



5.13 Physical Restraint and Seclusion in Schools

The Board of Education believes that all students must have access to a safe and respectful educational program. Furthermore, the Board considers the positive and least restrictive approaches in the provision of student supports to be best practice.

A wide variety of creative approaches to teaching/learning are used to support students' academic and social-emotional learning goals, including the configuration of physical spaces within and beyond the traditional classroom setting and accommodations for students' sensory and self-regulatory needs.

The Board of Education supports the following guidelines regarding the use of physical restraint and seclusion in our schools in the event such action is required to protect the safety of self/others.

Guidelines

1. Restraint and seclusion are used only as emergency, not treatment, procedures.
2. All behavioural interventions must protect the rights of all students to be treated with dignity while-honouring each student's right to learn in a safe environment. Alternate behavioural interventions are based on prevention through positive behaviour supports and/or relationships to the greatest extent possible. Interventions will address the underlying motivation for student behaviour.
3. All efforts will be made to use strategies that avoid the need for the use of physical restraint/seclusion. Physical restraint and seclusion will be used:
 - a. Only in exceptional circumstances.
 - b. Only where the behaviour of a student poses imminent danger of serious physical harm to self and/or others.
4. Restraint or seclusion is discontinued once the threat of imminent danger or serious physical harm to self and/or others has dissipated.
5. Parents/guardians/caregivers are notified as soon as possible that emergency action was used.
6. Staff working in a situation that may involve physical restraint or seclusion are trained accordingly. Training sessions include positive behaviour support planning, non-violent crisis intervention including techniques specific to neurodivergent

students, and conflict de-escalation techniques. These types of training opportunities will continue to be offered to school personnel on a regular basis.

7. Students exhibiting behaviour that is compromising the safety of self and/or others will be supported by an IEP and/or Behaviour Plan and/or Safety Plan that will be reviewed annually at a minimum. Parents/Caregivers/Guardians and, where appropriate, students will be offered opportunities to be consulted and encouraged to be involved in the development of these plans.
8. Any use of physical restraint and seclusion, or the use of time-out for the purpose of removal from the classroom will be reported to the Superintendent or designate.
9. The physical restraint and seclusion policy will be reviewed annually at the direction of the Superintendent or designate.

Definitions:

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.

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

Behaviour interventions 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 separate space.

Time-out –is the removal of a child from an educational setting for a specified and limited period of time. Time out is only one option along a continuum of behaviour interventions that can maximize student learning and assist in the acquisition of replacement behaviours. Time out is a strategy used as part of a student’s behaviour plan and occurs outside of the classroom on rare occasions.