



Richland Parish  
Student Services

## **Guidelines and Procedures for Crisis Intervention and Implementing Seclusion/Restraint Techniques**

The Richland Parish School System will provide a comprehensive educational foundation and safe learning environment for all students. Students will demonstrate mastery of skills needed to be lifelong learners. It is our system's purpose to develop the whole child to his/her fullest potential. Excellence will be expected from each employee and student in the system.

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# Introduction

This document provides the Richland Parish Schools' guidelines and procedures for appropriate responses to the behavior of students with disabilities that may require immediate intervention in the form of seclusion and restraint. The parental notification of written guidelines and procedures must be provided to every parent of a child with a disability in Richland Parish and to all school employees, posted at each school, and on the Richland Parish Schools website, and a copy must be provided to the Louisiana State Department of Education (LDOE).

These procedures specifically address the statutory requirements of *Louisiana Revised Statutes 17:416.21* and *Louisiana Bulletin 1706, §540-543*. Policies regarding the use of restraint and seclusion are reviewed annually and updated as appropriate.

This document in no way constitutes the totality of interventions and strategies that may be used by Richland Parish Schools and its personnel in addressing the educational and social-emotional needs of students with exceptionalities.

## Definitions

*Bulletin 1706, §540*

### Crisis Intervention

The implementation of an action plan for school personnel to implement when a student exhibits disruptive behaviors that prevent him from participating in classroom or daily activities.

This may include:

1. The use of positive behavioral supports and sensory rooms or other calming spaces intentionally designed to help comfort and stabilize a student so that he or she may return to the classroom or daily activities.
2. In extraordinary circumstances, the use of seclusion and physical restraint as a means to safely de-escalate a situation in which a student poses a risk of imminent risk or harm to self or others.

### Imminent Risk of Harm

An immediate and impending threat of a person causing substantial physical injury to self or others.

## Mechanical Restraint

The application of any device or object used to limit a person's movement.

### **Exceptions:**

1. A protective or stabilizing device used in strict accordance with the manufacturer's instructions for proper use and which is used in compliance with orders issued by an appropriately licensed health care provider
2. Vehicle safety restraints, when used as intended, during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle
3. Orthopedically prescribed devices that permit a student to participate in activities without risk of harm
4. Any device used by a duly licensed law enforcement officer in the execution of his or her official duties

## Physical Restraint

The use of manual restraint techniques that involve physical force applied to restrict the movement of all or part of a person's body.

### **Exceptions:**

1. Consensual, solicited, or unintentional contact.
2. Momentary blocking of a student's action if said action is likely to result in harm to the student or any other person.
3. Physical contact that does not restrict a student's movement or that lasts for less than three consecutive minutes within an hour for the purpose of protecting the student or others.
4. Minimal physical contact for the purpose of safely escorting a student from one area to another or assisting the student in completing a task.
5. Calming or comforting hugs that do not restrict a student's movement.

## Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support

A systemic approach to embed evidence-based practices and data-driven decision-making to improve school climate and culture, including a range of systemic and individualized strategies to reinforce desired behaviors and diminish the recurrence of problem behaviors, in order to achieve increased academic achievement and social competence of students.

## Seclusion

A procedure that involuntarily isolates and confines a student in a designated separate room or area until he or she is no longer an imminent risk of harm to self or others.

## Seclusion Room

A specifically designed, confined room or area from which a student is involuntarily prevented from leaving until the risk of harm has passed.

## Sensory Room (Calming Space)

An unlocked room or space that is used for the monitored separation of a student to utilize positive behavior supports and comfort or stabilize the student.

## School Employee

A teacher, paraprofessional, administrator, support staff member, or a provider of related services.

## School Health Designee

A school employee designated to assess the use of seclusion and physical restraint in the event that a school nurse is not present on a school campus at the time such measure is used.

# Guiding Principles for the Use of Seclusion and Restraint

**No student shall be subjected to any form of mechanical restraint by school employees.**

1. Every effort should be made to prevent the need for the use of restraint and for the use of seclusion - this use is a LAST RESORT.
2. Physical restraint or seclusion should not be used except in situations where the child's behavior poses imminent risk of serious physical harm to self or others, and when de-escalation and other positive behavioral interventions and support attempts have failed.
3. Any behavioral intervention must be consistent with the child's rights to be treated with dignity and to be free from abuse. Personnel will not discuss any aspect of seclusion or restraint with any student at any time. Once an incident of seclusion or restraint is ended, teachers and others will return to teaching and provide opportunities for the student to earn positive reinforcements.
4. Restraint or seclusion should be used in a manner that causes no physical injury to the student, results in the least possible discomfort, and does not interfere in any way with a student's breathing or ability to communicate with others.
5. If a student is involved in **three incidents** in a school year involving the use of seclusion or physical restraint as a result of posing an imminent risk of harm to self or others, the special education teacher shall adhere to the following chronological steps:

**Step 1: (The Third Incident):** Immediately upon a student reaching their third cumulative incident of seclusion or physical restraint within a single school year, the special education teacher must send a Prior Written Notice to the parent or legal guardian to convene an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meeting. At this meeting, the IEP team shall formally create, review, and/or revise the student's behavior supports and Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP).

**Step 2 (The Escalation Trigger):** If, *following* the implementation of the revised IEP supports, the student's challenging behavior continues or escalates to the point of requiring further seclusion or physical restraint, a heightened administrative oversight review is triggered.

**Step 3 (The Three-Week Review Cycle):** Once Step 2 is triggered, the Director or Supervisor of Special Education (or their designatee) must personally review the student's behavioral data, BIP, and crisis plans **at least once every three weeks** to monitor the efficacy of the interventions and ensure safety compliance.

6. Behavioral strategies to address dangerous behavior that results in the use of restraint or seclusion should address the underlying cause or purpose of the dangerous behavior.
7. Teachers and other personnel should be trained regularly on the appropriate use of

effective alternatives to physical restraint and seclusion, such as positive behavioral interventions and supports, and only for cases involving imminent risk of serious physical harm, on the safe use of physical restraint and seclusion.

8. Every instance in which restraint or seclusion is used should be carefully and continuously and visually monitored to ensure the appropriateness of its use and safety of the child, other children, teachers, and other personnel.
9. Parents should be informed of the policies on restraint and seclusion at their child's school or other educational setting, as well as applicable Federal, State, or local laws.
10. Parents should be notified as soon as practicable, but no later than the end of the same day in which restraint or seclusion is used with their child.

## Prohibited Uses (Applies to Seclusion, Seclusion Rooms, and Physical Restraint)

1. As a routine school safety, discipline, or intervention measure or to address behaviors such as general noncompliance, self-stimulation, and academic refusals, and other behaviors that, while disruptive to a classroom setting or other daily school activities, do not present an imminent risk of harm to self or others.
2. As a form of discipline or punishment
3. As a threat to control, bully, or obtain behavioral compliance
4. For the convenience of school personnel
5. When unreasonable, unsafe, or unwarranted
6. If the student is known to have any medical or psychological condition that precludes such action (as certified by a licensed health care provider in a written statement provided to the school in which the student is enrolled).

# Use of Seclusion

*Bulletin 1706, §541 & §543*

## **Seclusion is permitted only:**

1. For student behaviors that involve an **imminent risk of harm**
2. **As a last resort**, if and when less restrictive crisis intervention measures such as positive behavioral supports, constructive and non-physical de-escalation, and restructuring of a student's environment have failed to stop a student's actions that pose an imminent risk of harm to self or others.
3. By a school employee who uses accepted methods of escorting a student to a seclusion room, placing a student in a seclusion room, and supervising a student while the student is in the seclusion room.
4. To be utilized for one student at any given time, and the school employee supervising the student must be able to see and hear the student the entire time the student is placed in the seclusion room

## **Discontinuation of Seclusion:**

A student shall be removed from seclusion as soon as the reasons for justifying such action have subsided.

## Seclusion Room

### **A Seclusion Room shall:**

1. Be free of any object that poses a danger to the student placed in the room
2. Have an observation window and be of a size that is appropriate for the student's size, behavior, and chronological and developmental age
3. Have a ceiling height and heating, cooling, ventilation, and lighting systems comparable to operating classrooms in the school

## Procedures for Use of Seclusion

When all non-intrusive attempts to stop a student's behavior that presents an imminent risk of harm have failed, trained staff will verbally instruct that student to move to an approved seclusion room.

A student may be physically placed in a seclusion room, using approved assisted transport methods if circumstances warrant such action. A student in a seclusion room will be monitored continuously. Seclusion will end when crisis intervention, emergency medical, or law enforcement personnel intervene or when supervising staff determine that the student no longer presents an imminent risk of harm to themselves or others.

School personnel may confine a student with a disability to a seclusion room (a room or other confined area from which the student is involuntarily prevented from leaving) on an individual basis and for a limited time to allow the student the opportunity to regain control in a private setting.

When the use of a seclusion room is necessary, the student with a disability should be escorted to the seclusion area without the use of physical force, if possible. Physical prompts are permissible for the purpose of safely guiding the student from one area to another, but care should be taken to limit the use of physical contact with the student and to avoid the use of physical force. Verbal redirection and other means of positive support should be used before resorting to physical means.

If physical intervention becomes necessary to prevent a student in seclusion from harming him/her self or others, seclusion ends, trained personnel enter the seclusion room, and de-escalation procedures will be implemented. Physical restraint will be implemented as prescribed if needed.

## School Employee Training Requirements

Training for the use of seclusion is provided on a case-by-case basis for specific needs that arise. Any school employees using seclusion must have received training within one calendar year of the use of seclusion. Records of who has been trained and training dates are maintained at the district level.

Training content shall include a review of 1706 requirements, the use of the seclusion log, and a review of the planned seclusion room. Specific emphasis will be placed on the purpose of seclusion rooms and their limited use, along with monitoring and the release of a student as soon as the threat of imminent harm is no longer present.

After any and all uses of a seclusion room, the report will be reviewed along with the seclusion log. Feedback will be provided based on the reason for the use of seclusion, adherence to the monitoring schedule, and the determination of discontinuation of seclusion.

# Use of Restraint

*Bulletin 1706, §542 & §543*

## **Physical Restraint is permitted only under the following conditions:**

1. If the student's behavior presents a threat of imminent risk of harm to self or others, and only as a last resort to protect the safety of self and others.
2. To the degree necessary to stop dangerous behavior.
3. In a manner that causes no physical injury to the student, results in the least possible discomfort to the student, and does not interfere in any way with a student's breathing or ability to communicate with others.
4. By trained personnel, except in emergency situations in which there is not sufficient time to have trained personnel respond.
5. Does not involve the use of any form of mechanical restraint.
6. The student is not physically restrained in a manner that places excessive pressure on the student's chest or back or that causes asphyxia.
7. Applied only in a manner that is directly proportionate to the circumstances and to the student's size, age, and severity of behavior.

## **Release from Physical Restraint:**

A student shall be released from physical restraint as soon as the reasons for justifying such action have subsided.

## Methods of Physical Restraint

Physical Restraint is a last resort to protect the safety of the student or others when an imminent risk to self or others is present. The dignity and safety of the student being restrained is always to be maintained.

Certain restraint and seclusion techniques are more restrictive than others, and employees are to *use the least restrictive technique necessary* to end the threat of imminent risk of serious physical harm.

Physical restraint procedures are designed to be infrequent, safe, and practical. They include a 1-person and 2-person standing hold (including management options if the individual drops to the floor), two 2-person transports, and modifications for smaller and/or medically fragile students.

Physical restraint is only to be used by employees who have current training in district policies and procedures for the safe use of physical restraint techniques.

**Prone (i.e., lying face down) restraints or other restraints that restrict breathing are never to be used because they can cause serious injury or death.** Breathing can also be restricted if loose clothing becomes entangled or tightened, or if the child's face is covered by a staff member's body part (e.g., hand, arm, or torso) or through pressure to the abdomen or chest.

ALL employees should be aware of the dangers and immediately intervene if a staff member is using restraint in a way that could impact a student's ability to breathe.

## School Employee Training Requirements

### **Training Content:**

Any training regarding physical restraint shall be based on best practices, aligned with research-based techniques, and maintain frequent updates in response to research in the areas of behavior management, de-escalation, and seclusion and restraint.

Positive behavioral strategies are in place in schools, and training in physical restraint and seclusion emphasizes that every effort should first be made to use these strategies to prevent the need for restraint or seclusion.

Training includes a review of guidelines and procedures for the safe use of physical restraint, including both proper uses (e.g., as safety measures to address imminent risk of physical harm) and improper uses (e.g., as punishment or to manage behavior) of these procedures.

School personnel also receive training on the district's policies and procedures for the timely reporting and documentation of all instances in which restraint or seclusion are used.

Training includes refreshers on positive behavior management strategies, proper use of positive reinforcement, the continuum of alternative behavioral interventions, crisis prevention, de-escalation strategies, and the safe use of physical restraint.

The physical prevention and safety skills include safe approach and contact strategies, physical redirection procedures, basic physical safety skills for safely avoiding contact, and releases from a variety of grabs (wrist grabs, clothing grabs, chokes, hair pulls, and bites).

### **Recertification Frequency:**

Any employee using physical restraint must be recertified annually. A list of currently certified employees and dates of certification is maintained and monitored at the district level.

Annual recertification is important because there are a wide range of skills that are critically important for safe, supportive, and humane interactions with individuals who may exhibit behavior that is dangerous to self or others. Employees who don't remember what to do or use skills incorrectly can put themselves, other employees, and the students they support at serious risk.

### **Physical Requirements:**

- Normal degree of flexibility, can bend at the waist at 45 degrees and twist to either side ● Ability to stand, walk, run, and shuffle (including shuffling backwards) for at least several minutes.
- Ability to transition from standing to kneeling and return to standing without needing assistance or support.
- Can grasp firmly and raise hands above the head.
- Learn and correctly demonstrate multi-step physical procedures.

### **Temperament Requirements:**

- Any employee trained in physical restraint use must also be trained in identifying their own triggers, signs of escalating tension in themselves, and the importance of maintaining calm in a volatile situation.
- Any employee deemed by district trainers not to have a temperament for the limited use of seclusion and restraint as a last resort and only until the imminent risk has resolved shall not be certified to use seclusion and restraint in Richland Parish Schools.

### **Instructional Materials:**

Training documents, including a trainee manual, are provided to all participants. These materials are offered annually to ensure all certified employees have access to the instructional materials.

### **Trainers:**

District-level trainers shall attend annual recertification training. All selected trainers must be able to present material effectively to a group, capable of learning and demonstrating moderately strenuous physical procedures, have a commitment to ensuring trainees are equipped to keep themselves and students safe, and take the responsibility of this training seriously.

### **Abuse or Mistreatment:**

Any complaint from a parent, student, or other school staff implicating a teacher or other school staff member as implementing seclusion or restraint in a way that abuses or mistreats a student shall be reported to law enforcement. (*Children's Code Article 610*)

Engaging in the use of physical restraint or seclusion in any way contrary to these guidelines or the training received shall result in revocation of district certification to use restraint and seclusion.

# Use of Mechanical Restraint

**No student shall be subjected to any form of mechanical restraint by school employees.**

## Monitoring and Documentation

*Bulletin 1706, §543*

Seclusion and Restraint require monitoring, documentation, and analysis of data collected on the frequency and use of seclusion and restraint. This data is tabulated and reported annually to the state department of education.

### Monitoring during the use of seclusion or restraint:

1. A student shall be monitored continuously:
  - a. Continuous assessment of staff and student status, including potential physical injuries
  - b. Termination of restraint or seclusion when the imminent risk of serious physical harm to self or others has dissipated
  - c. Evaluation of how procedures are being implemented
  - d. Consideration of opportunities for redirection and defusing the dangerous behavior
  - e. Consider having school health personnel promptly assess the child after the imposition of restraints or seclusion
2. Such monitoring shall be documented at least every 10 minutes and adjustments made accordingly, based upon observations of the student's behavior.
3. Any employee involved in the use of seclusion or restraint must recognize the vulnerable state that the student is in and take responsibility for keeping the student safe.
4. A student shall be released or removed as soon as the reasons for the action have subsided.

## Documentation and Reporting at School and District Level

1. When a student is placed in seclusion or physically restrained, the director or supervisor of special education shall be notified electronically by the school principal or his designee as soon as is practicable, but no later than one hour following the release of the student or by the end of the same school day, whichever occurs first.
2. A school employee who has placed a student in seclusion or physically restrained a student shall document and report each incident using the district-provided form, and submit the form to the school principal and director of special education no later than the school day immediately following the day on which the student was placed in seclusion or physically restrained.
3. The school principal or his designee and the supervisor of special education shall review video and audio footage, if available, to ensure policies and proper techniques were followed during the incident.

## Documentation and Reporting at the State Level

Each incident must be reported to the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) through the Special Education Reporting (eSER) system. Incidents shall be reported within 24 hours of their occurrence. This will be completed by the Director of Special Education or their designee.

1. Search for and select the student on eSER.
2. In the navigation bar, select Student -> Incidents.
3. Click the plus (+) button to add a new incident.
4. Report the incident type, date, beginning time, ending time, date report sent to parent, and date report sent to special education director.
5. Click Save Incident.

## Documentation and Reporting to Parents

All parents or legal guardians of a student with an exceptionality will be notified of the guidelines for the use of seclusion and restraint annually at the IEP meeting. In addition, Seclusion and Restraint Guidelines are posted on school and district websites.

The school shall document all efforts, including conversations, phone calls, electronic communications, and home visits, to notify the parent of a student who has been placed in seclusion or physically restrained. This documentation should be kept at the school and placed in the J-Pams communication section.

The student's parent or other legal guardian shall be notified as soon as is practicable but no more than the end of the same school day, of each incident of seclusion or physical restraint. Such notice shall include the reason for such seclusion or physical restraint, the procedures used, the length of time of the student's seclusion or physical restraint, and the names and titles of any school employee involved.

## Supporting Documents and Forms

Document	Description
<a href="#"><u>Bulletin 1706</u></a>	Regulations for Implementation of the Children with Exceptionalities Act
<a href="#"><u>Restraint and Seclusion: Resource Document</u></a>	US Dept. of Education Restraint and Seclusion Resource Document
<a href="#"><u>Developing Guidelines and Procedures for Seclusion and Restraint</u></a>	Developing local guidelines and procedures for implementing seclusion and restraint for students with disabilities
<a href="#"><u>Use of Seclusion/Physical Restraint Reporting Form</u></a>	Use of seclusion/physical restraint reporting form must be completed after each incident and a copy provided to the principal, parent, and director of special education within 24 hours of the incident.
<a href="#"><u>Child Safety Post-Seclusion/Restraint Evaluation Form</u></a>	Child Safety Post-Seclusion/Restraint Evaluation Form must be completed by the school nurse or a health designee after each seclusion or restraint incident and must be attached to the Use of Seclusion/Physical Restraint Reporting Form
<a href="#"><u>Seclusion Log</u></a>	Seclusion log to document monitoring of the student in seclusion, and must be included with Seclusion/Restraint Form if seclusion has been implemented.
<a href="#"><u>Parent Notification Letter of Restraint and Seclusion</u></a>	Letter notifying parents of seclusion and restraint guidelines to be provided to parents at every IEP meeting.

# Richland Parish

## Use of Seclusion/Physical Restraint Reporting Form

### Student Details

Student Name:	Grade:	Age:
Gender:	Race:	DOB:
Parent Name:	Parent Phone:	Parent Email Address:
Mark all that apply. <input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> FBA <input type="checkbox"/> 504 Plan <input type="checkbox"/> BIP <input type="checkbox"/> Health Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Crisis Plan		Disability

### Reporting Details

Name of Person Completing Form:	Date and Time of Report:	Date and Time of Incident:
List of school personnel who administered/monitored the seclusion and restraint:		
Name & Position/Title:	Role in Restraint/Seclusion:	Trained to use Restraint?
	Primary/lead Secondary Observer	Yes   No
	Primary/lead Secondary Observer	Yes   No
	Primary/lead Secondary Observer	Yes   No
	Primary/lead Secondary Observer	Yes   No

### Incident Details

Location of the Incident:		
Describe the specific events that may have triggered the dangerous behavior that led to restraint or seclusion.		
Describe the prevention, redirection, or pre-correction strategies that were used before and during the incident		
Describe the dangerous behavior that resulted in the implementation of restraint or seclusion.		
Start time:	End time:	
Describe the restraint or seclusion technique or strategies used:		
Describe how the student was monitored during and after the incident:		
Describe any actions taken immediately following the student's release from seclusion or physical restraint:		
Describe the student's actions immediately following the student's release from seclusion or restraint:		

Total Number of Seclusion/Restraint Incidents for School Year:

## Post, Response, Reporting

Safety Evaluation: <b>Student</b> Time Completed:	Safety Evaluation: <b>Student</b> Time Completed:
Evaluated by:      Role/Position:	Evaluated by:      Role/Position:
Did any injury or hospitalization occur as a result of the incident? Yes No <b>If yes, describe:</b>	

*Director or supervisor of special education shall be notified electronically no later than one hour following the release of the student, or the end of the same school day, whichever occurs first.  
Parent or legal guardian must be notified via phone as soon as is practicable but no later than the end of the same school day.*

### Notification Dates

Principal	Parent	SPED Director	eSER Report

If unable to contact the parent by phone, document attempts.  
Send home a copy of this report through email, online portal, or certified mail.

*Send to the principal, parent, and director of special education within 24 hours of the incident.*

# Richland Parish Child Safety Post-Seclusion/Restraint Evaluation Form

## Student Details

Student Name:	Date of Incident:	Time of Incident:
School Nurse or Health Designee:	Role/Position:	Time of Evaluation:

## Evaluation:

Did the child have any visible/known injuries prior to the restraint/seclusion?  <b><i>If yes, describe:</i></b>	Yes No
Was the child injured during the restraint/seclusion?  <b><i>If yes, describe:</i></b>	Yes No
Did any hospitalization occur because of the incident? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Was the parent notified of the injuries? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

\_\_\_\_\_ Signature and role of  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Person Completing this Report Date

## Seclusion Log

Date:	Time:	Student:
Reason for Seclusion:	Hitting/attempting to hit Kicking/attempting to kick	Biting/attempting to bite Scratching/attempting to scratch
	Biting/Cutting/attempting self-injurious behavior	
Release Criteria:		

#	Time Interval (10 minutes)	Safe? *	Behavior status?**	Observational Note	Initial
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
	1 Hour:	Offer Bathroom:		Offer Fluids:	

**\*Safe:** Visually check on the student, ensure he or she is medically safe, is not injured, and no potential for harm exists to prevent continuing with the seclusion.

<b>**Behavior Status:</b> Rate the student's current behavior status:			
1	Agrees to release criteria	7	Quiet
2	Threatening	8	Beating on door
3	Tense	9	Sitting
4	Yelling/Cursing	10	Laying down
5	Crying	11	Pacing
6	Struggling	12	Other



## **Parent Notification of Guidelines for Use of Seclusion and Physical Restraint with Exceptional Students**

The Richland Parish School System has established the following guidelines and procedures to comply with the revised mandates of Act 479, enacted during the 2025 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature. This legislation provides direction regarding crisis intervention strategies, which may include the use of positive behavioral supports, sensory rooms, or other calming spaces intentionally designed to comfort and stabilize students. Act 479 also outlines guidelines for rare and extraordinary situations where seclusion or physical restraint may be necessary to safely de-escalate a student who presents an imminent risk of harm to themselves or others. These techniques will be employed only as a last resort and in strict accordance with Louisiana Bulletin 1706, Sections 540 through 543.

### **I. Seclusion and Restraint**

Every effort should be made to prevent the need for using seclusion or restraint techniques. Environments should be structured and focused on positive interventions and supports to greatly reduce, and in many cases eliminate, the need to use seclusion or restraint. Seclusion and restraint should only be used when a student's behavior presents a threat of imminent risk of harm to self or others, and only as a last resort to protect the safety of self and others. Techniques may be implemented when the risk of not intervening is greater than the risk of intervening and to the degree necessary to stop the dangerous behavior. Techniques must be implemented in a manner that causes no physical injury to the student, results in the least possible discomfort, does not interfere in any way with the student's breathing or ability to communicate with others, and does not place excessive pressure on the student's back or chest or cause asphyxia. Seclusion and restraint must be implemented in a manner that is directly proportionate to the circumstances and to the student's size, age, and severity of behavior. A school employee shall continuously monitor a student who is secluded or physically restrained for the duration of such seclusion or restraint and shall release a student from seclusion and physical restraint as soon as the reasons for justifying such action have subsided.

Seclusion and restraint must not be used as a form of discipline or punishment, as a threat to control, bully, or obtain behavioral compliance, or for the convenience of school personnel. It is imperative that no school employee subject a student to unreasonable, unsafe, or unwarranted use of seclusion or restraint. Seclusion and restraint techniques must not be used to address behaviors such as general noncompliance, self-stimulation, or academic refusal. Such behaviors must be responded to with less stringent and less restrictive techniques. No school employee shall place a student in seclusion or restraint if he is known to have any medical or psychological condition that precludes such action, as certified by a licensed pediatrician, neurologist, or mental health provider in a written statement provided to the school in which the student is enrolled.

### **Seclusion**

The seclusion of a student must take place only in a designated seclusion room that meets established safety standards to ensure the student's physical and emotional well-being. The creation of a seclusion room must be formally approved in advance by the Director of Special Education before implementation. A student may only be placed in a seclusion room by a trained school employee who uses approved methods for escorting, placing, and supervising the student. While in the seclusion room, the student must be continuously monitored, and the supervising staff member must be able to see and hear the student at all times. Only one student may occupy a seclusion room at any given time to ensure individual safety and proper supervision.

It is critical to understand the distinction between a Seclusion Room and a Sensory Room, as they serve fundamentally

different purposes. Under no circumstances should a Sensory Room be used as a Seclusion Room. Sensory Rooms are intended to provide a calming, therapeutic environment that helps students regulate their emotions and return to a state of stability. These rooms are not to be associated with discipline, isolation, or restraint.

**Seclusion should ONLY be used:**

- for student behaviors that involve an **imminent risk of harm** to self or others
- **as a last resort**, when de-escalation and other positive behavioral interventions and support attempts have failed and the student continues to pose an imminent risk of harm to self or others
- **as a last resort**, if and when less restrictive crisis intervention techniques such as positive behavioral supports, constructive and non-physical de-escalation, and restructuring of a student's environment have failed to stop a student's actions that pose an **imminent risk of harm** to self or others

**Seclusion should NOT be used:**

- as a routine school safety, discipline, or intervention measure or to address behaviors such as general non-compliance, self-stimulation, and academic refusal, and other behaviors that, while disruptive to a classroom setting or other daily school activities, do not present an imminent risk of harm to self or others

**A Seclusion Room or other confined area must:**

- be free of any object that poses a danger to the student who is placed in the room
- have an observation window allowing school personnel to see and hear the student the entire time
- have a ceiling height and heating, cooling, ventilation, and lighting system comparable to an operating classroom in the school
- be of a size that is appropriate for the student's size, behavior, chronological, and developmental age

**Physical Restraint**

Physical restraint should only be used by school employees who have completed all components of the district's adopted de-escalation & physical management program. **Annual** recertification is required. At no time should a school employee subject a student to mechanical restraints to restrict that student's freedom of movement.

**Physical Restraint should ONLY be used:**

- when a student's behavior presents a threat of **imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others**, and only as a **last resort** to protect the safety of self or others
- to the degree necessary to stop a dangerous behavior
- in a manner that causes no physical injury to the student, results in the least possible discomfort, and does not interfere in any way with a student's breathing ability or ability to communicate with others

**Physical Restraint does NOT include:**

- consensual, solicited, or unintentional contact
- momentary blocking of a student's action if the student's action is likely to result in harm to the student or any other person
- a school employee holding a student for less than three consecutive minutes during any given hour for the protection of the student or others
- a school employee holding a student for the purpose of calming or comforting the student, provided the student's freedom of movement or normal access to his or her body is not restricted
- minimal physical contact (i.e., touching of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back) for the purpose of safely escorting a student from one area to another
- minimal physical contact for the purpose of assisting the student in completing a task or response

**Mechanical Restraint does NOT include:**

- any device used by a duly licensed law enforcement officer in the execution of his official duties
- any devices implemented by trained school personnel or utilized by a student that have been prescribed by an appropriate medical or related service professional and are used for the specific and approved purposes for which such devices were designed, such as:
  - adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to achieve proper body position, balance, or alignment to allow greater freedom of mobility than would be possible without the use of such devices or mechanical supports

- o vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle
- o restraints for medical immobilization
- o orthopedically prescribed devices that permit a student to participate in activities without risk of harm

## **II. Written Notification and Reporting**

The principal or his designee shall notify each parent or legal guardian of a student enrolled at the school with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) of the prohibition of the use of seclusion and restraint if the student has a condition that precludes such action, as certified by a licensed pediatrician, neurologist, or mental health provider in a written statement provided to the school in which the student is enrolled. This notification is included in our *Guidelines and Procedures for Crisis Intervention and Implementing Seclusion/Restraint Techniques*, provided to parents of students with disabilities at the beginning of each school year and on the Prior Written Notice for the student’s IEP meeting. IEP teams will discuss and document this discussion in the IEP. A student who has been placed in seclusion or has been restrained shall be monitored continuously, and monitoring shall be documented on the *Use of Seclusion/Physical Restraint Reporting Form*.

### **Immediately Following Implementation of Seclusion or Physical Restraint:**

- The school employee involved in the seclusion or restraint must immediately notify the school principal.
- The school principal must immediately notify the Supervisor of Special Education and/or Behavior Interventionist of the student secluded or restrained, personnel involved, and the location of restraint.
  - o The school principal or his designee and the Supervisor of Special Education and/or Behavior Interventionist must review video and audio footage, if available, to ensure that policies and proper techniques were followed during the incident. The Supervisor of Special Education and/or Behavior Interventionist will document the video viewing and findings on the *Seclusion/Restraint Video Documentation Log*
- The school administrator shall notify the parent or legal guardian of the student via a phone call as soon as is practicable, but no later than the end of the same school day.
- The school principal should contact a school nurse or school health designee to assess the student as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the same school day, to look for and document any signs of injury or distress. School health designee is defined as the district school nurse or the school-based health clinic nurse. In the event that one of these designees is not available, the next contact should be the school occupational therapist. Other personnel classified as health designees are: School Psychologist, School Social Worker, and School Licensed Professional Counselor. These individuals should only be contacted as a last resort. Please follow the order of the list.
- A school employee who secluded or physically restrained a student shall document and report the incident on the *Use of Seclusion/Physical Restraint Reporting Form*. The employee shall submit the *Use of Seclusion/Physical Restraint Reporting Form* to the principal by the end of the next school day following the incident. The principal or his designee shall complete the *Parent Notification of Seclusion/Restraint Letter* and provide the letter to the parent by the end of the following day. If the seclusion or restraint occurs on a Friday, the letter must be completed and sent to the parent by the end of the day on Friday.
- The principal or designee must provide the *Use of Seclusion/Physical Restraint Reporting Form* and *Parent Notification of Seclusion/Restraint Letter* to the schools designated IEP Facilitator, Behavior Interventionist and Special Education Supervisor at the same time the parent is provided a copy (within 24 hours of incident).

## **III. Response to Seclusion or Restraint**

### **Individualized Education Plan/Behavior Intervention Plan**

The IEP team must address the behaviors that prompted the seclusion/restraint in the student’s IEP and BIP. If a student is involved in three incidents in a school year involving the use of seclusion or physical restraint as a result of posing an imminent risk of harm to self or others, his Individualized Education Plan team shall:

- implement the Behavior Support Process (for students who do not have a BIP)
- conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)
  - o The School Psychologist and/or the School Social Worker, Behavior Interventionist, IEP Facilitator assigned to the student’s school, Special Education Supervisor and/or Pupil Appraisal Supervisor shall

actively participate in the FBA.

- review, revise, or develop a Behavior Intervention Plan, including any crisis intervention plans, to include any appropriate and necessary behavioral supports
  - prioritize the use of positive interventions and support

If the student's challenging behavior continues to escalate, requiring repeated seclusion or restraint practices, the Special Education Supervisor or his or her designee shall review the student's IEP and BIP at least every three weeks.

#### **IV. School & District Responsibilities**

- Schools will include the *Parent Notification of Guidelines for Use of Seclusion and Physical Restraint with Exceptional Students* in the student handbook
- A list of personnel trained in seclusion and restraint will be kept at each school site and the district office.
- Reported incidents of seclusion/restraint will be entered into the LDOE database by the Special Education Supervisor or designee.
- Prior to the beginning of the school year, the *Parent Notification of Guidelines for Use of Seclusion and Physical Restraint with Exceptional Students* shall be:
  - provided to all school employees and every parent or legal guardian of a student with a disability
  - posted on the district's website
  - submitted annually to the Special Education Advisory Council