

Belmont Public Schools



# Physical Restraint Protocol

# P R P PHYSICAL RESTRAINT PROTOCOL

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Department of Education have established new requirements for the use of physical restraint and requires that all staff be familiar with those regulations. (A full text of the DOE regulations, 46.00 is available in each school office.)

The new law is intended to ensure utmost safety for all students and staff and states that restraint will only be used when absolutely necessary.

## DEFINITION

Restraint is defined in CMR 46.00 as:

The use of bodily force to limit a student's freedom of movement.

When should Restraint be used?

Only when a student's behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm to self and/or others and when other, non-physical interventions have been tried and failed or are judged to be inadequate to the circumstances.

Restraints should not be used (46.04.3)

1. When non-physical interventions could be used.
2. As a means of punishment.
3. As a response to property destruction, school disruption, refusal to comply, or verbal threats.

Note:

Touching or holding a student without the use of force is not physical restraint. This can include physical escort of a student, touching to provide instructional assistance, and other forms of physical contact that do not include the use of force.

Further note:

Crisis restraint is different from therapeutic restraint, which, if necessary, is addressed through an individual student's IEP or 504 plan.

## PROCEDURES

A Crisis Restraint Team will be formed in each school. The team will receive specific training in prevention techniques and safe team restraint techniques and will be responsible for adhering to the safety requirements of restraints as specified in the new regulations. The team, under the direction of the building Principal, will also be responsible for facilitating training and awareness of physical restraint requirements for the building staff annually.

Each school building team will develop a plan for alerting and summoning the team if a Restraint crisis were to occur. Additionally, there are Reporting and Data Keep Requirements (sec. 46.06) in the event of a restraint which the team will be prepared to facilitate.

Post Crisis follow-up meetings, involving all team members and teachers involved, will be conducted to learn from the experience and as an aid in planning and prevention.

Restraints lasting over five minutes or any restraint causing injury to student or staff must be report to the building Principal. Extended Restraints (restraints lasting over 20 minutes) have additional reporting requirements. (See pages 8 and 9 of this manual for a copy of the reporting form.)

It is important to stress that the DOE regulations are designed to increase safety and to reduce the need for physical restraint. Therefore, verbal strategies concerned with the rate of speed, tone, and volume are stressed as well as non-verbal techniques such as the importance of personal space and body language.

<b>STUDENT BEHAVIOR</b>
<i>Anxiety Stage</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observable, notable change in behavior.</li> </ul>
<i>Defensive Stage</i>
<p>Belligerent, starts to lose rational control.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Questioning: Information or challenging</li> <li>2. Refusal: Verbal or nonverbal noncompliance</li> <li>3. Release: Emotional outburst, loss of rationalization</li> </ol>
<i>Acting Out Person:</i>
<p>Behavior escalates, loss of control, beings to become a danger to self or other.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Intimidation: Verbally or non-verbally threatening</li> </ol>
<i>Tension Reduction:</i>
Drop in energy.

<b>ADULT SUPPORTIVE RESPONSE</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empathetic, non-judgmental response.</li> <li>• Discover the problem.</li> <li>• Validate the student's need.</li> </ul>
<p>Using a calm, positive tone, set limits: clear, simple, reasonable, and enforceable.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Informational: Give a rational response Challenging: stay on topic, redirect</li> <li>2. Set Limits</li> <li>3. Allow release if possible, remove the audience, state directives</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call the Response Team.</li> <li>• Use distraction techniques, be aware of the environment and student's actions until the Response Team arrives.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debrief with the Response Team</li> <li>• Debrief with the student, re-establish communication</li> </ul>

The Model above may be a useful summary of the different behaviors involved in a growing crisis and the appropriate staff response to levels of student behavior.

The form below is to be used to report each and every incident and are found in the main office of each school.

**PHYSICAL RESTRAINT INCIDENT REPORT**

STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_  
SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_  
GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_ TEACHER: \_\_\_\_\_  
GENDER: M \_\_\_ F \_\_\_  
DATE AND TIME OF INCIDENT: \_\_\_\_\_  
LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT THE STUDENT DID:**

Hurt Self (explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Hurt Others (explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE CRISIS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**BEHAVIORS EXHIBITED BY THE STUDENT:**

\_\_\_ Agitated    \_\_\_ Hostile    \_\_\_ Non-Compliant    \_\_\_ Withdrawn  
\_\_\_ Mood swings    \_\_\_ Crying    \_\_\_ Self-abusive    \_\_\_ Threats

Add details to the behavior if desired:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILS OF RESTRAINT:**

Regular \_\_\_ Extended \_\_\_ Amount of Time \_\_\_\_\_

Team members involved:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Type of restraint used: \_\_\_\_\_

How incident ended: \_\_\_\_\_

**FOLLOW UP TO RESTRAINT:**

Report to Administrator on:            date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent contact on:                        date: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency or Police contact on:            date: \_\_\_\_\_

Post-Restraint meeting on:                date: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPLETED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

POSITION: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINCIPAL SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## NOTES:

### OTHER PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES

In order to reduce the need for physical restraint, it is necessary to prevent the escalation of negative behavior to the crisis stage. To achieve this, all staff should use preventative strategies.

These strategies include:

- Active listening
- Encouragement
- Problem solving
- Clarifying expectations
- Providing support
- Consultation with support staff
- Restructuring the environment
- Behavior modification strategies
- Referral to Physician/Medical plan

It is also important to keep in mind that some attempts at intervention can escalate anxiety and can intensify a crisis. Some of these include:

- Doing too much talking and showing too much emotion
- Using degrading, insulting, or embarrassing putdowns
- Making assertions about the student's motives or feelings
- Raising one's voice or shouting
- Backing the student into a corner
- Generalizing to other student's behavior
- Preaching, using sarcasm, or nagging
- Making unsubstantiated accusations
- Drawing unrelated persons into the conflict
- Displaying tense body language
- Insisting on having the last word
- "Do what I say, not what I do."
- Having a double standard
- Pleading or bribing