

SD 42 POLICY: 9430

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

PHILOSOPHY

The Board of Education recognizes that it has a responsibility to maintain safe, orderly and caring school environments for all of its students and employees.

The Board of Education believes that behaviour interventions for all students emphasize prevention and positive behaviour supports, and every effort is made to employ preventative actions that preclude the need for the use of physical restraint or seclusion.

The Board further believes that respect for student rights, maintaining student dignity and the safety of all involved is paramount.

The Board recognizes that the use of emergency physical restraint or seclusion procedures may be necessary when a student presents imminent danger to themselves or others.

AUTHORITY

The Board authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to establish procedures that will guide the implementation of this policy pursuant to the Ministry of Education Provincial Guidelines – Physical Restraint and Seclusion in School Settings.

DEFINITIONS

1. **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.

The provision of a 'physical escort', i.e. temporary touching or holding of a student's hand, wrist, arm, shoulder or back for the purpose of accompanying and inducing a student who is acting out to walk to a safe location, does not constitute physical restraint.

The provision of physical guidance, or prompting of a student when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, or providing comfort also does not constitute physical restraint.

2. **Seclusion** is the involuntary confinement of a person alone in a room, enclosure, or space which the person is physically prevented from leaving.

Behaviour strategies, such as "time out", used for social reinforcement as part of a behaviour plan, are not considered 'seclusion'.

The term seclusion does not apply where a student has personally requested to be in a different/secluded location/space.

3. **Time out** is the removal of a child from an apparently reinforcing setting to a presumably non-reinforcing setting for a specified and limited period of time. Time out involves

removing a student from sources of positive reinforcement as a consequence of a specific undesired behavior.

Time out is only one option along a continuum of behavior interventions supporting behavior change. Time-out can be implemented on several different levels, ranging from quiet time in the regular classroom to a time-out room in a location outside of the classroom.

Typically, time-out is used in tandem with positive interventions that can maximize student learning and assist in the acquisition of replacement behaviours.

SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY FOR THE USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION

1. Physical restraint and seclusion procedures are emergency, not treatment, procedures and are used *only* in exceptional circumstances where a student is in imminent danger of causing harm to self or others.
2. All school staff members are provided the opportunity to participate in training in positive behaviour interventions and supports and de-escalation techniques, and all specialized staff who work directly with a student in situations where there is a potential for imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others, and where they may be required to respond to an individual whose behavior is presenting a danger to self or others are expected to be trained in crisis intervention and the safe use of physical restraints and seclusion.
3. Parents, and where appropriate, students, are offered opportunities to be consulted in the development of positive behaviour supports and interventions, behaviour plans, emergency or safety plans.
4. Every instance where physical restraint and/or seclusion or the use of "time out" outside of a classroom has occurred is documented.
5. Prevention/intervention strategies are reviewed and revised in situations where: repeated use of physical restraint and seclusion for an individual student occurs; multiple uses of physical restraint and seclusion occur within the same classroom; or, physical restraint and seclusion is repeatedly used by an individual.
6. Incidents of physical restraint and seclusion will be reported to the school principal, and forwarded to the Superintendent of Schools or designate.
7. The School District will review this policy on a regular basis to ensure alignment with current research/practice and to ensure alignment with guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education.

APPROVED: May 18, 2016

REVIEWED: June 2021