



# Superintendent's Circular

School Year 2015-2016

NUMBER:  
SSS-1  
DATE:  
December 17, 2015

## BEHAVIORAL EMERGENCIES: PHYSICAL RESTRAINT POLICY

### Background and Purpose

The purpose of this circular is to ensure that **every** student participating in a Boston Public School program is free from the unreasonable use of physical restraint and that such an intervention is used only in emergency situations after other less intensive alternatives have failed or have been deemed inappropriate. Physical restraint should be administered only when needed to protect a student or other students and staff from imminent, serious physical harm as a measure of last resort. When necessary, physical restraint should be administered in the least intrusive manner possible and should be used to prevent or minimize harm to the student.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education established regulations governing the use of physical restraints on students. These regulations supersede all previously established procedures. The Boston Public Schools is required to follow the provisions of 603 CMR 46.00 which regulates the use of physical restraint on students in Massachusetts public school districts, charter schools, collaborative and special education schools.

### Restraint Prevention

Boston Public Schools (BPS) is guided by the principle that the use of seclusion and restraint can be reduced most effectively by implementing proactive procedures that prevent serious challenging behaviors from occurring. Massachusetts has developed a blueprint outlining a single system of supports that is responsive to the academic and non-academic needs of all students. This blueprint, the Massachusetts Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), provides a framework for school improvement that focuses on system level change across the classroom, school, and district. The MTSS model applies the three-tiered public health framework of prevention and interventions to address students' academic and behavioral concerns. It guides both the provision of high-quality core educational experiences in a safe and supportive learning environment for all students and academic and/or non-academic targeted interventions/supports for students who experience difficulties and for students who have already demonstrated mastery of the concept and skills being taught. BPS is committed to support each school in developing and implementing school wide positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) system as well as a continuum of physical, social, and emotional supports to meet the needs of all students. BPS utilizes the MTSS blueprint as the vehicle for providing students and staff the support they need to optimize learning and subsequent academic achievement.

BPS promotes the belief that behavioral strategies, particularly when implemented as part of a school-wide program of positive behavioral interventions and supports, can be used to address the underlying causes of dangerous behavior and reduce the likelihood that restraint or seclusion will need to be used.

For students identified as eligible for special education services, additional supports may be provided through their Individualized Education Program (IEP) and such students retain all rights afforded to them under state and federal special education laws at all times. Specifically, for students with cognitive or developmental disabilities (e.g., Autism) who exhibit challenging behaviors, the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) may be utilized as the fundamental approach to addressing and preventing these problem behaviors. This instructional approach emphasizes the importance of looking at the antecedents, behaviors, and consequences (ABC's) of challenging behaviors, teaching alternative or replacement skills, and developing instructional plans using task analysis. **No written**

individual behavior plan or individualized education program (IEP) may include use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior, 603 CMR 46.03(3)(d).

### **Training**

Please note that, at the beginning of each school year, Principals/Headmasters are required to identify program staff to be responsible for administering proper physical restraint procedures. These individuals will participate in an in-depth training (a minimum of 16 hours) in the use of physical restraint and appropriate de-escalation methods. Also, Principals/Headmasters shall arrange a time for ALL STAFF to receive training with regard to the restraint policy and restraint prevention within the first month of the school year and for employees hired after the school year begins, within a month of their employment.

### **Reporting**

Any staff member, who administers ANY restraint, shall verbally inform the Principal/ Headmaster as soon as possible and by written report no later than the next school working day. The principal shall maintain an on-going record of all reported instances of physical restraint electronically. Additionally, the report shall be maintained in the student record. If the Principal/Headmaster has administered the restraint, then he/she shall submit the report to an individual or team designated by the superintendent or board of trustees for review. The Principal/Headmaster shall also maintain an on-going record of all reported instances of physical restraint, which shall be made available for review by the Department or the student's parent, upon request AND yearly by July 31.

### **Review of Restraint Data and Reports**

The principal shall also 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 deems appropriate to assess each student's progress and needs. The principal shall also 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. 603 CMR 46.06(5)(a-d). Behavioral Health Services shall also review all restraint data monthly.

**The Superintendent shall devise and implement a guidance document to implement this policy.**

Summary of significant dates and deadlines:

Date	Activity
<b>September 30</b>	Deadline for all staff trained in restraint and behavioral policy AND at least one staff member from every school to be in-depth trained in physical restraint
<b>July 31</b>	Reporting to DESE on District Wide Restraint Data

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