tools and methods to avoid physical restraint and/or seclusion including the implementation of pro-active, positive, non-punitive supports and interventions that make the use of seclusion and physical restraint unnecessary. Further, it is expected that efforts will be made to determine the underlying causes of distressed behaviour.

GUIDELINES

1. Definitions

1.1. Seclusion – the involuntary confinement of a person, alone in a room, enclosure or space which the person is physically prevented from leaving. The term seclusion does not apply to the following situations:

1.1.1. When a student has personally requested to be in a different/secluded location/space;

1.1.2. When a student is outside of the regular classroom and possibly alone (but supervised) for a calm or quiet break if these breaks represent behaviour strategies which are proactive and are part of the student's daily routine.

1.2. Physical Restraint – 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. The term physical restraint does not apply to the following situations:

1.2.1. The provision of gentle physical guidance or prompting of a student when teaching a skill, redirecting attention or providing comfort.

1.2.2. A temporary, gentle touch on a student's arm, shoulder or back for the purpose of guiding a student to a safe location. A gentle touch to some students can be a physical trigger. Be mindful of a student's safety plan.

2. Physical restraint and/or seclusion may never be used as a punishment, discipline, or to force compliance in an educational learning setting.

3. Physical restraint and/or seclusion is never conducted in a manner that could, in any way, cause harm to a student, i.e., never restricts the breathing of a student; never places a student in a prone position (i.e., facing down on their stomach) or supine position (i.e., on their back, face up) or never employs the use of mechanical devices.

4. Any use of physical restraint and/or seclusion should preserve a student's dignity and rights as much as possible.

5. All school staff members involved in implementing physical restraint and/or seclusion protocols must be trained in Non-Violent Crisis Intervention with the additional training for holds to ensure that positive behaviour interventions, supports, and de-escalation techniques are used.

6. Physical restraint and/or seclusion is to be discontinued once imminent danger or serious self-harm or harm to others has dissipated.

7. If a student is injured through physical restraint or while in seclusion, a Student Report of Injury must be filed immediately.

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8. If a staff member is injured during physical restraint or while a student is in seclusion, a "Worker's Report of Injury or Occupational Disease to the District" (NWSD Form 6A) must be completed and given to the Principal/VP in accordance with WorkSafeBC regulations.
9. A review/revision of prevention/intervention strategies must occur in cases where there is:
 - 9.1. Repeated use of physical restraint and/or seclusion for an individual student
 - 9.2. Multiple use of physical restraint and/or seclusion occurring within the same classroom
 - 9.3. Repeated use of physical restraint and/or seclusion by an individual staff member
10. Communication with District and School Staff:
 - 10.1. Follow-up after each incident involving the use of physical restraint and/or seclusion:
 - 10.1.1. School staff will notify the Principal as soon as possible after an incident - always prior to the end of the day on which the incident has occurred.
 - 10.1.2. The Principal will notify District staff as soon as possible after an incident – always prior to the end of the day on which the incident has occurred.
11. Documentation is required by school staff of any use of physical restraint and/or seclusion.
12. Communication with Parents:
 - 12.1. The Principal will notify parents/guardians as soon as possible, and always on the same day in which an incident has occurred.
 - 12.2. A debriefing will occur with involved school personnel; parents or guardians of the student; and where possible, with the student and will examine what happened/what caused the incident, and what could be changed, i.e., prevention and response.
13. Safety Plans
 - 13.1. Where the use of physical restraint and/or seclusion may be a potential part of a Student's Safety Plan the procedure will be clearly laid and shared with staff and parents/guardian.
14. Seclusion
 - 14.1. With regard to seclusion, any space used for seclusion will not jeopardize the secluded student's health and safety.
 - 14.2. Any student placed in seclusion must be continuously and visually observed by an adult who is physically present throughout the period of seclusion, and, if possible, is able to communicate in the student's primary language or mode of communication.
 - 14.3. Any time, except when a student's IEP details a different procedure, seclusion is necessary a "Student Safety Incidence or Level 1 Threat Assessment Report" must be filed with the District. Parents/Guardians must also be informed about the incident immediately.

- 14.4. A student must never be locked in a room unless a Safety Plan for Locked Seclusion has been created in collaboration with District Inclusive Education staff, School Administration, school staff, parents and possibly outside agencies.
- 14.5. 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.
- 14.6. If a student's Safety Plan details a procedure for the use of seclusion it will also contain an agreed to notification system for parents and a plan to build skills to eliminate the need for seclusion.
- 14.7.
- 15. Physical restraint
 - 15.1. The use of a harness or similar approved equipment will only be employed, upon approval at the district level, upon the recommendation of an Occupational Therapist, and with parental informed consent. The student's IEP must include a plan to build skills to eliminate the need for the device.
 - 15.2. Parents/guardians must also be informed immediately.
 - 15.3. Physical Restraint is always conducted in a safe and calm manner by a person who is trained in the proper methods of physical restraint. This training will ensure that:
 - 15.3.1. Students' breathing is not restricted
 - 15.3.2. Student is not in a prone position (facing down on their stomach)
 - 15.3.3. Student is not in a supine position (on their back, face up)
 - 15.3.4. Mechanical restraint devices are never used
 - 15.4. If a student's Safety Plan details a procedure for the use of physical restraint, it will also contain an agreed to notification system for parents and a plan to build skills to eliminate the need for the use of physical restraint.
- 16. Debriefing and Restorative Practice:
 - 16.1. 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.
 - 16.2. 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.
 - 16.3. Debriefing with students with diverse abilities and disabilities will be conducted by persons who are the most skilled in communicating with the student.
 - 16.4. Restorative practices return control to the student who has acted out, helping the student repair harm that was done, along with adult support and encouragement. This gives the student a sense that they are not alone, that their dignity is protected, re-



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establishes communication, helps to build coping strategies, and restores the student back into their school community in a healthier way.