

Pulaski County School System Guidelines and Best Practices for Restraint Procedures

Restraint procedures should only be used when the physical safety of the student or others is in immediate danger. Restraint procedures are **emergency** procedures and should be used only in emergency circumstances. Restraints should be not be used as a punishment, to address compliance, or as a substitute for appropriate educational support.

Use of restraint in emergency situations is appropriate when:

- The student's actions pose a clear, present, and imminent danger to themselves or others;
- Less restrictive measures have not effectively de-escalated the risk of injury;
- The restraint lasts only as long as necessary to resolve the risk of injury; and
- The degree of force applied does not exceed what is necessary to protect the student or others from injury.

Training and Oversight

- All school staff should receive an overview of the appropriate use of restraint including the identification of staff who has received advanced training.
- Schools should be staffed with sufficient number of personnel who have successfully completed an appropriate training program in de-escalation and in the safe use of restraints.
- Restraints should be conducted by persons who are trained in the use of restraint procedures unless unavoidable emergency circumstances do not allow a trained person to be immediately available.
- Each school should have a trained administrator or designee to serve as a school-wide resource to supervise proper procedure and documentation of restraints.
- Restraints should not be conducted without at least one additional staff member present and in line of sight. This enhances safety for the student restrained, the staff conducting the restraint, and other students.
- Training should result in a district approved certification or credential for individual staff members, recurrent with annual updates, and appropriate to the age and developmental level of students.
- Training should include content and skill development on prevention, conflict management, evidence-based positive behavior supports, de-escalation techniques, and physical restraint prevention.
- Training should include information about the effects of medications and medical conditions and how restraint procedures might affect the physical well-being of the student during restraint procedures.
- Training should include multiple methods for monitoring a student's well-being during a restraint.

Prohibited/Allowable Restraint and Redirection

- Prone restraints (with the student face down on his/her stomach) or supine restraints (with the student face up on the back) or any maneuver that places excessive pressure or weight on the chest, lungs, sternum, diaphragm, back, neck, or throat should never be used.
- No restraint should be administered in such a manner that prevents a student from breathing or speaking.
- The use of mechanical or chemical restraints is prohibited. This does not prohibit the use of devices for specific therapeutic or safety purposes such as medical immobilizations, adaptive devices, mechanical supports, or vehicle safety restraints.
- Physical restraint does not include holding of a student for a short period of time by a staff person for the protection of the student or others; brief holding of a student for the purpose of calming or comforting the student; minimal physical contact for the purpose of safely escorting a student from one area to another; intervening in fights; or minimal physical contact for the purpose of assisting the student in completing a task, preventing a potentially harmful action (e.g., running into the street), teaching a skill, or redirecting attention.

- Nothing in this guidance, including training guidelines, would preclude a teacher or other staff member from using reasonable force to protect themselves, students, or other persons from assault or imminent, serious physical harm. These guidelines shall not create a barrier to maintaining a safe school environment

Documentation and Follow-up

- District report forms following a restraint incident must be filled out and turned in to the principal the day of the incident. Also, a **copy must be sent to Central Office 1) District Safe Schools Coordinator** who will forward to Special Education to upload to form to Infinite Campus.
- Included in the documentation is the names of those staff members involved; efforts made to deescalate the situation; description of the incident; type and duration of the restraint used; injuries that occurred, if any; date on which parental notification took place; and any other circumstances surrounding the use of restraint.
- Parents or guardians should be informed as soon as possible after each and every instance of the use of restraint and a copy of documentation placed in the student's file.
- Due to the risk of potential delayed effects, the well-being of the student should be monitored for the remainder of the school day. Similarly, the well-being of the person(s) who conducted the restraint should be monitored.
- A staff de-briefing should occur as soon as possible after every incident of the use of restraint. This de-briefing should include all of the participants in a restraint situation, an administrator and/or another staff member who has expertise in the use of behavioral techniques and who was not involved in the restraint procedure.
- The debriefing should focus on antecedent conditions that preceded the behavior of concern, alternate interventions that were used and why they were unsuccessful in de-escalating the behavior, how the situation could have been handled in such a way to prevent the need for the use of restraint, and how a similar event could be avoided in the future.
- A debriefing with the student should occur separately.

Safety Plans and Positive Behavioral Supports

- School wide or general safety plans or policies should identify that physical restraint may be employed in emergency situations and disseminated to parents of all students via the school handbook, emergency plan, or other mechanisms for informing parents and the public about school policies. Any school which employs physical restraint procedures should have a school-wide positive behavior support plan/program which includes the use of positive behavior interventions and de-escalation techniques, training of school personnel on how to implement positive behavior supports, and documentation procedures.
- Repeated use of physical restraints for any one student or multiple restraints across different students should be viewed as the likelihood that supports, educational methodologies, and other interventions for students should be modified as well as an overall school evaluation of its behavior support plans and programs serving students with behavioral needs should be conducted.
- For students in special education, multiple restraints should trigger an IEP team review of the individual student's programs and placement including functional behavioral assessments followed by behavioral intervention plans which incorporate appropriate positive behavioral interventions including instruction in appropriate behavior and strategies to de-escalate their behavior.
- The use of restraint is an emergency procedure and should not normally be incorporated into the student's Individual Educational Program (IEP) or behavior intervention plan and should not be used as a behavior change strategy.