



## SD #10 (Arrow Lakes) District Protocol

### Physical Restraint and Seclusion in Schools

#### Overview

The District recognizes that it has a responsibility to maintain a safe, caring and orderly school environment for all of its students and employees. The District believes that behavior interventions for all students emphasize prevention and positive behavior supports, and every effort is made to employ preventative actions that preclude the need for the use of physical restraint and seclusion.

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

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

#### Emergency Physical Restraint or Seclusion Procedures

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 physical harm to self or others. Restraint or seclusion, if necessary to employ for safety, is discontinued once imminent danger of physical self-harm or harm to others has dissipated.
2. Physical restraint or seclusion is never conducted in a manner that could, in any way, cause harm to a student.
  - a. Never by restricting the breathing of a student.
  - b. Never by placing the student in a prone position (i.e. facing down on his/her stomach).
  - c. Never by placing the student in a supine position (i.e. on his/her back, face up).
3. In the event of employing seclusion as an emergency procedure, the student is continuously visually observed by an adult who is physically present throughout the period of seclusion and that all health and safety policies or regulations including WorkSafe BC regulations are followed.
4. All school staff members who work with students in situations where there is a potential for imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others are provided the opportunity to participate in training opportunities in positive behavior interventions and supports and de-escalation techniques in order to maintain supportive, safe environments for both staff and students and to enable them to defuse conflict and crisis situations and safely use physical restraint and seclusion in extreme, emergent situations to prevent harm to self or others.

## **School Planning and Support**

5. Schools will implement positive behavior supports and interventions, behavior plans, safety plans, and other plans to prevent and de-escalate potentially unsafe situations.
6. Parents and or guardians, and where appropriate, students, are offered opportunities to be consulted in the development of positive behavior supports and interventions, behavior plans, or safety plans.
7. In cases where a student’s behavior could potentially cause harm to self or others, the student’s educational planning includes development of:
  - a. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) outlining the student’s learning outcomes, required learning support services, and instructional and assessment methods with the following attachments:
    - i. A formal positive behavior support plan describing positive behavior intervention supports and conflict de-escalation procedures that are in place and reviewed regularly, and at least, annually.
    - ii. A safety plan detailing emergency and safety procedures that shall be reviewed regularly, and at least annually.

## **Documentation**

8. Every instance where physical restraint and/or seclusion or the use of “time out” outside of classrooms has occurred is documented including:
  - a. Time and location of the incident.
  - b. Names of all people involved or witnessing the incident.
  - c. Written statements that lead to and describe the incident and the resolution.
  - d. Notifications as noted below.
9. Follow up/Communication after each incident of physical restraint and seclusion that includes:
  - a. Notification to the school principal who will inform the Director of Learning and the Superintendent, always prior to the end of the school day on which the incident has occurred.
  - b. Notification, by the school principal, to the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) prior to the student returning home or as soon as possible.
  - c. A debriefing with involved school personnel, parents and/or guardians of the student, and a debriefing with the student by a school counsellor to examine what happened/what caused the incident and what could be changed, actions that could be taken in the future to make the use of physical restraint or seclusion unnecessary.
  - d. Prevention/intervention strategies are reviewed and revised in situations where: physical restraint and seclusion for an individual student occurs more than once; multiple uses of physical restraint and seclusion occur within the same classroom; or, physical restraint and seclusion is repeatedly used by an individual.

- e. Completion of a School District Threat/ Violence Report form that must be forwarded to the Chair of the District Occupational Health and Safety Committee.

## Definitions

10. **Behaviour** – The actions by which an individual adjusts to his or her environment. It is commonly understood that behavior is communication. It is the impact of the behavior that dictates whether a behavior is negative or positive.
  - a. Understanding that behavior is communication, the purpose of this protocol is to promote a response that protects both the individual and other’s safety and well-being.
11. **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.
  - a. 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.
  - b. 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.
12. **Seclusion** – is the involuntary confinement of a person, alone in a room, enclosure, or space which the person is physically prevented from leaving.
  - a. Behaviour strategies, such as ‘time out’, used for social reinforcement as part of a behavior plan, are not considered seclusion.
  - b. The term seclusion does not apply where a student has personally requested to be in a different/secluded location/space.
13. **Time-out** – is the removal of a child from 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.
  - a. 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 the school.
  - b. Typically, time-out is used in tandem with positive interventions that can maximize student learning and assist in the acquisition of replacement behaviours.

## Related Legislation and or Documents:

- Source: *Provincial Guidelines – Physical Restraint and Seclusion in School Settings* British Columbia Ministry of Education June 3, 2015