

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

A. Introduction

The Laconia School District authorizes staff members to use physical restraints in limited situations. Physical restraint may be used only under the following conditions:

1. Physical action of a student creates a substantial risk of harm to self or others;
2. All other positive interventions have failed, or the level of immediate risk prohibits exhausting other means; and
3. Staff is trained in the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) program.

Physical restraint is appropriate only when a student is displaying physical behavior that presents substantial risk to the student or others, and considered when, in the opinion of the supervising adult, the threat is imminent. Persons implementing a restraint will use extreme caution and the least amount of physical strength necessary to protect the student. The use of physical intervention should not exceed that necessary to avoid injury. The degree of physical restriction employed **must** be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the potential consequences.

A physical restraint of a student should be conducted in a manner consistent with the techniques described in the District approved training program. The purpose of the restraint should be to assist the student to regain emotional stability. It should last only as long as is necessary to accomplish this. To the extent possible, it should be conducted in such a way as to preserve the confidentiality and dignity of all involved.

Restraint should be carried out by trained persons authorized by the Superintendent, Director of Student Services, Principal, or his/her designee. Untrained staff is limited to physically intervening by using the minimal amount of physical contact with the student to protect the student and ensure the safety of others until trained staff is available. Untrained staff should request assistance from trained staff as soon as possible.

B. Definitions

1. **Physical restraint** occurs whenever a staff member physically restricts a child's movement against his or her will. Physical restraint is a temporary measure to be used only when necessary to facilitate care, welfare, safety, and security for all.
2. **Substantial risk** is the serious, imminent threat of bodily harm where there is the ability to enact such harm. Substantial risk shall exist only if all other less restrictive alternatives to diffuse the situation have been exhausted and have failed, or the level of risk prohibits exhausting other means.

3. **Trained Staff** are those individual who successfully complete and stay current in a training program that results in acquisition of skills in preventing restraints, evaluating risk of harm in an individual situation, use of approved techniques and monitoring the effect of the restraint.
4. **District** shall mean the Laconia School District.
5. **Parent** shall mean the student's parent, legal guardian, surrogate parent or student over the age of 18.

C. Risks of Restraint

Staff will understand that all physical restraints involve some risk. This may include injury, including in rare instances, death to the person being restrained and/or to staff. Restraint related positional asphyxiation or other physical injuries can occur. For this reason, it is essential that staff is trained in appropriate techniques that minimize the possibilities of risk.

There is also the risk of psychological impact in using restraints. An individual's past experience with abuse or the fear involved with being restrained may cause unanticipated responses. Staff should be aware that for some students the use of physical restraint might have the unintended consequences of acting as a positive reinforcement for their behavior.

In addition, staff should be conscious of individual perceptions, experiences and cultural orientation and recognize that for some students any touching may be unwelcome and misinterpreted despite good intentions. In these situations, touching the student may evoke an extreme and intense response and make the use of restraint more dangerous for both student and staff.

D. Training

The District shall ensure all appropriate personnel are trained in the use of physical restraint procedures. Efforts will be made to apply physical restraint only by individuals who have received training in the District approved program and have remained current in its use.

The District will notify all new personnel working in programs where the use of restraint is "anticipated" of the Use of Physical Restraint Policy and Procedures and the requirement they participate in the approved training program within a reasonable period. Staff will receive on-going training to maintain the requirements of the training program chosen by the District.

Staff members assigned to provide training must be a "certified instructor" in the training program selected by the District.

E. Prevention Strategies

It is expected that school staff will implement positive and constructive methods to de-escalate potentially dangerous situations. When the district “anticipates” that a student is likely to behave in a way that may require physical restraint, staff will conduct a functional behavior assessment and develop a positive behavior plan including a plan for teaching replacement behaviors. When appropriate, a team of knowledgeable people will include behavioral goals and objectives in a student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP), 504 Accommodation Plan or other Behavior Intervention Plan. Staff must implement all strategies identified in any formal plan such as an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), 504 Accommodation Plan or any other Behavior Intervention Plan.

Whether the student is eligible for special education or not, the school can still develop a specific behavior support plan in conjunction with the parent/guardian.

F. Processing the Incident

Immediately after the student has restored emotional and behavioral control, a staff member not involved with the incident shall examine the student to ascertain if any injury has been sustained during the restraint. This should be verified by the school nurse or other health professional.

The individuals involved with the incident shall complete a written report as soon after the incident as possible.

The staff member involved with the physical restraint will have the opportunity to meet with his/her supervisor after the incident. The purpose is to have staff process the incident, look at what could have been done to prevent the restraint and look at any more efficient ways to manage a restraint should it occur in the future. The supervisor will provide support to the staff member and determine when the staff member shall return to his or her duties.

The student, with assistance from staff, will process the event at the earliest appropriate time.

G. Informed Decision Making

When the use of physical restraint is included in a student’s written plan, the District will provide the parent/guardian with a copy of the Policy and Procedures for the Use of Physical Restraint.

Additionally, the parent/guardian will be asked to share relevant information with school personnel. This information should include, but not limited to, medical, health and/or psychological considerations, past experiences, patterns of behavior that may signal an imminent situation and/or de-escalation techniques that have proven to be successful. Whenever staff becomes aware of a medical condition, it is their responsibility to work with the parent/guardian to identify viable modifications/alternatives.

To the extent possible, the District will collaborate with the parent/guardian to identify appropriate and effective techniques for supporting student behavior. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the District to provide for the safety of all students. The general welfare and safety of both the student and others must be considered at all times. In dangerous situations where the student can cause serious, probable and imminent bodily harm to himself/herself or others, restraint may be used.

H. Documentation

All restraints must be documented. A form to be used for documentation has been provided in the Appendix. The form is entitled “Incident Report”.

I. Reporting Requirements

Appropriate personnel will use the following protocol after each incident:

1. Verbally notify Principal as soon as possible;
2. School Principal or designee will verbally notify the parent/guardian as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the school day that the restraint occurs. The Principal or designee will update the parent/guardian on the student’s current emotional state and discuss strategies to assist the parent/guardian in dealing with any residual effects of the incident;
3. Complete the Incident Report – Form #1 within one school day to the school Principal or designee;
4. Send copy of the written report to the parent/guardian within 24 hours following the use of restraint;
5. Place a copy of report in the student’s confidential file.

Further, it is expected that each staff member involved in an incident will engage in a processing session(s). Components to be included in this session are outlined in the Staff Processing of Restraint – Form #2. The staff member’s supervisor or designee shall complete and file the form.

K. Annual Review Process

The District shall establish a Committee to conduct an annual review of all individual and program-wide data associated with this policy. The Committee shall review at a minimum, the following components related to the use of restraint. These include an analysis of the following components:

1. Incident reports;
2. Procedures used during restraint, including the proper administration of specific District approved restraint techniques;
3. Preventative measures or alternatives tried, techniques or accommodations used to avoid or eliminate the need of the future use of restraint;
4. Documentation and follow up of procedural adjustments made to eliminate the need for future use of restraint;
5. Injuries incurred during a restraint;
6. Notification procedures;
7. Staff training needs;
8. Specific patterns related to staff or student incidents; and
9. Environmental considerations, including physical space, student seating arrangements, and noise levels.

Upon review of the data, the Committee shall identify any issues and/or practices that require further attention and provide written recommendations to the Superintendent of Schools. Further, the Committee can recommend review of the training program to ensure the most current knowledge and techniques are reflected in the District program.

The Laconia School Board will annually review its written policy and procedures regarding the use of restraint.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that all relevant personnel are aware of the District Use of Physical Restraint Policy and Procedures.

Principals will annually identify staff members who serve as school-wide resources to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. Each school will maintain and distribute an up to date list of trained staff to all relevant educational personnel.

Incident Report – Form #1

Student: _____ Date of Incident: _____

School/Program: _____ Grade: _____

Person Completing Report: _____

Job Title: _____ Report Date: _____

Signature of Person Completing Report: _____

Staff Involved in Restraint:

_____ Job Title: _____

_____ Job Title: _____

_____ Job Title: _____

Beginning Time of Restraint: _____ Ending Time: _____

Description of incident that necessitated restraint:

Location:

Others involved/witnesses:

Possible motivators:

- Obtain peer attention
- Obtain adult attention
- Obtain items/activities
- Avoid peer(s)
- Avoid adult(s)
- Avoid task or activity
- Get/avoid self-regulation (sensory issue)
- Don't know
- Other _____

Describe student's behavior before, during and after the restraint.

Staff Processing of Restraint Incident – Form #2

All staff involved in a crisis incident should be part of a processing session. This should occur after the incident report has already been written and as soon as possible after the event occurred. The focus of processing is to increase the effectiveness of staff response and to decrease the need for future restraint.

The following are important elements of the processing and should be checked off as discussed:

- Staff discussed what lead up to the incident. **(Check each area discussed)**
 - Each staff member described the incident from his/her own perspective without interruption from others. (Not everyone will perceive or remember the incident in the same way.)
 - Staff discussed the triggers that initiated the escalation of behavior, including student, staff and environmental triggers.

- Staff talked about their own feelings and reactions regarding: **(Check each area discussed)**
 - What aspects of the restraint process went well? What were the strengths in de-escalating the incident?
 - Was there anything staff could have done differently that might have decreased or eliminated the need for restraint?
 - How did staff feel about how the restraint situation was handled and how it turned out?
 - Was the restraint necessary to maintain the safety of staff and student(s)? Were there other options?
 - What was the staff attitude prior, during, and after the restraint? How did it escalate or de-escalate the student?
 - Was the appropriate number of staff involved in the restraint? Too many? Too few? How did it impact the restraint in terms of intensity and duration?

- Staff discussed what to do next. **(Check each area discussed)**
 - Was the event processed with the student? What was the result?

 - Overall, what were the issues that must be addressed by student/staff?

 - What resources will staff need to assist in working more effectively with the student in the future? What are the training needs?

A staff processing session is a time to review the facts, to acknowledge staff feelings regarding the crisis, and to give and receive support and encouragement from others.