

Physical Restraint Policy

APPENDIX 2

SY24-25 Roxbury Prep Student and Family Handbook

Roxbury Preparatory Charter School

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has established regulations governing the use of physical restraint on students. The **Roxbury Preparatory Charter School** 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.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students attending that **Roxbury Preparatory Charter Public School** are free from any unreasonable use of physical restraint.

What is physical restraint?

Direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts student's freedom of movement"

When should physical restraint be administered?

- Only as an emergency procedure of last resort.
- Physical restraint should only be administered when all other de-escalation methods have failed.
- Physical restraint should be administered with the least amount of force as possible, to prevent any physical harm to students.
- Physical restraint should be administered when a student's behavior poses a threat of serious physical harm to self or others.

What is not a physical restraint?

- Brief physical contact to promote student safety (e.g., breaking up a fight)
- Providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill
- Physical escort (ie: temporary touching or holding without use of force to induce an agitated student to walk to a safe location)
- The use of reasonable force to protect self, the student or others, is still permitted

When should physical restraint NOT be administered?

In no event shall the following forms of restraint be used:

- **Medication restraint**, which is the administration of medication to temporarily control behavior, except in the event that such medication is prescribed by a licensed physician and authorized for use in school by the parents.
- **Mechanical restraint**, which is the use of a device or equipment to restrict a student's freedom of movement, except for devices used for the specific and approved positioning or protective purposes for which such devices were designed.

- **Seclusion**, which means the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving.
- **Prone restraint**, when a student is placed face-down on the floor or another surface and physical pressure is applied to the student's body to keep the student in the face-down position.
- **Physical restraint should never be administered as a discipline or punishment.**
- **Physical restraint should not be administered** when a student has destroyed school property, being disruptive, not responding to directives or giving verbal threats that do not pose an imminent serious physical harm.
- **When the student cannot be safely restrained because it is medically contraindicated for reasons including**, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting
- **Physical restraint in a manner inconsistent with 603 CMR 46.00** or this policy.

Who should administer physical restraint?

- **Only staff members that have been trained by Roxbury Preparatory Charter Public School** in physical restraint for school age children should administer physical restraint.
- When administering physical restraint, only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury or harm should be used.
- Whenever possible, the administration of a restraint shall be witnessed by at least one adult who does not participate in the restraint.
- Staff must continuously monitor student's physical status while restrained
- If physical restraint more than 20 min., must obtain the **School Principal** approval
- If **the School Principal** is not in the building obtain approval from campus **Director of Operations**, and you must inform the **Regional Superintendent of Operations, Kim Kinsman.**
- Discontinue any restraint ASAP if student indicates (s)he cannot breathe.

DEFINITIONS:

Definition of restraints: The following terms as used in 603 CMR 46.00 has the following meanings.

Designation of Principal: Principal is the instructional leader or headmaster of a public education school program or his or her designee. The board of directors of a charter school or virtual school, or special education school or program approved under 603 CMR 28.09, shall designate in the restraint prevention and behavior support policy who will serve as principal for purposes of 603 CMR 46.00.

Roxbury Preparatory Charter Public School - Designee for Principal is the campus **Director of Operations or the RSO – Regional Superintendent of Operations.**

Physical Escort: Physical escort is a temporary touching 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 to walk to a safe location.

Physical restraint: Physical Restraint is 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.

Mechanical restraint: Mechanical restraint is the use of any device or equipment to restrict a student's freedom of movement. Mechanical restraint does not include devices implemented by trained school

personnel, or used 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.

Chemical/medication restraint: Chemical/medication restraint is the administration of medication for the purpose of temporarily controlling behavior.

NOTE: Medication restraint does not include medication prescribed by a licensed physician and authorized by the parent/guardian for administration in the school setting.

Prone restraint: Prone restraint is a physical restraint in which a student is placed face down on the floor or another surface, and physical pressure is applied to the student's body to keep the student in the face-down position.

Seclusion: Seclusion is the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include a time-out.

Mechanical and medication restraint, and seclusion ARE PROHIBITED.

Prone restraint is prohibited, except on an individual student basis, under the following circumstances:

- The student has a documented history of repeatedly causing serious self-injuries and/or injuries to other students/staff; and
- All other forms of physical restraint have failed to ensure the safety of the student and/or others; and
- There are no medical contra-indications, as documented by a licensed physician; and
- There is a psychological or behavioral justification for the use of prone restraint, and there are no psychological or behavioral contra-indications, as documented by a licensed mental health professional; and
- The school has obtained consent to use prone restraint in an emergency, and has been approved by the principal; and
- The school has documented all these circumstances in advance of the use of prone restraint, and maintains the documentation.

Time away from the classroom: If a student is **removed from or leaves the classroom or class activity for more than 30 minutes, approval of the School Principal will be required.** Further, if the student remains separated from the classroom or learning activity for more than half a day, the student's separation will be considered an **in-school suspension**, regardless of whether the student chose to leave or was directed by a school staff member to leave. Any space where students spends time outside of the classroom, must be clean, safe, and sanitary. Students can never be locked unsupervised in any campus space; staff must continuously observe student(s) or be immediately available at all times.

- If time away from class exceeds 30 minutes, **the School Principal must provide approval.**
- If **the School Principal** is out of the building, the campus **Director of Operations (DOO)** or **the Regional Superintendent of Operations (RSO)** will/must provide approval.

Strategies to Calm Students and Prevent Restraint:

Physical restraint is an emergency procedure which should be used only as a last resort. There are a number of other de-escalation techniques school staff should use first, including:

3

- Active listening;
 - Use of a low, non-threatening voice;
 - Limiting the number of adults providing direction to the student;
 - Not blocking the student's access to an escape route;
 - Suggesting possible resolutions to the student, and offering the student a choice;
 - Avoiding dramatic gestures (waving arms, pointing, blocking motions, etc.);
 - Communicating what is expected behavior by clearly stating instructions and expectations;
 - Brief physical contact to promote student safety;
 - Redirecting attention;
 - Temporary touching 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 to walk to a safe location (“physical escort”).
- As a policy, Roxbury Prep **does not use “time-out”** as a strategy to calm students.

Report of Physical Restraint: Certain reporting requirements are triggered once physical restraint is administered to a student. These include the following:

Written Report: A written report must be compiled for each instance of physical restraint administration, including, among other required information, a description of the administration of restraint and the alternatives to restraint that were attempted.

*Whenever a student is restrained, the **Regional Director of School Support (DOSS), Regional Superintendent of Operations (RSO) and Regional Superintendent of Instruction (RSI)** should be informed by the end of the school day, and forwarded a copy of the incident report when completed.

Report to Regional Director of School Support (DOSS), Mary Henningsen:

- Verbally: As soon as possible
- In writing: By the end of next school day

Parent: The school must make a reasonable efforts to orally notify a parent of the use of restraint on a student within 24 hours of the restraint, and for sending written notification to the parent within three school working days following the use of restraint to an email address provided by the parent for the purpose of communicating about the student, or by regular mail to the parent postmarked within three school working days of the restraint. The written communication to the parent will be provided in the native language upon request made to the school from the parent/guardian.

School Principal and/or Dean of Students notifies parent/guardian:

4

- Verbally: Reasonable efforts to inform within 24 hours
- Written report: Email – within 3 school days; mail – postmarked no later than 3 school days
- Must include specified information: summary description of the incident, nature of the restraint used, name/title of restrainer, length of restraint and number if multiple, the alternative methods used to de-escalate the situation prior to restraint.
- Provides parents/students opportunity to make inquiries and comment to the School Principal and/or Dean of Students.

Weekly and Monthly Reviews: The RSO/DOSS will conduct weekly reviews of restraint data to identify students who have been restrained multiple times during the week. Additionally, the RSO will conduct monthly reviews of school-wide restraint data to consider patterns in the use of restraints and to determine if any actions should be taken.

Weekly: In the event a student is restrained multiple times during the week, a student review team will convene. The student review team consists of the classroom teacher and any other providers who have been working with the student (e.g. Administrator, applicable Social Work member, applicable SST member, other service providers, etc.). The CPI trainer, usually the Dean of Students at Roxbury Prep, may attend in applicable situations.

- Reports of restraint, and parent & student comments
- Circumstances and factors leading to use of restraint
- Strategies to reduce or eliminate the use of restraint
- Written plan of action as required

Monthly: SST/Social Work/Administration/SEL/BCBA will convene monthly to review school-wide use of restraints.

- Examine patterns of behavior and use of restraints e.g., similarities in the time of day, individuals involved, duration of restraints, etc.
- Determine if necessary to provide additional training, revise policies & procedures

Injury Report: If the administration of physical restraint results in an injury to a student or to staff, regardless of the seriousness of the injury, the written report must be submitted to DESE no later than three school days after administration of the restraint. The **Regional Director of School Support** is responsible to prepare/submit the Restraint Report to the DESE Security Portal.

Annual Report: Each school is required to collect and report physical restraint data to DESE on an annual basis. The **Regional Director of School Support** is responsible to verify/submit the Annual Restraint Report to the DESE Security Portal.

Preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior and suicide: The School Social Work Team will provide school wide professional development focused on policies and procedures for identifying and preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior and suicide, including individual behavior crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with an individual student. The SST crisis team, along with teachers and other school personnel, will identify students who are potentially at risk, and review their social, emotional and behavior progress at the campus **School Support Team (SST)** meeting to plan interventions and support for students.

The **School Support Team (SST)** crisis team may include the Regional Social Work Supervisor, School Principal, campus Director of Operations, Special Education Coordinator, School Social Worker, Dean of Students, Office Manager or other school personnel as designated by the School Principal. All members of the crisis team are trained in Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI). For any student with a history of significant emotional/behavior including at risk behavior (harm to self and/or others) and/or a student who required a physical restraint, the crisis team will develop a safety or crisis plan. The plan will

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include strategies and supports which may include specific de-escalation strategies, counseling services, monitoring protocol, data collection, and frequent review meetings for the purpose of assessing progress and making necessary adjustments. Trained members of the School Support Team (including mental health and special education learning support practitioners) who may respectively conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) or Safety Assessment, and may refer to outside agencies, including mental health agencies as appropriate.

Complaint Procedures: In the event a student or parent has a complaint about restraint practices at **Roxbury Preparatory Charter School**, such student or parent should contact the campus Director of Operations and inform him/her about the details and circumstances around the complaint. Upon receipt of a complaint, the campus Director of Operations or his/her designee shall promptly and thoroughly investigate the complaint by interviewing the student, the person(s) administering the restraint, and any other staff or students who witnessed the incident. The campus Director of Operations shall inform the Regional Director of School Support and the Regional Superintendent for Operations of the complaint, and results of the investigation.

The campus Director of Operations or his/her designee shall document all steps taken in the investigation and share with the Regional Director of School Support and the Regional Superintendent for Operations, and this team shall make a determination about whether the restraint about which the complaint was made was administered in accordance with this policy and the law, and convey the determination to the complainant. In the event that a complaint involves the campus Director of Operations or the School Principal, the complainant should contact the Regional Director of School Support and the Regional Superintendent for Operations directly. Any **Roxbury Preparatory Charter School** staff member who has violated this policy may be disciplined at the discretion of the School Principal or Director of Operations (or Regional Superintendent for Operations in the event the School Principal or Director of Operations has administered the restraint), up to and including termination.

Prevention of Violence and Parent Engagement: **Roxbury Preparatory Charter School** has developed and distributes to staff and families methods for preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior and suicide, including individual crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with individual students. In addition, **Roxbury Preparatory Charter School** will arrange a meeting with parents on an annual basis to discuss restraint prevention and the use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure. At this meeting, parents will obtain information about this policy and methods of de-escalation, as well as have the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback to **Roxbury Preparatory Charter School** staff.

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