

## **Arlington Public Schools**

### **Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Procedures**

#### **I. Introduction:**

In accordance with Arlington Public Schools' Physical Restraint Policy and Massachusetts regulations for the prevention and safe use of physical restraint (603 CMR 46.00), Arlington Public Schools has developed the following Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Procedures.

Arlington Public Schools is committed to maintaining an orderly, safe and supportive environment conducive to learning for all students. Arlington Public Schools implements a variety of de-escalation techniques and intervention strategies to safely support students and prevent the use of physical restraints whenever possible. Arlington Public School uses the physical restraint as an emergency procedure of last resort only when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault or imminent, serious physical harm to self or others and the district abides by safe physical restraint administration regulations. All physical intervention is guided by the principle of using a maximum amount of caring and a minimum amount of force.

#### **II. Prevention of Physical Restraint:**

Arlington Public Schools use a variety of de-escalation techniques and strategies as alternatives to physical restraint when a student's (or group of students') behavior requires immediate intervention. Additionally, the district implements a continuum of social-emotional and behavioral supports and services, including crisis planning, to foster social-emotional growth, self-regulation and prevent student violence, self-injurious behavior and suicide. These supports and interventions may include, but are not limited to:

- [Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan](#)
- **Tier One SEL Programming**
  - [Responsive Classroom](#) (K-6)
  - [Ruler](#) (7-12)
  - Second Step (K-5)
  - [PBIS](#) (K-6)
    - [PBIS Brief](#)
  - [Whole Child Lessons](#)
  - Zones of Regulation

- Advisory 6th,9th-12th
- Calm/Cool Down Spaces
- [SEL Resources for Educators Website](#)
- **Tier Two and Three SEL Supports**
  - Counseling and Social Work Services
  - Small Groups that teach social skills
  - Student Support Teams (SST) at All Schools
  - Use of Mental Health Screeners (District Wide)
  - Panorama Survey 2x (Family, Student and Staff)
    - Panorama Playbook for specific skills, needs, and targets
  - Individualized Educational Plans (IEP)
  - 504 Plans
- **SEL and Mental Health Assessments**
  - Views of Climate and Learning Survey (VOCAL)
  - Youth Behavior and Risk Survey (YBRS)
  - [Social and Emotional Learning Indicator System](#) Survey (SELIS)
  - Mental Health Screeners
  - SCUTA at the secondary level for student relationships and engagement
- Youth Mental Health First Aid
- Trauma Sensitive Training for Staff

Arlington Public Schools will engage parents/guardians about restraint prevention and the use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure by:

- making Arlington Public Schools restraint prevention and behavioral support policy and procedures, including complaint procedures available to families;
- discussing with families of students who have required and/or may require physical intervention methods of preventing student violence/self-harm, restraint prevention behavioral supports, alternatives to physical restraint, staff training and restraint use requirements, as well as behavioral support services available to student;
- collaborate with parents/guardians and student's community providers on use of effective de-escalation strategies and alternatives to restraint across settings; and,
- refer families to community-based resources and support, as needed.

### **III. Safe Use of Physical Restraint**

Arlington Public Schools use of physical restraint shall comply with 603 CMR 46.03. The definitions of forms of restraint shall be as defined in 603 CMR 46.02.

**Mechanical and medication restraint are prohibited.**

**Physical restraint, including prone restraints where permitted, shall be considered by Arlington Public Schools an emergency procedure of last resort and can only be used when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstances.** All physical restraints, including prone restraint where permitted, shall be administered in compliance with 603 CMR 46.05.

**Physical restraint** is defined by regulation as direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

**Physical escort** is not considered a restraint. Physical escort is defined by regulation as a temporary touching or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated to walk to a safe location.

**Prone restraint** is defined by regulation as a physical restraint in which a student is 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 facedown position. **Prone restraints are prohibited in Arlington Public Schools, except on an individual student basis and only under the following circumstances:**

- The student has a documented history of repeatedly causing serious self-injuries and/or injuries to other students or staff;
- All other forms of physical restraints have failed to ensure the safety of the student and/or the safety of others;
- There are no medical contraindications as documented by a licensed physician;
- There is psychological or behavioral justification for the use of prone restraint and there are no psychological or behavioral contraindications, as documented by a licensed mental health professional;
- The program has obtained consent to use prone restraint in an emergency as set out in 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), and such use has been approved in writing by the principal and supervisor of ABA services.
- The program has documented 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b)1-5 in advance of the use of prone restraint and maintains the documentation.

**Arlington Public Schools shall NOT use physical restraints:**

- As a means of discipline or punishment;

- When the student cannot be safely restrained because it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting;
- As a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a public education program rule or staff directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm; or
- As a standard response for any individual student. No written individual behavior plan or individualized education program (IEP) may include use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort.

**Limitations on use of restraint:**

- Physical restraint in the district shall be limited to the use of such reasonable force as is necessary to protect a student or another member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.
- Physical restraint must end as soon as the student is no longer an imminent threat to the physical harm of self or others.
- Only public education program personnel who have received training required for all staff, pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(2) or the in-depth training required for select staff, pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(3) shall administer physical restraint on students.
- Whenever possible, the administration of a restraint shall be witnessed by at least one adult who does not participate in the restraint. The training requirements contained in 603 CMR 46.00 shall not preclude a teacher, employee or agent of a public education program from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.
- A person administering physical restraint shall use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation subject to the safety requirements set forth in 603 CMR 46.05(5). Floor restraints, including prone restraints otherwise permitted under 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), shall be prohibited unless the staff members administering the restraint have received in-depth training according to the requirements of 603 CMR 46.04(3) and, in the judgment of the trained staff members, such method is required to provide safety for the student or others present.
- All physical restraint must be terminated as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger to himself or others, or the student indicates that he or she cannot breathe, or if the student is observed to be in severe distress, such as having difficulty breathing, or sustained or prolonged crying or coughing.

**Additional requirements for the use of physical restraint:**

- No restraint shall be administered in such a way that the student is prevented from breathing or speaking. During the administration of a restraint, a staff member shall continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin temperature and color, and respiration.
- Restraint shall be administered in such a way so as to prevent or minimize physical harm. If, at any time during a physical restraint, the student expresses or demonstrates significant physical distress including, but not limited to, difficulty breathing, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately, and school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance.
- **If a student is restrained for a period longer than 20 minutes, staff must contact the Principal and obtain the approval of the Principal prior to the restraint continuing beyond 20 minutes.** The Principal's approval shall be based upon the student's continued agitation during the restraint justifying the need for continued restraint.
- Program staff shall review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavioral intervention plans regarding the use of physical restraint on an individual student.
- After the release of a student from a restraint, the public education program shall implement follow-up procedures. These procedures shall include reviewing the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the restraint, reviewing the incident with the staff person(s) who administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed, and consideration of whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident.

#### **IV. Physical Restraint Reporting and Review Requirements**

Arlington Public Schools shall report and review the use of physical restraints as follows:

**Informing the Principal or Designee.** The staff member who administered the restraint shall verbally inform the Principal or designee of the restraint as soon as possible, and by written report no later than the next school working day. The written report shall be provided to the Principal or designee for review of the use of the restraint. If the Principal has administered the restraint, the Principal shall prepare the report and submit it to an individual or team designated by the Superintendent for review. The Principal or designee shall maintain an on-going record of all reported instances of physical restraint, which shall be made available for review by the parent or the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education upon request (DESE).

**Informing Parents/Guardians.** The Principal or designee shall make reasonable efforts to verbally inform the student's parent of the restraint within **24 hours** of the event, and shall

notify the parent by written report that must include all the elements described below sent either within **three school working days** of the restraint to an email address provided by the parent for communications about the student, or by regular mail postmarked no later than three school working days of the restraint. If the program customarily provides a parent of a student with report cards and other necessary school-related information in a language other than English, the written restraint report shall be provided to the parent in that language. The Principal or designee shall provide the student and the parent an opportunity to comment orally and in writing on the use of the restraint and on information in the written report.

**Written Report.** The written report required by 603 CMR 46.06(2) and (3), maintained by school and provided to parent/guardian, must include:

- the name of the student; the names and job titles of the staff who administered the restraint, and observers, if any; the date of the restraint; the time the restraint began and ended; and, the name of the Principal or designee who was verbally informed following the restraint; and, if applicable, the name of the principal or designee who approved continuation of the restraint beyond 20 minutes pursuant to 603 CMR 46.05(5)(c).
- A description of the activity in which the restrained student and other students and staff in the same room or vicinity were engaged immediately preceding the use of physical restraint; the behavior that prompted the restraint; the efforts made to prevent escalation of behavior, including the specific de-escalation strategies used; alternatives to restraint that were attempted; and the justification for initiating physical restraint.
- A description of the administration of the restraint including the holds used and reasons such holds were necessary; the student's behavior and reactions during the restraint; how the restraint ended; and documentation of injury to the student and/or staff, if any, during the restraint and any medical care provided.
- Information regarding any further action(s) that the school has taken or may take, including any consequences that may be imposed on the student.
- Information regarding opportunities for the student's parents to discuss with school officials the administration of the restraint, any consequences that may be imposed on the student, and any other related matter.

**Report all restraint-related injuries to DESE.** When a physical restraint has resulted in an injury to a student or program staff member, the program shall report it to DESE as required by 603 CMR 46.06(4) no later than **three school working days** after the restraint. The program shall also send DESE a copy of the record of physical restraints maintained by the Principal or designee pursuant to 603 CMR 46.06(2) for the 30-day period prior to the date of the reported restraint.

**Report all physical restraints to DESE.** Every program shall collect and report data to DESE regarding the use of physical restraints. Such data shall be reported in a manner and form directed by the DESE.

**Individual student review.** The Principal or designee shall conduct a weekly review of restraint data to identify students who have been restrained multiple times during the week. If such students are identified, the principal shall convene one or more review teams as the Principal or designee deems appropriate to assess each student's progress and needs. The assessment shall include at least the following:

- review and discussion of the written reports submitted in accordance with 603 CMR 46.06 and any comments provided by the student and parent about such reports and the use of the restraints;
- an analysis of the circumstances leading up to each restraint, including factors such as time of day, day of the week, antecedent events, and individuals involved;
- consideration of factors that may have contributed to escalation of behaviors, consideration of alternatives to restraint, including de-escalation techniques and possible interventions, and such other strategies and decisions as appropriate, with the goal of reducing or eliminating the use of restraint in the future;
- agreement on a written plan of action by the program.

If the Principal or designee directly participated in the restraint, a duly qualified individual designated by the Superintendent or designee shall lead the review team's discussion. The Principal shall ensure that a record of each individual student review is maintained and made available for review by the Department or the parent, upon request.

**Administrative review.** The Principal or designee shall conduct a monthly review of school-wide restraint data. This review shall consider patterns of use of restraints by similarities in the time of day, day of the week, or individuals involved; the number and duration of physical restraints school-wide and for individual students; the duration of restraints; and the number and type of injuries, if any, resulting from the use of restraint. The Principal or designee shall determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify the school's restraint prevention and management policy, conduct additional staff training on restraint reduction/prevention strategies, such as training on positive behavioral interventions and supports, or take such other action as necessary or appropriate to reduce or eliminate restraints.

**Complaints.** A parent/guardian, student and/or Arlington Public Schools staff member may file a complaint about restraint practices with the Principal/Superintendent or designee. A building or district administrator will be assigned to investigate the complaint by reviewing records and/or interviewing relevant parties. The building/district administrator investigating the complaint will notify the complainant of the findings and if applicable, any corrective action steps.

**Referral to law enforcement or other state agencies.** Nothing prohibits:

- The right of any individual to report to appropriate authorities a crime committed by a student or other individual;
- Law enforcement, judicial authorities or school security personnel from exercising their responsibilities, including the physical detainment of a student or other person alleged to have committed a crime or posing a security risk; or
- The exercise of an individual's responsibilities as a mandated reporter pursuant to G.L. c. 119, § 51A. 603 CMR 46.00 shall not be used to deter any individual from reporting neglect or abuse to the appropriate state agency.

## **V. Use of Time-Out**

**Seclusion Prohibited.** Arlington Public Schools prohibits seclusion. Seclusion (sometimes referred to as “seclusion restraint”) is defined by regulation as the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include a time-out as defined in 603 CMR 46.02.

**Time-Out.** Arlington Public Schools uses time-out as a behavioral support strategy. Time-out is defined by regulation as when a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out includes inclusionary time-out and exclusionary time-out.

**Inclusionary Time-Out:** When the student is removed from positive reinforcement or full participation in classroom activities while remaining in the classroom. The use of inclusionary time-out functions well as a behavior support strategy while allowing the student to remain fully aware of the learning activities of the classroom. Inclusionary time-out includes practices used by teachers as part of their classroom behavior support tools, such as "planned ignoring," asking students to put their heads down, or placing a student in a different location within the classroom. These strategies, used to reduce external stimuli in the student's environment while keeping the student physically present and involved in learning, have proven to be useful tools for classroom management.

**Exclusionary Time-Out:** The separation of a student from the rest of the class either through complete visual separation (e.g. walled off rooms located within the classroom) or from actual physical separation from the classroom. **The following applies to exclusionary time-outs:**

- Should not be used as a method of punishment for noncompliance, or for incidents of misbehavior that are no longer occurring.

- Should be reserved for use only when students are displaying behaviors which present, or potentially present, an unsafe or overly disruptive situation in the classroom.
- Must end when the student has calmed.
- Unless it poses a safety risk, a staff member must be physically present with the student. If it is not safe for the staff member to be present with the student, the student may be left in the time-out setting with the door closed. However, in order to ensure that the student is receiving appropriate support, staff member(s) must be immediately available outside where the individual can continuously observe and communicate with the student as appropriate to determine when the student has calmed. Students must never be locked in a room.
- For students displaying self-injurious behavior, a staff member must be physically present in the same setting with the student.
- If it appears that the use of exclusionary time-out exacerbates the student's behavior, or the continuation of the exclusionary time-out beyond 30 minutes has not helped the student to calm, then other behavioral support strategies should be attempted.
- **For any exclusionary time-out that may last longer than 30 minutes, a staff member must contact and seek approval from the Principal for the continued use of time-out beyond 30 minutes.** The Principal may not routinely approve such requests but must consider the individual circumstances, specifically whether the student continues to be agitated to determine whether time-out beyond 30 minutes is justified.

## **VI. Required Physical Restraint and Behavioral Support Staff Training**

**Required training for all staff.** Each Principal or designee shall determine a time and method to provide all program staff with training regarding the Arlington Public Schools restraint prevention and behavior support policies and procedures as well as requirements when restraint is used. Such training shall occur within the first month of each school year and, for employees hired after the school year begins, within a month of their employment. **Training must include information on the following:**

- The role of the student, family, and staff in preventing restraint;
- The program's restraint prevention and behavior support policy and procedures, including use of time-out as a behavior support strategy distinct from seclusion;
- Interventions that may preclude the need for restraint, including de-escalation of problematic behaviors and other alternatives to restraint in emergency circumstances;
- When behavior presents an emergency that requires physical restraint, the types of permitted physical restraints and related safety considerations, including information regarding the increased risk of injury to a student when any restraint is used, in particular a restraint of extended duration;

- Administering physical restraint in accordance with medical or psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavioral intervention plans applicable to an individual student; and
- Identification of program staff who have received in-depth training pursuant to 603 CMR 46.03(3) in the use of physical restraint.

**In-depth staff training in the use of physical restraint.** At the beginning of each school year, the principal of each public education program or his or her designee shall identify program staff who are authorized to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. Such staff shall participate in in-depth training in the use of physical restraint. DESE recommends that such training be competency-based and be at least sixteen (16) hours in length with at least one refresher training occurring annually thereafter.

**In-depth training must include:**

- Appropriate procedures for preventing the use of physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, relationship building and the use of alternatives to restraint;
- A description and identification of specific dangerous behaviors on the part of students that may lead to the use of physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted;
- The simulated experience of administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effect(s) on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance;
- Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints;
- Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint; and,
- Instruction regarding the impact of physical restraint on the student and family, recognizing the act of restraint has impact, including but not limited to psychological, physiological, and social-emotional effects.