

**PEMBROKE PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Physical Restraint and Behavior Support Procedures**

Physical restraint is defined as direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort. Physical restraint shall only be used when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the Pembroke school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. Furthermore, any such physical restraint shall be administered so as to prevent or minimize any harm to the student.

This policy shall be reviewed annually and provided to Pembroke Public Schools staff and made available to the Parents of enrolled students. Nothing in this policy precludes any teacher, employee, or agent of the Pembroke Public Schools from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons, or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

**1. Methods for Preventing Student Violence and Self-Injurious Behavior**

**i. Prevention/De-Escalation Techniques**

Prevention includes using positive steps taken before a behavioral crisis occurs.

**a. Interrupting**

Interrupting is the first thing to do when trying to break a chain of behaviors, distracting the individual to another topic or something in the environment.

**b. Ignoring**

Ignoring is used during the early stages of negative behavior in which the behavior is not visibly responded to, in order to avoid inadvertently reinforcing it. It does not mean that early danger signs are truly ignored and does not mean that dangerous behaviors are ever ignored.

**c. Redirecting**

Redirecting is used to manage a potentially dangerous behavior by deflecting or redirecting the behavior, and then reinforcing a more appropriate behavior by rewarding the individual for displaying the more appropriate behavior.

Prevention also involves assuring staff has training; appropriate staffing; policies/procedures in place including behavioral support plans; appropriate programming; ability to recognize individuals strengths, weaknesses and triggers.

**2. Alternatives to Physical Restraint and Methods of Physical Restraint**

**i. Alternatives**

Physical restraint shall not be used unless the following, less intrusive behavior interventions and supports have been unsuccessful or deemed inappropriate by school staff:

**a. Positive behavioral interventions**

- b. Verbal redirection**
- i. Verbal directive to cease behavior**
- c. Opportunity for a break**
- d. De-escalation techniques**
- e. Loss of earned tokens/rewards/privileges**
- f. Opportunity for time-out**

Time-outs are a behavioral support strategy developed pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(1) in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed. Any time outs over thirty (30) minutes must obtain principal approval.

- g. Physical Prompts and Assists**

Physical Prompt or Assists are used when the upset person is moving forward but with little resistance. Staff has hands on the individual, but individual is not displaying assaultive behavior or significantly resisting. Intention of this assist is to move the individual from one place to another and to release him/her upon arrival at desired location. Physical assists must be brief in nature.

- h. Physical Escort**

A physical escort is a temporary touch or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated or upset to walk to a safe location. Physical Escorts must be brief in nature.

- ii. Methods of Physical Restraint:**

- a.** Physical restraint shall not be used as a means of discipline or punishment; if the student cannot be safely restrained due to medical contraindications which have been documented by a licensed physician and provided to the District; as a response to property destruction, disruption, refusal to comply with rules or staff directives, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. Physical restraint shall not be used as a standard response for any individual student. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort.
- b.** Restraint will not be used as a standard response for any individual student. No written individual behavior plan or individualized education program (IEP) may include use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort.
- c.** The following forms of physical restraint shall only be administered by trained personnel, using only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or other member(s) of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. The staff member(s) administering physical restraint shall use

the safest method available and appropriate to the situation. Staff shall continuously monitor the physical status of the student during restraint, and the student shall be immediately released from the physical restraint if the student expresses or demonstrates significant physical distress.

All physical restraints must terminate as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger, or if the student indicates that he/she cannot breathe, or if the student is observed to be in severe distress. If any physical restraint approaches twenty (20) minutes, staff will obtain the approval of the building Principal to continue the restraint based upon the student's continued agitation. All physical restraints shall be administered in compliance with 603 CMR 46.00.

i. **Passive Protective Holds**

Passive Protective Holds are used by one or two staff to facilitate a short term emergency physical intervention. The individual is potentially causing harm to self/others or is engaged in major property destruction that could potentially lead to harm to self or others.

a. **Transports**

Transports are used to move an upset individual from one area to another area. This is used when the individual is not cooperating and may be aggressive/assaultive. Individual must have their feet on the floor. Purpose of a transport is to move the individual from danger to safety, not from danger to destination.

b. **Immobilization Holds**

Immobilization Holds prevent the individual from moving freely and involve immobilizing head, arms and legs.

3. **Prohibited Forms of Restraint**

Medication restraint, mechanical restraint, and seclusion restraint, as defined in 603 CMR 46.02, are prohibited in the Pembroke Public Schools.

- a. Any form of physical restraint used in a manner inconsistent with 603 CMR 46.00 is prohibited in the Pembroke Public Schools.
- b. **Mechanical restraint** shall mean the use of any device or equipment to restrict a student's freedom of movement. This term does not include devices implemented by trained school personnel, or utilized by a student that have been prescribed by an appropriate medical or related services professional, and are used for the specific and approved positioning or protective purposes for which such devices were designed.
- c. **Medication restraint** shall mean the administration of medication for the purpose of temporarily controlling behavior. Medication prescribed by a physician and authorized by the parent for administration in the school setting is not medication restraint.

- d. Prone restraint, as defined in 603 CMR 46.02, shall only be permitted under the following, limited circumstances:
  - 1) The student has a documented history of serious self-injury and/or injuries to other students or staff;
  - 2) All other forms of physical restraint have failed to ensure the safety of the student and/or the safety of others.
  - 3) There are no medical contraindications documented by a licensed physician;
  - 4) There are no psychological or behavioral contraindications documented by a licensed mental health professional;
  - 5) The student's Parent has provided voluntary, informed, written consent to the use of prone restraint; consent shall mean agreement by a parent who has been fully informed of all information relevant to the activity for which agreement is sought, that the parent understands that the agreement is voluntary and may be revoked at any time. The agreement describes the activity and lists the records (if any) which will be released and to whom.
  - 6) The building Principal, or designee, has provided written approval.

Pembroke Public Schools will not use prone restraint unless the above circumstances have been documented in advance.

#### **4. Staff Training, Physical Restraint Reporting, and Follow-Up Process**

##### **i. Staff Training**

- a. All staff/faculty will receive training regarding the District's physical restraint policy within the first month of each school year, and employees hired after the school year begins will receive training within one month of starting their employment.
- b. Required training for all staff will include review of the following:
  - 1) Pembroke Public Schools Physical Restraint and Behavior Support Policy
  - 2) School building-level physical restraint procedures, including the use of time-out as a behavior support strategy;
  - 3) The role of the student, family, and staff in preventing physical restraint;
  - 4) Interventions which may preclude the need for restraint, including de-escalation of problematic behaviors and alternatives to restraint;
  - 5) When in an emergency, the types of permitted physical restraints and related safety consideration, including information regarding the increased risk of injury to a student when any restraint is used;
  - 6) Identification of Pembroke Public Schools' staff who have received in-depth training

##### **c. In-Depth Training**

- 1) At the beginning of the school year, the building Principal will identify those designated staff who will participate in in-depth training and who will then be authorized to serve school-wide resources to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint.
- 2) Designated staff members shall participate in in-depth training in the use of physical restraint, with at least one refresher training annually.

- 3) In-depth training will include:
  - a. Appropriate procedures for preventing the need for physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, relationship building and the use of alternatives to restraint;
  - b. A description and identification of specific dangerous behaviors on the part of students that may lead to the use of physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted;
  - c. The simulated experience of administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effect(s) on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance;
  - d. Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints;
  - e. Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint; and
  - f. Instruction regarding the impact of physical restraint on the student and family, including but not limited to psychological, physiological, and social-emotional effects.

**ii. Physical Restraint Reporting**

**a. Report to building Principal:**

- 1) Staff shall verbally inform the Principal of any physical restraint as soon as possible, and by written report within one (1) school day.
- 2) The Principal or designee shall maintain an ongoing record of all reported instances of physical restraint.

**b. Report to Parent(s) of Physically Restrained Student:**

- 1) The Principal or designee shall make reasonable efforts to verbally inform the student's Parent of the physical restraint within twenty-four (24) hours.
- 2) The Principal or designee shall provide the Parent a written report of the physical restraint within three (3) school days. This written report may be provided via email, if the Parent has provided the District with an email address.
- 3) The principal shall provide the student and the parent an opportunity to comment orally and in writing on the use of the restraint and on information in the written report.
- 4) The Parent and/or student may also pursue the Grievance Procedure described in Section 10, below.

**c. Report to Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE):**

- 1) Whenever a physical restraint results in injury to the student or any school community member, the District shall send a copy of the written report to DESE within three (3) school days.
- 2) A copy of the ongoing physical restraint log from the past thirty (30) days will also be provided to DESE.
- 3) Pembroke Public Schools shall also report physical restraint data

annually to DESE, as directed by DESE.

**d. Report to Law Enforcement and Other State Agencies:**

- 1) Nothing in this policy prevents any individual from reporting a crime to the appropriate authorities;
- 2) Nothing in this policy prevents any individual from exercising their responsibilities as a mandated reporter under M.G.L, c. 119, §51A.

**e. Contents of Written Report**

- 1) The written report of any physical restraint shall include:
  - a. Name of the student; name(s) and job title(s) of staff who administered the physical restraint, and observers, if any; the date, time restraint began, and the time that restraint ended; the name of the Principal or designee who was verbally informed following the restraint, and who approved continuation of the restraint beyond twenty (20) minutes, if applicable.
  - b. A description of the activity in which the restrained student and other students and staff in the vicinity were engaged immediately preceding the use of the physical restraint; the behavior that prompted the restraint; the efforts made to prevent escalation of behavior, including specific de-escalation strategies used; alternatives to restraint that were attempted; and the justification for initiating physical restraint.
  - c. A description of the administration of the restraint including the holds used and reasons such holds were necessary; the student's behavior and reactions during the restraint; how the restraint ended; and documentation of injury to the student and/or staff, if any, and any medical care provided.
  - d. Information regarding any further action(s) that the school has taken or may take, including any consequences that may be imposed on the student.
  - e. Information regarding opportunities for the student's Parent(s) to discuss the administration of the restraint and any consequences with school officials.

**iii. Follow-Up Procedures**

- a. After a student is released from a physical restraint, staff shall implement follow-up procedures, including:
  - Reviewing the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the physical restraint;
  - 1) Reviewing the incident with the staff member(s) who administered the physical restraint to ensure proper restraint procedures were followed; and
  - 2) Consideration of whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the physical restraint, if any.
- b. The principal of the program shall conduct a weekly review of restraint data in order 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 assessment shall include at least the following:

- 1) review and discussion of the written reports developed in accordance with 603 CMR 46.06 and any comments provided by the student and parent about such reports and the use of the restraints;
- 2) an analysis of the circumstances leading up to each restraint, including factors such as time of day, day of the week, antecedent events, and individuals involved;
- 3) consideration of factors that may have contributed to escalation of behaviors, consideration of alternatives to restraint, including de-escalation techniques and possible interventions, and such other strategies and decisions, as appropriate, with the goal of reducing or eliminating the use of restraint in the future;
- 4) an agreement on a written plan of action by the program.
- 5) If the principal directly participated in the restraint, a duly qualified individual designated by the superintendent or board of trustees shall lead the review team's discussion. The principal shall ensure that a record of each individual student review is maintained and made available for review by the Department or the parent, upon request.

5. **Procedure for the Use of Time-Out**

- i. Principals shall develop a procedure for the use of time-outs that include the process by which staff will obtain the Principal's approval for any time-out lasting longer than thirty (30) minutes. Such approval shall be based on the student's continuing agitation.

6. **Methods for Engaging Parents**

- i. Pembroke Public Schools will conduct an annual workshop, open to the entire school community, concerning restraint prevention and the use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure. This workshop may be coordinated with the special education parent advisory council, the parent-teacher organization, and other relevant community groups.
- ii. Any parent with concerns about the use of physical restraint at any school within Pembroke Public Schools may request a meeting with the building Principal or the Superintendent to discuss such concerns. Any individual who believes that a physical restraint of a student may have been unwarranted or conducted inappropriately may also make use of the Grievance Procedure described in Section 10, below.

7. **Grievance Procedures**

This grievance procedure is established to ensure procedures are in place for receiving and investigating complaints regarding physical restraint practices. Any individual who believes that a physical restraint of a student may have been unwarranted or conducted inappropriately may file a complaint by utilizing this procedure:

- i. The complaint must be submitted in writing or on audiotape to the Director of Student Services.

- ii.** The Director of Student Services will meet with the complainant within ten (10) school days of receipt of the complaint.
- iii.** A thorough investigation will be conducted which may include interviewing witnesses, staff involved and/or the student; reviewing all written documentation leading up to and pertaining to the incident and all reports filed with the Director of Student Services and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
- iv.** A written report will be developed by the Director of Student Services and provided to the complainant.