

USE OF SECLUSIONS AND RESTRAINTS

The Lafayette School Corporation Board of School Trustees believes that maintaining an orderly, safe environment is conducive to learning and is an appropriate expectation of all school employees within the school corporation. The Board recognizes that there are times when it becomes necessary for employees to use reasonable restraint and/or seclusion to protect a student from causing harm to themselves or to others.

Seclusion and physical restraint as defined in this policy shall be used only as means of maintaining a safe and orderly environment for learning and only to the extent necessary to preserve the safety of students and others. Behavior interventions, behavior supports, de-escalation methods shall be used regularly to minimize the need for use of restraints and seclusions. School employees must make every effort to prevent the need for use of restraints and seclusion on students. The use of these methods must be done before the use of restraints and seclusions.

Use of seclusion or physical restraint may also be a component of a behavioral intervention plan (BIP) and/or an Individualized Education Program (IEP). If such is the case, the terms of the BIP or the IEP will control the use of these measures.

Seclusion or physical restraint shall never be used as a form of punishment, as a disciplinary measure, as a means of coercion or retaliation, or as a convenience.

The superintendent or designee shall determine the appropriate training program of physical restraint and seclusion to be used in the corporation. The training program must include behavioral support, prevention, de-escalation and crisis response techniques. Training shall be done on an annual basis and given to the appropriate employees in each building as determined by the superintendent and the building principal.

Except in the case of an emergency, only school employees who are current in the corporation-designated training program may implement physical restraints or seclusion with a student. An individual who applies physical restraint shall use only techniques in which he or she has received such training within the preceding two years, as indicated by written evidence of participation.

Physical restraints and/or seclusions should be used only when a student's behavior poses an imminent threat of serious physical harm to the student or to other persons present or damage to school property.

Seclusion

“Seclusion” means the confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving.

Any area used for seclusion shall be subject to the following requirements:

1. Have the same ceiling height as the surrounding room or rooms and be large enough to accommodate not only the student being isolated but also any other individual who is required to accompany that student;
2. Be constructed of materials or objects that cannot be used by students to harm themselves or others, and be designed so that students cannot climb up the walls;
3. Be designed to allow continuous visual monitoring of and communication with the student; and
4. Comply with all applicable health and safety requirements.

Any device that requires the use of a key or special code on any exit from the time out room or enclosure is prohibited.

An adult must supervise the student while confined and must be able to see the student at all times.

A student shall not be kept in seclusion for more than 30 minutes after he or she ceases presenting the specific behavior for which seclusion was imposed or any other behavior for which the was deemed an appropriate intervention.

If a student is placed in seclusion pursuant to a BIP or IEP, any time limitations identified in the BIP or IEP will control.

Physical Restraint

“Physical restraint” physical contact between a school employee and a student in which the student unwillingly participates and involves the use of a manual hold to restrict freedom of movement of all or part of a student’s body or to restrict normal access to the student’s body.

Physical restraint should be employed only when:

1. The student poses a physical risk to himself, herself, or others;
2. There is no medical contraindication to its use;
3. Other less restrictive interventions were used and were ineffective; and
4. The employee using the restraint has been trained in its safe application.

Mechanical or chemical restraints are not authorized to be used in school.

The degree of restriction employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident, size and condition of the student, and the potential risks for injury to the student. Only staff members who have completed the designated training program may place a student in a physical restraint.

Students shall not be subjected to physical restraint for using profanity or other verbal displays of disrespect for themselves or others.

A verbal threat shall not be considered as constituting a physical danger unless a student also demonstrates a means of or intent to carry out the threat.

Any application of physical restraint shall take into consideration the safety and security of the student. Further, physical restraint shall not rely upon pain as an intentional method of control.

In determining whether a student who is being physically restrained should be removed from the area where such restraint was initiated, the supervising employee shall consider the potential for injury to the student, the educational and emotional well-being of other students in the vicinity, and if applicable, any requirements pursuant to a BIP or an IEP.

If physical restraint is imposed upon a student whose primary mode of communication is sign language, the student shall be permitted to have his or her hands free of restraint for brief periods, unless the supervising employee determines that such freedom appears likely to result in harm to the student or to others.

A student shall be released from physical restraint immediately upon a determination by the supervising employee administering the restraint that the student is no longer in imminent danger of causing physical harm to themselves or to others.

Reporting and Reviewing of Incidents

Any school employee using restraint and/or seclusion shall report such to the building principal, their supervisor, or other designated administrator. A written report of each incident shall be completed by the employee who used such techniques. The written report is required to contain information required by the corporation's restraint and seclusion plan. Parents/Guardians of the student involved in the restraint or seclusion incident shall receive a copy of the written report of the incident.

The parent or guardian must be notified of the use of the physical restraint and/or with their student within 24 hours of the incident.

An annual review of the use of physical restraint and seclusion including a review of all individual corporation cases involving the use of physical restraint and seclusions shall be completed and documented to ensure compliance with the school's policy and procedures.

When reviewing individual cases, it is recommended that when a student has experienced three instances of seclusion or physical restraint, the school personnel who initiated, monitored, and/or supervised the incidents shall review the effectiveness of the procedure(s) used and prepare an individual behavior plan for the student that provides either for continued use of these interventions or for the use of other specified interventions. The plan shall be placed into the student's student record. The review shall also consider the student's potential need for an alternative program or for a referral for a special education evaluation, if the student does not have an IEP.

Training Requirements

Physical restraint should be applied only by individuals who have received systematic training through the corporation-designated program and who have obtained written evidence of successful

participation in such training. Training will be valid for a 2-year period at which time the individual needs to go through renewal training.

Training with respect to physical restraint should include but need not be limited to the following:

1. Appropriate procedures for preventing the need for physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, and the use of alternatives to restraint;
2. A description and identification of dangerous behaviors on the part of students that may indicate the need for physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted, including compliance with any BIP or IEP requirements;
3. The simulated experience of administering and receiving a variety of physical restraint techniques, ranging from minimal physical involvement to very controlling interventions;
4. Instruction regarding the effects of physical restraint on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance;
5. Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints; and
6. Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint.

Nothing in this policy should be construed to limit the rights and abilities of school employees to keep order and administer necessary discipline in their classrooms and on school grounds as set out in state law and school board policy.

All complaints regarding the use of physical restraints and seclusions will be investigated according to the provisions of board policy on public complaints.

The superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations to carry out the requirements set forth in this policy and any other requirements established by law.

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