

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 53 (Okanagan Similkameen)

POLICY

No. F-15

Adopted: February 27, 2019
Reviewed: February 28, 2024

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION

Preamble:

The Board of Education expects safe, caring and orderly learning environments with positive and least restrictive approaches in the provision of student supports.

Policy:

The Board acknowledges that in exceptional circumstances, where the behaviour of a student poses imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others, including school personnel, and where less restrictive interventions have been ineffective in ending imminent danger of serious physical harm, physical restraint or temporary seclusion may be required.

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 53 (Okanagan Similkameen)

REGULATIONS

No. F-15

Adopted: April 10, 2019
Reviewed: February 28, 2024

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION

Definitions:

The following terms shall guide practice in relation to its use:

Physical Guidance involves gently guiding or physically leading a student to support the teaching of a skill, redirecting attention and/or appropriately providing comfort. It does not constitute physical restraint.

Physical Escort/Assistance involves temporary, physical contact that may include gently holding a student's hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back, to accompany a student to a safe location. Physical escort/assistance may be used to support a student who is of elementary age and is exhibiting anxiety at the point of separation from the parent(s)/guardian(s) at school. In these instances, the use of physical escort/assistance shall be planned in advance in consultation with the child's parent(s)/guardian(s).

Physical Restraint involves restricting a student's freedom of movement or mobility. It shall only be used:

- to ensure the safe evacuation of students and/or school personnel from a location if a student is interfering or blocking access to the only available exit;
- if a student is in the process of actively pursuing others in a manner that constitutes an imminent risk of harm to other students and/or school personnel, and a safe barrier or perimeter cannot be established between the student and others who are at risk;
- if a student is engaging in self-injurious behaviour that constitutes an imminent risk of harm to self.

Seclusion is the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room, enclosure or space in which the student is physically prevented from leaving. It shall only be used:

- to safely secure a location, when a student has escalated to a point that constitutes an imminent risk of harm to self or others that serves as a barrier or perimeter to ensure the safety of others who have been evacuated from the area.

Seclusion is **not** the use of a separate, pre-designated location that a student's support team has identified as a supportive space to assist with self-regulation, where the student's participation is voluntary. In such instances, a positive behaviour support plan shall be in place outlining the use of the pre-designated space and the strategies being used to encourage a student to self-select this location to support self-regulation. Involuntary seclusion is not a practice supported by the District.

Procedures:

The following procedures shall be implemented without unnecessary delay subsequent to a school principal identifying a student as having difficulty self-regulating physically aggressive behaviour in a manner that constitutes an imminent risk of harm or injury to self or others:

- The school principal shall notify the Director of Student Support Services and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student identified if restraint has been utilized. The school team will debrief the events and actions.
- A Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA) shall be conducted or revised by trained school and/or district personnel.
- The results of the FBA will be used to develop and implement a Positive Behaviour Support Plan (PBSP); the PBSP will be focused on employing preventative measures that minimize the need for school personnel to use physical restraint and/or seclusion; classroom-wide, universal approaches to promoting self-regulation shall be considered.
- The PBSP shall be developed in consultation with the parent(s)/guardian(s). Consultation will include the home team and medical team (if involved and available).
- A Risk Reduction Assessment (RRA) shall be developed and implemented as necessary to ensure the safety of the school personnel who are working with the student; environmental preparations shall be proactively implemented to support the PBSP and RRA.
 - Both the PBSP and RRA shall ensure that the initial response to instances of physically aggressive behaviour shall be to evacuate the immediate surroundings and establish a safe barrier or perimeter from which to safely observe the student.
- The use of physical restraint shall only occur:
 - to ensure the safe evacuation of students and/or school personnel from a location if a student is interfering or blocking access to the only available exit;

- if a student is in the process of actively pursuing others in a manner that constitutes an imminent risk of harm to other students and/or school personnel, and a safe barrier or perimeter cannot be established between the student and others who are at risk;
 - if a student is engaging in self-injurious behaviour that constitutes an imminent risk of harm to self.
- The use of involuntary seclusion shall only occur in the following exceptional circumstance:
 - to safely secure a location when a student has escalated to a point that constitutes an imminent risk of harm to self or others, that serves as a barrier or perimeter to ensure the safety of others who have been evacuated from the area; School personnel shall observe at a safe distance to monitor the student's safety and well-being.
 - Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be contacted on any occasion when physical restraint and/or seclusion is occurring and be afforded the opportunity to support the situation in a manner that will increase the student's ability to self-regulate.
 - Site specific training and resources shall be made available without unnecessary delay to support the implementation and sustainability of a PBSP and RRA for students who have difficulty self-regulating physically aggressive behaviour.