

SD42 POLICY: 9430

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

PHILOSOPHY

The Board of Education (“Board”) is committed to maintaining safe, orderly, and caring school environments for all of its students and employees. It emphasizes prevention and positive behaviour supports, prioritizing actions that avoid the use of physical restraint or seclusion.

The Board values student rights, student dignity and safety of all involved as paramount priorities, recognizing that emergency physical restraint or seclusion may be necessary when a student presents imminent danger to themselves or others.

AUTHORITY

The Board authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to establish procedures to guide the implementation of this policy pursuant to the Ministry of Education Provincial Guidelines – Physical Restraint and Seclusion in School Settings.

DEFINITIONS

1. **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’ — temporary touching or holding 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 while teaching a skill, redirecting attention, or providing comfort also does not constitute physical restraint.

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

Behaviour strategies, such as “time out”, used for social reinforcement as part of a behaviour plan, are not considered seclusion.

The term seclusion does not apply when a student voluntarily requests to be in a separate or secluded space.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Physical restraint and seclusion procedures are emergency, not treatment, procedures and are used *only* in exceptional circumstances when a student is in imminent danger of causing harm to self or others.
2. All school staff are provided the opportunity to participate in training on positive behaviour interventions and supports and de-escalation techniques.
3. Parents/Guardians, and when appropriate, students, are offered opportunities to be advised of and/or consulted in the development of positive behaviour supports and interventions, behaviour plans, and emergency or safety plans.
4. Every instance of physical restraint and/or seclusion is documented.
5. Prevention and intervention strategies are reviewed and revised in situations where: repeated use of physical restraint and seclusion for an individual student has occurred;

multiple uses of physical restraint and seclusion have occurred within the same classroom; or physical restraint and seclusion has repeatedly been used by an individual.

6. Incidents of physical restraint and seclusion will be reported to the school principal and forwarded to the Superintendent of Schools or designate.
7. The School District will review this policy on a regular basis to ensure alignment with current research, best practices, and guidelines from the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

APPROVED: May 18, 2016

UPDATED: January 15, 2025