



BEHAVIORAL EMERGENCY: UPDATE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT POLICY

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State Regulations Require Policy Update

Background

- National dialogue on reducing the use of restraints
- Massachusetts DESE responded to research, comments, and incidents regarding misuse and risks of prone and other restraints
- Limited data statewide regarding restraint use in public schools
- Alignment with early childhood regulations
- DESE issued revisions for public review and comment; guidelines approved December 2014
- New regulations go into effect **As of January 1, 2016**

State Regulations Require Policy Update

Regulations require school districts to update their policies and procedures. In addition, BPS is not only seeking to comply, but to focus on prevention of behavioral emergencies (measure of last resort)

- **Goals** of the regulatory revisions include:
 - **emphasizing the emergency nature of restraint use**
 - **use of proactive and positive behavioral interventions and supports,**
 - **and improving reporting regulations** surrounding the collection and reporting of restraint data to ESE
 - Applies to every student in every school

State Regulations Require Policy Update

Prohibitions on:

- **Prone** (on stomach) restraints, medication, and mechanical restraints.
- **Seclusion** (isolating student without access to staff member)

Highlights of revisions:

- **Definition of “time-out”** included in regulations
- **Emphasis on training all staff in restraint prevention and awareness of emergency nature of restraint**
- Increase in **principal oversight** in restraints conducted in schools.

Main Changes to BPS Policy

- **Focus on restraint prevention and positive behavioral supports**
 - Multi-tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) in behavior
 - Emphasis on strengthening the Core (Tier 1), such as social emotional learning, de-escalation techniques, and positive behavioral support strategies (SEL & Wellness)
 - Providing individualized approaches to proactively address challenging and more serious behaviors (Behavioral Health)

Main Changes to BPS Policy cont'd

- **All school-based staff must be trained on BPS policy**
- **Continued need for identified staff members (4 per school) to be trained** in a specialized, in-depth training program for 16 hours regarding appropriate restraint procedures; only such staff is authorized to restrain students

Main Changes in BPS Policy

- **Reporting requirements greatly increase**
 - State has provided reporting form for tracking all restraint data by school
 - Principals must monitor and review restraints weekly for individual students and monthly school-wide, if occurring
 - Reporting must be shared with Behavioral Health Services to provide support when necessary
 - District reports all restraints to DESE yearly (before only upon injury or restraint in excess of 20 minutes)-Behavioral Health

Timeline

- December 2015- Restraint Incident reports in place through Aspen
 - Principals notified of changes
- January 1, 2016- regulations go into effect
- January 2016 Principals trained
- Spring 2016 develop all staff training on restraint prevention with emphasis on positive behavior intervention and support (PBIS)
- Continue professional development on PBIS and MTSS
- July 2016 First report with restraint data to DESE
- September 2016
 - All staff trained and yearly thereafter
 - Parent handbook updated