

SECLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The purpose of this policy is to define the circumstances under which technology center personnel may use seclusion for students with disabilities in compliance those guidelines set forth in the SDE's Special Education Handbook ("Seclusion Guidelines").

For purposes of this policy, the term "seclusion" means the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. This includes situations where a door is locked as well as where the door is blocked by other objects or held by staff. Any time a student is involuntarily alone in a room and prevented from leaving should be considered seclusion regardless of the intended purpose of the name applied to this procedure or the name of the place where the student is secluded. Seclusion does not include timeout, which is a behavior management technique implemented for the purpose of calming and redirecting.

Seclusion should never be used for the purposes of discipline or as a punishment, to force compliance, as a convenience for staff or to prevent property damage. Seclusion should not be used to manage behavior.

Technology center personnel may use seclusion for students with disabilities only under the emergency circumstances identified in the Seclusion Guidelines and only if the elements identified by the Seclusion Guidelines exist.

School personnel may only utilize seclusion procedures if they have training in:

1. Conflict de-escalation;
2. The crisis cycle and interventions at each stage;
3. Possible effects of seclusion;
4. Appropriate use of seclusion rooms (including escorting and placing a student in a seclusion room);
5. Hold current CPR and First Aid certification; and
6. Monitoring the wellbeing of students.

Seclusion training should be recurrent and with annual updates and result in some form of certification or credential.

Any student placed in seclusion based on the criteria in the Seclusion Guidelines must be continuously monitored visually and aurally by a school employee. Additionally, (a) the student must be allowed to go to the bathroom upon request, (b) the student must be permitted water to drink upon request, and (c) immediate action must be taken if the student displays any signs of medical distress.

A “seclusion room” is defined as a room or other confined area in which a student with a disability is placed in isolation from other persons from which the student is prevented from leaving. A seclusion room must meet the following criteria:

1. It must be of adequate size permitting the student to sit or lie down;
2. It must have adequate lighting;
3. It must be equipped with heating, cooling, ventilation, and lighting systems that are comparable to those in other rooms throughout the building where the seclusion room is located;
4. It must be free of any objects that pose a potential risk of harm to the student with a disability;
5. If equipped with a door that locks, the lock must automatically disengage in case of an emergency, such as fire or severe weather; and
6. It must allow continuous visual and auditory monitoring of the student with a disability.

The use of seclusion for students with disabilities shall also be subject to any written procedures utilized by the district to further explain the responsibilities of technology center staff members.