

JGF(2)-R Seclusion or Restraint of Students

1/7/13

RATIONALE/OBJECTIVE:

The Cobb County School District (District) is dedicated to sound discipline and safety practices in the continuing effort to provide students in the District an effective and safe learning environment, to promote learning, and to encourage maturity during the school day as well as during all school-related activities.

RULE:**A. DEFINITIONS:**

1. Chemical Restraint means any medication that is used to control behavior or restrict the student's freedom of movement that is not a prescribed treatment for the student's medical or psychiatric condition. Use of chemical restraint is prohibited in all District schools.
2. Mechanical Restraint" means the use of any device or material attached to or adjacent to a student's body that is intended to restrict the normal freedom of movement and which cannot be easily removed by the student. The term does not include an adaptive or protective device recommended by a physician or therapist when used as recommended by the physician or therapist to promote normative body positioning and physical functioning, and/or to prevent self-injurious behavior. The term also does not include seatbelts and other safety equipment when used to secure students during transportation. Use of mechanical restraint is prohibited in all District schools.
3. Physical Restraint means direct physical contact from an adult that prevents or significantly restricts a student's movement. The term "physical restraint" does not include prone restraint, mechanical restraint, or chemical restraint. Additionally, physical restraint does not include: providing limited physical contact and/or redirection to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing guidance to a location, or providing comfort.
4. Prone restraint means a specific type of restraint in which a student is intentionally placed face down on the floor or another surface, and physical pressure is applied to the student's body to keep the student in the prone position. Use of prone restraint is prohibited in all District schools.

B. USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT IN DISTRICT SCHOOLS:

1. Physical restraint may be used in District schools only in situations in which the student is an immediate danger to himself/herself or others and the student is not responsive to less intensive behavioral interventions including verbal directives or other de-escalation techniques.
2. Physical restraint is prohibited in District schools as a form of discipline or punishment; when the student cannot be safely restrained; or when the use of intervention would be contraindicated due to the student's psychiatric, medical, or physical conditions as described in the student's education records.
3. All physical restraint must be immediately terminated when the student is no longer an immediate danger to himself/herself or others or if the student is observed to be in severe distress.
4. Whenever possible, all physical restraints should be observed and monitored by another adult to ensure student and staff safety.
5. Whenever possible, only faculty and staff trained in the use of physical restraint will physically restrain students. In situations when a trained staff member is not present, but a student must be physically restrained in accordance with this Administrative Rule, the

student may be restrained. In such situations, individuals present should be directed to summon trained staff and/or seek assistance as quickly as possible.

C. TRAINING ON USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT:

1. The Superintendent and/or designee shall make available appropriate training to District faculty and staff on the appropriate use of physical restraint. This training will be provided as part of a program which addresses a full continuum of positive behavioral intervention strategies, as well as prevention and de-escalation techniques.
2. The Superintendent and/or designee will identify for training those staff members working in schools/programs in which staff historically has been called upon to physically restrain students, or others as deemed appropriate based on their employment positions.
3. The District will maintain written and/or electronic documentation on training provided and the list of participants in each training. Records of such training will be made available to the State Department of Education or any member of the public upon request.

D. DOCUMENTATION OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT:

1. The use of physical restraint will be documented by staff or faculty participating in or supervising the restraint for each student in each instance in which the student is restrained. Staff and faculty should use the District's Restraint Incident Report Form (or equivalent) to document the use of physical restraint.
2. Each school shall maintain a copy of completed Restraint Incident Report Form (or equivalent), as well as any other summary reports, in accordance with the requirements of the State Department of Education and existing record retention schedules.

E. PARENTAL NOTIFICATION:

1. Parents shall be informed within one (1) school day when a physical restraint is used and shall be provided a copy of the completed Restraint Incident Report Form (or equivalent) at that time. Parents and the District may mutually agree that notification may be provided via electronic mail.
2. The District will provide information to parents about the District's policies governing the use of physical restraint by posting this Administrative Rule on its website and by including it in its Student Handbook.

F. LIMITATIONS:

1. Nothing in this Administrative Rule shall be construed to prohibit a school system, school, or program employee from taking appropriate actions to diffuse a student fight or altercation.
2. Nothing in this Administrative Rule shall be construed to eliminate or restrict the ability of a District employee to use his or her discretion in the use of physical restraint to protect students or others from imminent harm or bodily injury. Nothing in this Administrative Rule shall be construed to impose ministerial duties on any District employee.
3. Nothing in this Administrative Rule limits the ability of District staff to seek assistance from law enforcement and/or emergency medical personnel. Nothing in this Administrative Rule shall be construed to interfere with the duties of law enforcement or emergency medical personnel.
4. Nothing in this Administrative Rule shall be construed to go beyond or as inconsistent with the requirements of State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.35.
5. The use of physical restraint in District schools, as well as this Administrative Rule and the Restraint Incident Report Form, shall be reviewed by the District at least annually.

Adopted: 10/13/10

Revised and re-coded: 1/7/13 (Previously coded as Administrative Rule JGF)

Legal Reference

Rule 160-5-1-.35

Seclusion and Restraint for All Students