

AP 310 – Restraint and Seclusion

Introduction:

Student access to an effective educational program is a basic right of each student in British Columbia's K-12 education system. Positive, least restrictive, and inclusive instructional approaches in the provision of student supports are considered best practice. Respect for student rights, maintaining student dignity and the safety of all involved is paramount.

Learning environment design has been shown to have a direct impact on teacher- student and student-teacher relationships and, consequently, on student learning, achievement, and well-being. The overarching goal of learning environment design is the creative and intentional design of space to facilitate and support positive, inclusive student learning experiences – rather than punitive, disciplinary ones.

In recent years, our understanding of the 'learning environment' has evolved. A wide variety of creative approaches to teaching/learning and to the configuration of physical spaces within and beyond the traditional classroom setting, including accommodations for students' sensory and self/co-regulation needs, are employed to support students' academic and social-emotional learning goals. Based on evidence-based educational practices and current research, the design of inclusive learning spaces are expected to be flexible, and individualized, to support student success and meaningful participation.

Every effort should be made to structure learning environments, and to provide learning supports that make physical restraint and seclusion unnecessary.

It is expected that school personnel implement effective supports and interventions to prevent and de-escalate potentially unsafe situations. It is expected that collaborative problem solving, and practical evidence-based tools are utilized to ensure the design of learning spaces are focused on prevention and positive instructional experiences for all students.

Principles:

- Positive behaviour interventions for students must promote the rights of all students to be treated with dignity.
- Behaviour interventions for all students must emphasize prevention and positive behaviour supports, and every effort is made to employ preventative actions that preclude the need for the use of physical restraint or seclusion.
- Positive behaviour interventions and mental health supports are to be provided routinely for all students who need them, and are to be provided in a safe and least-restrictive instructional environment.

- District inclusive education specialists are to collaborate with school teams to establish appropriate, evidence-based, inclusive behaviour interventions to address the underlying cause of potentially harmful behaviour.
- Physical restraint or seclusion is used *only* in exceptional circumstances where the behaviour of a student poses imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others, including school personnel, and where less restrictive interventions have been ineffective in ending imminent danger of serious physical harm. Restraint or seclusion is discontinued once imminent danger or serious physical self-harm or harm to others has dissipated.
- Neither restraint nor seclusion are used as a punishment, discipline, or to force compliance in an educational/learning setting.
- Educational assessments are provided by district inclusive education specialists for students whose pattern of behaviour impedes their learning or the learning of others. The purpose of behavioural assessments and corresponding student observations are to inform the development of positive behaviour support-plans. These plans incorporate positive behaviour interventions and are to include instructional strategies for de-escalation to support student learning and meaningful participation.
- West Vancouver School District will include among their staff members, professionals who are trained in positive behaviour intervention supports, conflict de-escalation, and crisis de-escalation and non-violent crisis intervention techniques to enable them to defuse conflict and crisis situations.
- West Vancouver School District will provide training to provide the skills and competencies necessary to effectively prevent, minimize and manage behavioural challenges with dignity, safety, and the possibility of change.
- School and district staff are to be aware of and to engage the assistance of additional program and resource supports that may be available in their community.

Guidelines:

- Where a student's behaviour could cause harm to self or others, restraint or seclusion may be required until such time as the imminent danger of serious harm to self or others has dissipated.
- Physical restraint and seclusion are used *only* in exceptional circumstances where a student is in imminent danger of causing harm to self or others.
- It is expected that school/school personnel will implement positive behaviour supports and interventions, behaviour plans, emergency, or safety plans to prevent and de-escalate potentially unsafe situations.
- It is expected that parents/guardians and students are offered opportunities to be consulted in the development of positive behaviour supports and interventions, behaviour plans, and emergency or safety plans.
- All school personnel are provided regular opportunities for training in positive behaviour interventions and supports to effectively prevent, minimize and manage behavioural challenges with dignity, safety, and the possibility of change.

- School personnel who work *directly* with a student in situations where there is a potential for imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others, and where they may be required to respond to an individual whose behaviour is presenting a danger to self or others, will be trained to provide the skills and competencies necessary to effectively prevent, minimize and manage behavioural challenges with dignity, safety, and the possibility of change. Such staff will be trained by district inclusive education specialists in crisis intervention and the safe use of physical restraint.
- In cases where a student's behaviour could potentially cause harm to self or others, the student's educational planning includes development of:
 - an Individual Education Plan (IEP) outlining the student's learning outcomes, required learning support services, and instructional and assessment methods.
 - a formal positive behaviour support plan collaboratively created by appropriate school personnel, district inclusive education specialists, parents/guardians and the respective student describing positive behaviour intervention supports and conflict de-escalation procedures
 - an emergency or safety plan and staff training/implementation plan detailing procedures to prevent, minimize and manage behavioural challenges with dignity, safety, and the possibility of change.
- Recurring practice of restraint or seclusion is not an approved educational practice in any student's educational program and should only be used in emergency situations where imminent danger is present.
- Physical restraint or seclusion is never conducted in a manner that could, in any way, cause harm to a student, i.e., never restricts the breathing of a student; never places a student in a prone position (i.e., facing down on his/her stomach) or supine position (i.e., on his/her back, face up); never employs the use of mechanical devices.
- It is critical that:
 - any space used for purpose of behavioural de-escalation will not jeopardize the secluded student's health and safety
 - any student placed in seclusion is *continuously visually observed by an adult who is physically present throughout the period of seclusion* and that all health and safety district policies and procedures including WorkSafe BC regulations be followed.
 - school personnel are able to communicate with the student in the student's primary language or an appropriate, alternative mode of communication is present at all times
 - all safety and behaviour plans are required to be regularly reviewed to ensure alignment with current research/practice, with ongoing progress monitoring and in compliance with this administrative procedure

Procedures:

- development, by the school-based team in conjunction with a district inclusive education behaviour specialists, of positive behaviour supports and interventions, behaviour plans, emergency or safety plans for each student whose behaviour could potentially pose imminent danger of harm to self or others
- the student's positive behaviour plan, are attached to the student's IEP, are reviewed regularly and includes ongoing progress monitoring to determine the necessity of the plan with successful implementation,

- there will be immediate follow-up after any incident involving the use of physical restraint or seclusion that includes:
 1. notification to the school principal as soon as possible after an incident/ always prior to the end of the school day on which the incident has occurred
 2. notification, by the school principal, to the student's parents/guardians as soon as possible/always prior to the end of the school day on which the incident has occurred
 3. notification to the school district principal of inclusive education as soon possible after an incident/always prior to the end of the school day on which the incident has occurred
 4. notification to the superintendent or district leadership designate as soon as possible after an incident has occurred
 5. a debriefing with involved school personnel, appropriate district inclusive education specialists; parents or guardians of the student; and where possible, with the student, to examine
 - what happened?
 - what may have caused the incident? (e.g. biological dysregulation, social interactions, instructional demands, etc.)
 - where the incident occurred? (e.g. environmental assessment)
 - what factors leading up to the event require further analysis or consideration?
 - what future preventative and responsive actions could be taken in the future, to make the use of physical restraint or seclusion unnecessary?
 6. regular review of all safety plans and related student positive behaviour support plans to ensure alignment with current research/practice