

Houston County Schools
Policy Regarding Time Out and Restraint

Superintendent: Tim Pitchford Date: Approved 2012

Houston County Schools

Policy Regarding Time Out and Restraint

These procedures are established for the purpose of meeting the obligations governing the use of designated time out rooms and therapeutic restraint. These procedures shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with federal and state law and regulations.

1. Definitions

- a. Chemical Restraint- Any medication that is used to control violent physical 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 Houston County Schools.
- b. Mechanical Restraint- 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 Houston County Schools.
- c. Physical Restraint- 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 or prevent self-injurious behavior, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing guidance to a location, providing comfort, or providing limited physical contact as reasonably needed to prevent imminent destruction to school or another person's property.
- d. Prone Restraint- 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 that restricts the flow of

air into the student's lungs. Use of prone restraint is prohibited in Houston County Schools.

- e. Seclusion- A procedure that isolates and confines the student in a separate, locked area until he or she is no longer an immediate danger to himself/herself or others. The seclusion occurs in a specifically constructed or designated room or space that is physically isolated from common areas and from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include situations in which a staff member trained in the use of de-escalation techniques or restraint is physically present in the same unlocked room as the student, time-out as defined below, in-school suspension, detention, or a student-requested break in a different location in the room or in a separate room. Use of seclusion is prohibited in Houston County Schools.
 - f. Time-out- A behavioral intervention in which the student is temporarily removed from the learning activity or when reinforcement is withdrawn from the student. Time-out is appropriately used when:
 - i. The non-locking setting used for time-out is appropriately lighted, ventilated, and heated or cooled.
 - ii. The duration of the time-out is reasonable in light of the purpose of the time-out and age of the child; however, each time-out should not exceed 60 minutes in duration.
 - iii. The student is reasonably monitored by an attending adult, who is in reasonable physical proximity of the student while in time-out.
 - iv. The time-out space is free of objects that unreasonably expose the student or others to harm.
2. Statement of Values and Belief:
- a. Social and emotional skills form a foundation for young people's success not just in school, but also as healthy and caring adults, productive workers, and engaged citizens. Positive student behavior in school is directly connected to increased motivation, efficient academic learning, high achievement, diminished disciplinary action, and increased graduation rates.
 - b. Students and school personnel have the right to work in a safe environment. Implementation of approaches to positive student behavior will improve overall school safety, will minimize the need for the use of restraint and will ensure that it is only used in emergency situations.
3. General Information:
- a. Houston County Schools seeks to promote a safe and productive workplace and educational environment for its employees and students. In

accordance with the Alabama Administrative Code, the rules governing the use of physical restraint on students in Alabama public schools, the Houston County Schools seeks to ensure that every student in Houston County Schools is free from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. PHYSICAL RESTRAINT SHALL ONLY BE USED IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS, AFTER OTHER LESS INTRUSIVE ALTERNATIVES HAVE FAILED OR BEEN DEEMED INAPPROPRIATE, AND WITH EXTREME CAUTION.

- b. It is expected that school staff will implement positive behavior supports and interventions, functional behavioral assessments and related behavior plans designed to teach replacement behaviors, and constructive methods to deescalate potentially dangerous situations prior to the use of restraint.
 - c. School personnel shall only administer a physical restraint when it is needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from imminent physical harm. When a physical restraint needs to be administered, school personnel shall seek to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of the physical restraint.
4. Prohibitions and Requirements:
- a. The use of seclusion is prohibited in Houston County Schools and educational programs.
 - b. The use of prone restraint is prohibited in Houston County Schools and educational programs.
 - c. The use of chemical restraint is prohibited in Houston County Schools and educational programs.
 - d. The use of physical restraint is prohibited in Houston County Schools except in those situations in which the student is an immediate danger to himself or others and the student is not responsive to less intensive behavioral interventions including verbal directives or other de-escalation techniques. Notwithstanding the foregoing, physical restraint is prohibited in Houston County Schools and educational programs when used as a form of discipline or punishment.
 - e. All physical restraint must be immediately terminated when the student is no longer an immediate danger to himself or others or if the student is observed to be in severe distress. The person(s) administering a physical restraint shall use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury or harm.
5. Regulations and procedures of Restraint in Houston County Schools:
- a. Therapeutic restraint is utilized only by trained personnel of Houston County Schools except in rare and unusual emergency circumstances.

Training shall be provided by certified trainers and documentation shall be kept by all personnel members who have been trained. Training shall be provided as a part of a program which addresses prevention and de-escalation techniques as well as positive behavioral intervention strategies. Documentation of training, which includes the list of participants in each training, will be maintained.

- b. Therapeutic restraint as covered by these policies and procedures shall be used only for the purpose of preventing a student from injuring him or herself, or others, or major disruption to the physical environment. Such restraint is undertaken in accordance with an individualized, written plan that specifically calls for nonviolent crisis prevention.
- c. Therapeutic restraint as covered by these policies and procedures shall involve the least amount of physical contact that is required to bring the behavior under control. Restraint must be administered in such a way so as to prevent or minimize physical harm. No restraint should be administered in such a way that the student is prevented from breathing or speaking.
- d. During the restraint, a staff member should continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin color and respiration. If, at any time during the restraint, the student demonstrates significant medical distress, the student shall then be released from the restraint and the school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance.
- e. For each student and in each instance restraint is utilized as covered by these policies and procedures, the classroom teacher that is involved in that decision/action shall document the action on the approved form. This documentation must include the following: the name of the student; the date and time of the restraint; the time the restraint ended; the antecedent events leading up to the behavior requiring the restraint; the behavior itself requiring the restraint; other types of intervention that may have been used; the names of staff members involved in the incident and any injury that may have been accrued by student or staff; and the names of staff members who participated in the restraint. If a call is placed to the family or to emergency personnel, that should be noted in the documentation as well.
- f. This written documentation shall be provided to the building principal, the Special Education Coordinator, and the parent within one school day of the use of restraint. Administrators will review each incident of restraint and the documentation provided.

- g. Any prohibited use of seclusion and chemical, mechanical, or physical restraint must be reported to the Superintendent of Education immediately. Use of prohibited seclusion or restraint can result in disciplinary action.
- h. Nothing in this rule shall be construed to interfere with the school system, school or program, or school or program employee's authority to utilize time-out as defined in this rule or any other classroom management technique or approach, including a student's removal from the classroom that is not specifically addressed in this rule.
- i. Nothing in this rule modifies the rights of school personnel to use reasonable force as permitted under the *Code of Alabama, 1975* or modifies the rules and procedures governing discipline under the *Code of Alabama, 1975*.
- j. Nothing in this rule shall be construed to prohibit the school system, school, or program employee from taking reasonable action to diffuse or break up a student fight or altercation.
- k. Nothing in this rule shall be construed to prohibit the school system, school, or program employee from taking reasonable action to obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object on a student or within control of a student.
- l. Nothing in this rule shall be construed to eliminate or restrict the ability of an employee of the school system, school or program 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 rule shall be construed to create a criminal offense or a private cause of action against the local board of education or program or its agents or employees.
- m. In some instances in which a student is an immediate danger to himself or herself or others, the school or program must determine when it becomes necessary to seek assistance from law enforcement and/or emergency medical personnel. Nothing in these rules shall be construed to interfere with the duties of law enforcement or emergency medical personnel. Parents must be promptly informed when students are removed from the school or program setting by emergency, medical or law enforcement personnel.

Houston County Schools

Documentation of Safe Physical Management

Student's Name _____ DOB _____ School _____

Does the student have an active IEP? **Yes** **No** Date of restraint _____

Antecedent Events:

Where was the student? _____

What was the student doing prior to the behavior that resulted in physical restraint?

_____.

What time of the day was it? _____

Who was with the student? _____

Behavior That Precipitated the Physical Restraint

Describe what the student was doing that was dangerous to themselves or others.

Who observed the behavior that prompted the use of physical restraint?

What interventions were used prior to the physical restraint? _____

Who did the restraint? _____

What restraint was used?

How long was the student restrained? _____

Where did the restraint occur? _____

Who witnessed the restraint? _____

Describe the student's behavior and reaction during the restraint. _____

How was the situation/problem resolved? _____

Describe the student's behavior after the restraint? _____

Post-intervention:

What is planned to prevent future situations/problems? _____

Signature of person completing this documentation _____

Witnesses Signature

Position Held

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Date this documentation was sent to the parent/guardian: _____

Date this documentation was provided to building administrator: _____

Date this documentation was provided to Special Education Coordinator: _____