

Seclusion and Restraint Plan

A. Overview

Every effort should be made to prevent the need to restrain or place students in seclusion. However, the Bluffton-Harrison Metropolitan School District (“Corporation”) recognizes that at times it may become necessary for staff to use reasonable restraint or seclusion when other interventions are ineffective and there is an imminent risk of injury. Restraint or seclusion should not be used as a means of punishment or convenience. All behavioral interventions used must ensure the right of all students to be treated with dignity and respect.

A supportive school environment can greatly reduce, and in many cases eliminate, the need for restraint or seclusion. All staff will use prevention, positive behavior intervention and support, and conflict de-escalation strategies to eliminate or minimize the need for use of restraint or seclusion. School staff should promote and teach students appropriate behavior and should model appropriate behavior with their own conduct.

This Restraint and Seclusion Plan applies to all staff and to all students, not only students with disabilities. Any behavioral intervention, including any physical restraint or seclusion, must be consistent with any applicable Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP), or Individualized Education Program (IEP), as well as with this Plan.

B. Restraint

1) What is and is not “restraint”

“**Chemical restraint**” means the administration of a drug or medication to manage a student's behavior or restrict a student's freedom of movement that is not a standard treatment or dosage or both for the student's medical or psychiatric condition.

“**Mechanical restraint**” means the use of a mechanical device, material, or equipment attached or adjacent to a student's body *that the student cannot remove* and *that restricts the freedom of movement* of all or part of the student's body or restricts normal access to the student's body.

The term *does not include* materials or equipment that is used as authorized by a licensed physician or other qualified health-care professional. The term also *does not include* a bus harness or other safety equipment that is used to safely restrain a student during transport.

“**Physical restraint**” means physical contact between a school employee and a student in which the student *unwillingly participates*, and that involves the use of a *manual hold to restrict freedom of movement* of all or part of a student's body or to restrict normal access to the student's body.

The term *does not include*: (1) briefly holding a student without undue force in order to calm or comfort the student, or to prevent unsafe behavior, such as running into traffic or

engaging in a physical altercation; (2) physical escort; (3) physical contact intended to gently assist or prompt a student in performing a task or to guide or assist a student from one area to another; or (4) the use of a bus harness or other safety equipment that is used to safely restrain a student during transport.

2) Use of Restraint

- a. Chemical Restraints are not allowed.
- b. Mechanical Restraints are not allowed.
 - Mechanical devices, materials, or equipment authorized by a licensed physician or other qualified health-care professional (such as a physical or occupational therapist) are not “mechanical restraints” under this Plan, and *may be used by staff trained in their safe use*.
 - Transportation safety restraints are also not “mechanical restraints” subject to this Plan.
- c. Physical Restraint shall only be used when a student’s behavior presents an imminent risk of injury to the student or others.
- d. Physical Restraint shall only be used as a last resort when other less restrictive interventions are ineffective.
- e. Except in emergency situations when trained staff are not available, restraint should *only* be employed by staff members who have been trained in the safe use of restraint.
- f. Restraint shall never be used in a manner that restricts the child’s breathing or intentionally harms the child.
- g. Restraint shall only be used for a short period of time or until the imminent risk of injury has passed.

C. Seclusion

1) What is and is not “seclusion”

“**Seclusion**” means the confinement of a student *alone* in a room or area from which the student *physically is prevented from leaving*.

A “time-out” in which a student is *not alone* or is *not physically prevented from leaving* is not “seclusion” under this Plan.

2) Use of Seclusion

- a. Seclusion shall only be used when a student is displaying behavior that presents imminent risk of injury to the student or others, and the threat could be diminished if the student was in a safe environment away from other students and staff.
- b. Seclusion shall only be employed as a last resort when other less restrictive interventions are ineffective.
- c. Seclusion should only be used as long as necessary and shall be discontinued when there is no longer an imminent risk of injury.
- d. Seclusion should only be employed by staff members who have received training in the safe use of seclusion.
- e. A staff member must carefully and continually visually monitor every instance of seclusion to ensure that safety of the student and others.

3) Seclusion Environments

All seclusion environments shall:

- a. Be large enough to reasonably accommodate at least two people;
- b. Have adequate lighting and ventilation;
- c. Permit continuous visual monitoring of the student;
- d. Meet current fire and safety codes;
- e. Not be locked, except that a latching device that a staff member must continuously activate to prevent a door from opening is allowed.

D. Examination and Parental Notification

- 1) Immediately after the student has calmed down following the use of restraint or seclusion, a staff member not involved with the incident shall examine the student to determine if the student has been injured.
- 2) The building principal or designee shall attempt to verbally report every instance of restraint or seclusion to the parent/guardian of the student on the same school day of the incident. The principal or designee shall also offer the parents/guardians the opportunity to request a meeting regarding the incident.

E. Debriefing, Documenting, and Reporting

As soon as practical but always within 3 school days after an incident of restraint or seclusion, the principal or designee will debrief with at least one of the staff members and the student involved in the seclusion or restraint to discuss the procedures used and ways to avoid the need for restraint or seclusion.

An incident report that includes the following will be completed for each instance of the use of seclusion or restraint:

- a. The student's name;
 - b. A description of any relevant events and interventions used prior to the restraint or seclusion, of the restraint or seclusion used, and any effects of the restraint or seclusion;
 - c. Date of the incident;
 - d. The beginning and ending times of the restraint or seclusion;
 - e. A list of school personnel involved in the incident;
 - f. The date and time on which the parent/guardian was notified;
 - g. A description of the debriefing of the student and staff involved in the incident.
- The incident report will be saved in the student's record, sent to the Superintendent or designee and sent to the student's parents within 24 hours of the incident.

F. Training

All appropriate staff, volunteers, contractors, and others who have regular direct contact with students will be provided with training, as appropriate for their individual roles, on:

- 1) Effective alternatives to restraint and seclusion including: conflict de-escalation techniques, and positive supports and behavioral interventions techniques;
- 2) Steps to avoid the use of seclusion or restraint;
- 3) The safe use of seclusion and restraint only in accordance with this plan;
- 4) Debriefing practices and procedures.

Documentation of training shall be kept that includes: the name and position of those trained,

who provided the training, when the training was completed, and a short description of the training.

G. Annual Review and Reporting

The Superintendent will designate a coordinator of data, planning and oversight of the use of restraint or seclusion procedures in the school corporation.

At least annually, the designated administrator will review the data on the use of restraint and seclusion in the Corporation in order to minimize the use of restraint or seclusion, and will review and consider revising this Plan.

The location of this restraint and seclusion plan will be included in the student handbook for each school.

H. Emergencies, Law Enforcement, and Use of Physical Force with Non-Students

Nothing in this Plan prevents a school employee from stopping a physical altercation, acting to prevent physical harm to a student or another individual, or acting to address an emergency until the emergency is over, whether or not the school employee has received formal training on the use of restraint or seclusion. If a staff member's emergency use of physical force constitutes "restraint" or "seclusion" under this Plan, the notification, reporting, and debriefing requirements of the Plan should be followed.

Bluffton-Harrison Metropolitan School District
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