

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Office of the Chancellor

2011 AUG 23 AM 11: 28

ABSTRACT OF CORRESPONDENCE

TO: Kaya Henderson, Chancellor
FROM: Dr. Nathaniel Beers, Chief, Office of Special Education
DATE: 08-23-11
SUBJECT: DCPS Physical Restraint and Seclusion Policy

1. Summary of Key Points (Brief): Policy will facilitate the implementation of a school-wide systematic approach to positive student behavior to improve overall school safety, minimize the need for the use of restraint and seclusion, and ensure that it is only used as a last resort in an emergency situation. These guidelines apply to all students in DCPS. Clearly outlines the use of physical restraints and seclusion in limited situations by certified staff (whenever possible) and only pursuant to this policy. This policy is to be used in conjunction with the training of staff in physical restraint and seclusion whereby each school is responsible for maintaining a core group of appropriate personnel trained and certified in crisis intervention techniques and procedures.

2. Special Concerns:

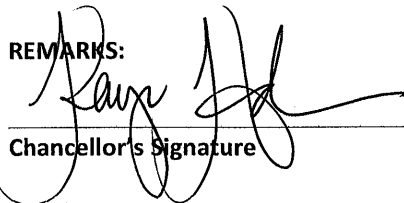
3. Action Required: Signature

4. Contact Person: Carla Watson Phone: 202-423-0957

5. Chancellor's Action:

Approved Disapproved Modify Discuss

REMARKS:



Chancellor's Signature

8/31/11
Date

CLEARANCE:

	PREPARED BY	CLEARED BY Chief	OGC (if required)	CLEARED BY	CLEARED BY
SURNAME & OFFICE (TYPED)	Carla Watson, OSE	Dr. Beers, OSE NB	Bob Utiger, OGC	WR	
INITIAL & DATE	CW 8-19-11	6/23/11	8/23/11 B/U	8/31/11	



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

August 2011

Guidelines for Physical Restraint and Seclusion

Guidelines for Physical Restraint and Seclusion

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Purpose

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) believes that social and emotional skills form a foundation for young people's success not just in school, but also as healthy and caring adults, productive workers, and engaged citizens. Positive student behavior in school is directly connected to increased motivation, efficient academic learning, high achievement, diminished disciplinary action, and increased graduation rates. Further, all students and school personnel in DCPS have the right to work and learn in a safe school environment. Implementation of a school-wide systematic approach to positive student behavior will improve overall school safety, will minimize the need for the use of restraint and seclusion, and ensure that it is only used as a last resort in an emergency situation. The purpose of these policies is to ensure that all students and staff are safe in school, and that students who may have a behavior crisis are free from inappropriate use of physical restraint or seclusion. These guidelines apply to all students in DCPS.

Positive Behavior Support

DCPS will implement school-wide programs and services that teach, reinforce and monitor positive behavior to create a school climate that is highly conducive to learning.

1. Each school will establish practices that have the goal of making the school climate and environment welcoming and supportive of learning, and will promote the recognition and reinforcement of appropriate student behavior.

2. It is expected that school staff will implement more intensive interventions if students are not responsive to the school's primary plan. These secondary and tertiary interventions can include social skills groups or the Behavior Education Program (BEP; Crone, Horner, & Hawken, 2004) for multiple individuals. Examples of secondary interventions include: small group instruction in social skills (e.g., Gresham, Van, & Cook, 2006), check-in and check-out (CICO) procedures (e.g., Fairbanks, Sugai, Guardino, & Lathrop, 2007), self-monitoring (Lane, Menzies, Bruhn & Crnabori, 2010) and literacy training (e.g., Lane, Wehby, et al., 2002). Tertiary-level support is often highly individualized (and resource intensive). Tertiary academic interventions are designed to address an individual's specific learning deficits (Hawken, Vincent & Schumann, 2008). Tertiary behavioral interventions are often in the form of a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) and other individualized interventions.

3. When personnel in any school for which DCPS is the LEA recognizes student behavior that is likely to lead to behavior that will be dangerous to the point of causing injury to someone, DCPS will immediately take steps to protect all concerned and will conduct a functional behavior assessment and develop a positive behavior plan including a plan for adjusting the antecedents and teaching replacement behaviors.
 - i. The plan will be developed in cooperation with the parent or guardian.
 - ii. This will occur whether or not the student is eligible for special education.

Definitions

A. **Chemical Restraint.** Use of medications to control behavior.

B. **Crisis Intervention Training.** Training provided to school personal who deal with aggressive, violent or out of control behavioral crises. It includes specific techniques for physical restraint and seclusion. The curriculum is evidenced based and aligns with best practices in behavior and crisis management. Training should include detection and signs of medical distress. The training results in certification by the program.

C. **De-Escalation.** Causing a situation to become more controlled, calm and less dangerous, thus lessening the risk for injury to someone.

D. **Functional Behavioral Assessment.** The assessment process includes the gathering information that can be used to hypothesize about the function of an individual's behavior. The analysis provides the information necessary to develop a behavior intervention plan.

E. **Mechanical restraint.** Use of any device or object (e.g., tape, ropes, straps, weights, weighted blankets) to limit an individual's body movement to prevent or manage out-of-control behavior.

F. **Physical restraint.** Any method of one or more persons restricting another person's freedom of movement, physical activity or normal access to his/her body.

G. **Prone physical restraint.** The individual is being held face down.

H. **Seclusion.** Individual is placed in a location where he or she is alone, and where he or she is physically prevented from leaving that environment.

I. **SEDS.** Special Education Data System. Also known as Easy IEP. SEDS is a comprehensive data system designed to support seamless service delivery for children with disabilities. The Office of the State Superintendent of Education for the District of Columbia (OSSE) has mandated SEDS use by all local education agencies for Individualized Education Program development, management, and historical record keeping.

J. **Supine physical restraint.** When an individual is face up on their back on a horizontal surface such as the floor.

Conditions for Appropriate Restraint and Seclusion

DCPS provides training for all staff on verbal de-escalation procedures, the dangers of restraint and seclusion, and procedures for contacting fully trained and certified staff when behavioral crises occur. Each school will maintain a core group of appropriate personnel trained and “certified” in crisis intervention techniques, which will include the use of physical restraint and seclusion procedures.

The District of Columbia Public School authorizes staff members to use physical restraints and seclusion in limited situations. The restraints and the use of seclusion may only be used under the circumstances specified in these policies. Physical restraint is appropriate only when a student is displaying physical behavior that presents imminent risk of injury to the student or others.

Conditions for the use of physical restraint

1. The student is demonstrating the intent and the ability to cause injury within a matter of minutes.
2. Physical restraint should only be employed as a last resort after other methods of de-escalating a dangerous situation have been attempted without success.
3. Physical restraint should only be employed by staff members who have received specific district approved crisis intervention training in the use of physical restraint procedures. In an exigent or unforeseen emergency an untrained staff member can intervene. If an untrained staff member intervened then they must complete the training within 90 days.
4. A physical restraint of a student should be conducted in a manner consistent with the techniques prescribed in a DCPS approved crisis intervention training program.
5. Physical restraint should last only as long as the risk of imminent injury is present. Typically, physical restraint should not last longer than a few minutes.
6. The degree of physical restriction employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident, the size and condition of the student, and the potential risks for injury to the student.
7. Mechanical and chemical restraints are not authorized in school.
8. Prone or Supine forms of physical restraint are not authorized.
9. For the purposes of this policy physical restraint does not include:
 - a. Taking away a weapon (such as a knife or gun)
 - b. Breaking up a fight
 - c. Physical prompts provided in the course of instruction.

Guidelines for Physical Restraint and Seclusion

10. The use of physical restraint should not be included in a student's IEP, in the Behavior Intervention Plan, or other educational planning documents.

When Physical Restraint Procedures Should Not Be Employed:

1. Physical restraint is not appropriate without imminent risk of injury to someone.
2. A verbal threat or verbally aggressive behavior does not itself indicate a substantial risk of injury, and should not result in restraint.
3. Destruction or damage to property does not constitute a risk of imminent injury unless in so doing a risk of injury to the student or others is created.
4. When known medical or physical condition of the student would make the restraint procedures dangerous for that student (e.g. individuals with heart or circulatory conditions, asthma, etc.) they should not be employed.
5. Restraint should never be used as a punishment or to force compliance with staff commands.

Conditions for Appropriate Use of Seclusion

1. Seclusion is appropriate only when a student is displaying physical behavior that presents imminent risk of injury to the student or others.
2. Seclusion should only be employed as a last resort after other methods of de-escalating a dangerous situation have been attempted without success.
3. Seclusion should only be used as long as the threat of imminent injury is present and should be discontinued when the student is no longer a threat to others.
4. Staff must maintain continuous visual and auditory monitoring of the student.
5. The use of a mechanical locked door is prohibited. The staff member can hold a door closed. When the staff member is not holding the door closed it will automatically release.
6. Seclusion should only be employed by staff members who have received specific DCPS approved crisis intervention training in the use of seclusion procedures.
7. Seclusion can only be used when the student can be safely transported to the seclusion environment by trained staff members using appropriate techniques based on crisis intervention training.
8. The use of seclusion should not be included in a student's IEP or Behavior Intervention Plan.

Guidelines for Physical Restraint and Seclusion

9. All seclusion environments should be inspected annually by fire or safety inspectors and for adherence to regulations affecting school safety codes. Seclusion environments should:
 - a. Be of reasonable size permitting individuals to lie or sit down.
 - b. Have adequate ventilation including heat and air conditioning as appropriate.
 - c. Have adequate lighting.
 - d. Be free of any potential or predictable safety hazards such as electrical outlets, equipment, and breakable glass.
 - e. Permit direct continuous visual and auditory monitoring of the student.
 - f. Meet current fire and safety codes.

Reporting and Documentation Requirements

Procedures for documenting and reporting the use of physical restraint or seclusion

A. Immediately after the use of physical restraint and/or seclusion, a staff member not involved with the incident shall examine the student to ascertain if any injury has been sustained during the restraint or seclusion.

B. The building administrator or designee will verbally notify the parent/guardian as soon as possible that the student was subjected to restraint or seclusion, how long it lasted, where it occurred, and who was involved. This notification must occur immediately following the restraint or seclusion, but no later than one hour following the initiation of the restraint or seclusion and must be documented in the student's behavior tracking system (STARS). If the student is identified or suspected of having a disability, then this should also be documented in the SEDS communication log.

C. The individuals involved with the incident shall complete a written report as soon as possible after the incident. All use of physical restraint or seclusion procedures must be documented on an incident report within one school day.

1. The building administrator or designee will send a copy of the written report to the parent or guardian within one school day following the use of restraint or seclusion, and will place a copy of the report in the student's record.

2. A copy of the incident report must be sent to the Instructional Superintendent or designee.

D. Within five days of the incident all of the individuals who were involved along with other team members should meet. For individuals who are not eligible for special education services, a student support team (SST) meeting must be held. For individuals who are eligible for special education services or may be suspected of having a disability, the IEP team must meet to discuss the restraint or seclusion and how to prevent it in the future. All meetings must be documented through the use of sign in sheets and meeting notes. Meeting sign in sheets and notes must be documented in the SST tracker and/or SEDS.

References

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- Fairbanks, S., Sugai, G., Guardino, D., & Lathrop, M. (2007). Response to intervention: examining classroom behavior support in second grade. *Exceptional Children, 73*, 288-310.
- Gresham, F. M., Van, M. B., & Cook, C. R. (2006). Social skills training for teaching replacement behaviors: remediating acquisition deficits in at risk students. *Behavioral Disorders, 32*, 363-377.
- Hawken, L. S., Vincent, C. G., & Schumann, J. (2008). Response to intervention for social behavior: Challenges and opportunities. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 16*, 213-225.
- Lane, K. L., Menzies, H. M., Bruhn, A. L., & Crnobori, M. (2010). *Managing challenging behaviors in schools: Research based strategies that work*. New York: The Guilford Press.
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