

Title: Corporal Punishment and Physical Restraint

Corporal punishment is defined as the intentional physical punishment of a student and is prohibited. It includes the use of unreasonable or unnecessary physical force or physical contact made with the intent to harm or cause pain. No employee is prohibited from:

- Using reasonable and necessary force, including physical restraint, not designed or intended to cause pain, in order to accomplish any of the following:
 1. To quell a disturbance or prevent an act that threatens physical harm to any person.
 2. To obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object within a student's control.
 3. For the purposes of self-defense or defense of others as provided for in Iowa Code section 704.3.
 4. For the protection of property as provided for in Iowa Code section 704.4 or 704.5.
 5. To remove a disruptive student from class or any area of school premises or from school sponsored activities off school premises.
 6. To protect a student from the self-infliction of harm.
 7. To protect the safety of others.
- Using incidental, minor, or reasonable physical contact to maintain order and control.

Reasonable physical force should be commensurate with the circumstances of the situation. The following factors should be considered in using reasonable physical force for the reasons stated in this policy:

1. The size and physical, mental, and psychological condition of the student;
2. The nature of the student's behavior or misconduct provoking the use of physical force;
3. The instrumentality used in applying the physical force;
4. The extent and nature of resulting injury to the student, if any, and
5. The motivation of the school employee using physical force.

Physical restraint is defined as the application of physical force that reduces or restricts a student's ability to move his or her arms, legs, body or head freely. This does not include

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temporary holding to assist an individual with daily living activities or guiding during an educational task.

Physical confinement is defined as confinement of a student in a seclusion room from which the student is physically or verbally prevented, or prohibited, from leaving. "Seclusion Room" means a room, area or enclosure, whether in or out of a classroom, used for seclusion. Preventing a student from leaving a classroom or school building, or in an office where a school employee is present, shall not be considered seclusion. Seclusion does not include time out at a desk, in a corner, at the back of the class, in the hall, before or after school detention, or typical in-school suspension.

Staff shall be trained periodically regarding the definition of corporal punishment, reasonable physical force, physical restraint and physical confinement as outlined in Chapter 103 of the Iowa Administrative Code. These individuals must also be provided a copy of Chapter 103 and any other policies, procedures, or training materials. Training shall include positive behavior interventions and support; evidence-based approaches to student discipline and classroom management, research-based alternatives to seclusion and restraint; crisis prevention, crisis intervention and crisis de-escalation techniques; student and staff debriefing requirements; safe effective use of restraint, confinement and detention. Individual employees must be trained in a district-approved program prior to use of restraint or confinement.

In any incident of restraint or confinement, an attempt to contact the parent(s)/guardians(s) must be documented no later than one (1) hour after the conclusion of the seclusion or restraint, or by the end of the day, whichever occurs first. Documentation shall be maintained regarding name of student, the name and job title of the employee(s) who implemented or were involved, including the date of each of the employee(s)' last completed 103 and CPI training, where applicable; date, start and end times; student action before, during and after; employee action before, during and after; a description of the less-restrictive means attempted to avoid restraint or seclusion, a description of any injuries to the student, others or property damage, a description of future approaches to the student's behavior, including any consequences or disciplinary actions and the time and manner the parent(s)/guardian(s) were notified. If an administrator approves continued restraint or seclusion after 15 minutes, the name of the administrator and the rationale must be included in the documentation.

If the school is non-compliant to the 103 rules, the reason(s) must be documented and shared with the parent(s)/guardian(s). Reasons for not receiving administrator approval for

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extended restraint or seclusion, parent notification rules not followed, reason for restraint or seclusion lasting longer than necessary, seclusion into a non-designated room, or breaks not provided to the student must be described. Required documentation must be provided to the parent within three (3) school days. The contents must invite the parent(s)/guardian(s) to any debriefing meeting, if held, including the date, time and place of the meeting and the employees or individuals who will attend. This meeting must be separate from any IEP meeting that would be scheduled as a result of the incident.

A debriefing meeting must be held after any first restraint or seclusion with the student, and every seventh (7th) incident thereafter during the school year; whenever personal injury occurs to the student or staff member; whenever a reasonable educator would determine a debriefing session is necessary; whenever suggested by a student's IEP team; whenever a meeting is agreed upon by the parent and school officials.

The debriefing meetings must include the parent and/or a representative, if they choose to attend, and the student (by parent permission). The debriefing must include the employee(s) who administered the physical restraint or seclusion; an administrator or employee who was not involved in the incident; any administrator who approved continuation of the restraint or seclusion past fifteen (15) minutes; other personnel designated by the school; and if indicated, an expert in behavioral or mental health. A written agenda must include the date and location of the meeting, names and titles of participants, a copy of the 103 documentation, a review of the student's BIP/IHP/IEP/Safety Plan, and identification of patterns of behavior and proportionate response of the student and employees involved. The subsequent report should cover, in a collaborative manner, an examination and determination of what caused the incident resulting in the use of physical restraint or seclusion; how the use of restraint or seclusion could have been avoided and may be avoided in the future, and a plan for implementing positive and preventive supports to mitigate the potential for future restraints or seclusion. Mechanical restraint, prone face down restraint and any restraint restricting breathing are prohibited.

Seclusion or physical confinement must provide adequate room size (minimally 56 square feet by January 20, 2026), with sufficient light, adequate ventilation and temperature similar to the rest of the building. Length of restraint or confinement must be reasonable for the circumstances and allow for bodily functions. If confinement exceeds fifteen (15) minutes, an administrator must approve. Thereafter, an administrator must approve continued seclusion every 15 minutes, by school district practice. Adequate and continuous supervision must occur.

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Door latches must be non-locking and allow for easy exit, if pressure is released. Electronic locks are allowed if programmed to release upon fire alarm, disaster warning or electrical failure.

Any use of physical seclusion must be authorized in *a* written behavior intervention plan signed by the parent, administrator and others as appropriate. The plan(s) cannot supersede Chapter 103 rules.

Physical Restraint and Seclusion is deemed reasonable and necessary to:

1. Prevent or terminate an imminent threat of bodily injury to the student or others;
OR
2. To prevent serious damage to property of significant monetary value or significant non-monetary value, OR
3. When the student's actions seriously disrupt the learning environment or when necessary to ensure the safety of the student or others: AND
4. When less restrictive alternatives would not be effective, would not be feasible, or have failed; AND
5. When the restraint or seclusion complies with all 103 rules.

Compliance tests, used as a measure of continued seclusion or restraint, are forbidden.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent or designee to implement training as required by this administrative regulation.

Cross References:
402.3, 406, 502, 503, 511, 512

Legal References:
Iowa Code §§ 279.8, 280.21 (2009), 281
I.A.C. 103.1980 704.3, 704.4, 704.5

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