

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 312

RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION

BACKGROUND

Student access to an effective educational program is a basic right of each student in British Columbia's K-12 education system. Positive and least restrictive approaches in the provision of student supports are considered best practice. Respect for student rights, maintaining student dignity and the safety of all involved is paramount.

Every effort shall be made to structure learning environments and to provide learning supports that make physical restraint and seclusion unnecessary. It is expected that school personnel implement effective supports and interventions to prevent and de-escalate potentially unsafe situations.

There is no evidence that using restraint or seclusion is effective in reducing the occurrence of the problematic behaviours that frequently precipitate their use. There is a growing body of knowledge that shows that continued use can cause harm.

DEFINITIONS

Physical restraint: a method of restricting another person's freedom of movement or mobility to secure and maintain the safety of the person or others. The following do not constitute physical restraint:

- physical escort IE: temporary touching or holding of a student's hand, wrist, arm, shoulder or back for the purpose of accompanying and inducing a student to walk to a safe location
- physical guidance IE: prompting of a student when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, or providing comfort

Seclusion: the involuntary confinement of a person, alone in a room, enclosure, or space which the person is physically prevented from leaving. The following do not constitute seclusion:

- behaviour strategies, such as 'time out', used for social reinforcement as part of a behaviour plan
- when a student has personally requested to be in a different/secluded location/space

PROCEDURES

1. Physical Restraint or Seclusion shall only be used as a last-resort intervention if the following conditions are in place:
 - 1.1. only by school personnel who have current School District 83 provided Non-violent Crisis Intervention (NCI) certification, which typically includes Certified Education Assistants (CEAs), Learning Resource Teachers (LRTs), Inclusion Resource Teachers (IRTs), and School Principals and Vice Principals (PVPs);
 - 1.2. in emergency situations where the behaviour of a student poses an imminent danger of physical harm to self or others;
 - 1.3. where less restrictive interventions have been ineffective in ending the imminent danger of physical harm;
 - 1.4. on occasions when more moderate control measures have not been used but a student is in the process of causing significant harm to self or to another person; and

- 1.5. discontinued once the imminent danger of physical self-harm or harm to others has dissipated.
2. If Physical Restraint is required, the following procedures shall be followed:
 - 2.1. with a verbal warning in accordance with NCI verbal de-escalation guidelines/strategies
IE: the reason for the restraint shall be provided and the necessary behaviour for ending the restraint given in a way the student can understand;
 - 2.2. with the least physical force necessary to protect the student and staff member;
 - 2.3. with the least disturbance to others;
 - 2.4. in the presence of another adult when possible;
 - 2.5. with the assistance of (an)other NCI-trained adult(s) as needed;
 - 2.6. conducted in a manner that does not cause harm to the student:
 - 2.6.1. never restrict the breathing of the student;
 - 2.6.2. never place the student in a prone position (i.e. facing down or on their stomach) or supine position (i.e. on their back, face up); and
 - 2.6.3. never use mechanical devices, including the wall or furniture, to assist with student restraint.
3. If Seclusion is required, the following procedures shall be followed:
 - 3.1. in a space that will not jeopardize the student's health and safety;
 - 3.2. continuously visually observed by an adult who is physically present throughout the period of seclusion; and
 - 3.3. following all health and safety policies or regulations, including WorkSafe BC regulations.
4. All instances of Physical Restraint and Seclusion shall be reported as soon as possible after an incident, and always prior to the end of the school day on which the incident occurred:
 - 4.1. to the Principal by the school personnel involved;
 - 4.2. to the parents/guardians by the Principal or Vice Principal;
 - 4.3. to the Student Support Services Department by the Principal or Vice Principal; and
 - 4.4. to the Superintendent or designate by the Student Support Services Department.
5. All instances of Physical Restraint and Seclusion shall be documented:
 - 5.1. using the Restraint and Seclusion Incident Report Form, which shall be e-filed according to SD83 Practices and submitted through the Workflow Team to the Student Support Services Department for review;
 - 5.2. every instance shall include:
 - 5.2.1. time and location;

- References: Restraint Seclusion Incident Report Form e-file code (in development)
Post-Restraint and Seclusion Debrief Meeting Template (in development)
British Columbia Ministry of Education. (2015). *Provincial guidelines: Physical restraint and seclusion in school settings*. Government of British Columbia. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/>
School District 27 (Cariboo-Chilcotin). (2021). *AP 550: Restraint and seclusion policy*.

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