administrative regulation

Seclusion, Physical Restraint, & Time Out

Administrative Regulation No. 3007

Classification:
School Program & Organization

Effective Date:
November 30, 2026

1 | Purpose

The purpose of this administrative regulation is to:

- ensure compliance with Alberta Education and Childcare's Standards for the use of Seclusion, Physical Restraint and Alberta Education and Childcare's Guidelines for Time Out;
- provide clear expectations and guidelines around the use of Seclusion rooms, Physical Restraint, and Time Out; and
- assist principals, teachers, Students and parents in developing a common understanding of Seclusion, Physical Restraint, and Time Out as Tier 3 | Specialized Supports and Services.

2 | Scope

This administrative regulation applies to:

- all Employees who work with Students;
- all Employees who work in schools designated to have Seclusion rooms; and
- all Employees who are trained in conflict De-escalation, non-violent crisis intervention, and implementing positive behaviour interventions to facilitate defusing conflict and crisis situations.

3 | Compliance

All Employees are responsible for knowing, understanding and complying with this administrative regulation.

Failure to comply with this administrative regulation may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

4 | Principles

The following principles apply:

- The principle of using the least restrictive and/or least intrusive option is to guide the use of Physical Restraint and/or Seclusion.
- Collaborative relationships between schools and parents respect the roles and responsibilities of each position.
- CBE schools are inclusive environments in which the personalization of learning addresses Student needs to ensure reasonable participation in the learning environment.

- CBE is committed to respecting the dignity and privacy of every Student and their families.
- All CBE staff work towards providing Students and staff with safe and caring environments that foster and maintain respectful and responsible behaviours.

5 | Definitions

CBE: means The Calgary Board of Education.

De-escalation: means educational and psychological strategies that helps calm a Student who is distressed or in crisis.

Employee: means an individual who is employed by The Calgary Board of Education.

Escort: (sometimes referred to as a physical escort) means the temporary, open-handed touching or guiding of a student to move them to a safe location.

Individual Program Plan (IPP): means an educational plan to support the personalization of learning for Students identified with a special education code.

Parent: means the parent as defined in Section 1(2) of the *Education Act* of Alberta.

Physical Restraint: means an emergency or safety procedure that utilizes any method of using physical contact for restricting or immobilizing another person's freedom of movement, physical activity, or normal access to their body. It is a personal restriction that serves as a means of controlling an individual's movement, reconstituting behavioural control, and establishing and maintaining safety for the individual and other individuals.

Seclusion: means an emergency or safety procedure that involves the involuntary confinement or isolation of a person, alone in a room or area from which the person cannot freely exit or is physically prevented from leaving. This may occur in a room with a door that has a lock. The lock may be engaged, or if not engaged, the door is otherwise blocked or held shut.

Seclusion room: means the involuntary confinement or isolation of a person, alone in a room or area from which the person cannot freely exit or is physically prevented from leaving. This generally occurs in a room with a door that has a lock. The lock may be engaged, or if not engaged, the door is otherwise blocked or held shut.

Student: means an individual enrolled in a CBE school, program, or course.

Student Support Plan (SSP): means a behaviour plan to promote growth and positive behaviour in Students.

Time Out: means a behavioural intervention/management strategy known as Time Out from positive reinforcement. It is a behavioural intervention that involves reducing or limiting the amount of reinforcement that is available to an individual for a brief period of time to decrease or stop a predefined challenging behaviour.

Trauma Aware practice: means to create an environment where Students do not experience further trauma or re-traumatization through awareness of the interaction between neurobiology and Student capacity for social functioning and emotional regulation.

6 | Regulation Statement

General

1) Schools must adhere to strict federal, provincial, and local policies and standards to protect the rights, dignity, health, and safety of Students and staff.
2) The director of Inclusive Education and identified system principal will be responsible for training and oversight of the use of Seclusion, Physical Restraint and Time Out within CBE.
3) Designated Seclusion rooms and exclusion Time Out spaces require approval from the superintendent of School Improvement.
4) When engaging in prevention and/or the delivery of Seclusion, consideration is given to the specific developmental and mental health needs of the Student.
5) Seclusion and/or Physical Restraint procedures are conducted in a manner that reduces harm to a child/Student and others.

Continual Monitoring

6) There is continual visual and aural monitoring of any child/Student throughout the period of Seclusion or Physical Restraint.
7) For a child/Student who is unable to adequately express themselves through speech alone, school staff who are able to communicate with the child/Student are present at all times if Seclusion is used.

Trained Interveners

8) Only trained, qualified and authorized staff shall initiate and deliver Seclusion, Physical Restraint, or Time Out.

Consent

9) There must be written informed consent from Parent/guardians for Seclusion, Physical Restraint, and Time Out, and documented in both a Student's IPP and Student Support Plan.
10) Prior to implementation, Students will be involved based on their age, maturity and individual circumstances including the Student's social, emotional, developmental and cognitive levels.

Documentation

11) Interventions must be documented, as per clause 7(43) of this regulation, in the Student Support Plan and include the preventative measures to be taken.

Functional Data Collection

12) The use of Seclusion, Physical Restraint, and Time Out must be informed by functional data collection.
13) The use of Seclusion, Physical Restraint, and Time Out must be limited and end as quickly as possible.

Safe Return to Class

14) The use of Seclusion, Physical Restraint, and Time Out must include a step-down process, enabling the Student to help decide when they are ready to safely return to class.

7 | Procedure

Physical Environment & Design Standards

1) Seclusion rooms will:
    a) be located in a space that ensures preservation of dignity of the Student;
    b) allow prompt and easy access by staff;
    c) allow for continuous observation; and
    d) be located away from elevators, stairs and exits.
2) Seclusion rooms:
    a) meet all legislative and regulated requirements related to safety and facilities; and
    b) are safe, humane and are adequately lit, well-ventilated, and at a suitable temperature.

Contents of a Seclusion Room

3) Seclusion rooms will not contain any furniture or equipment such as sensory tools, music players or blankets that may be harmful to Students.

Sanitation

4) Seclusion rooms are sanitized and cleaned after each use.

Principal Responsibilities

5) The principal is accountable for the use of Seclusion or Physical Restraint.
6) Principals are responsible for:
    a) the training of staff involved in Seclusion, Physical Restraint and Time Out which will include:
        i. positive behaviour supports;
        ii. skills for managing behavioural emergencies; assessing potential aggression/violence; and preventing and managing aggression/violence;
        iii. Trauma Aware care, non-violent crisis intervention (including De-escalation) and collaborative problem solving;
    b) communicating clear expectations and guidelines regarding the use of Seclusion rooms, Physical Restraint and Time Out rooms;
    c) identifying and communicating a formal procedure to identify options for preventing Seclusion; and
    d) ensuring staff are available for appropriate provision of Seclusion.

Prevention

7) Principals will support staff in understanding and implementing progressive Student discipline, including specific and proactive strategies to prevent the need for Seclusion or Physical Restraint and to minimize its use.
8) Staff will implement trauma-aware practice that is considerate of the uniqueness of each learner.

Student Support Plans (SSP)

9) Parents and Students will be given the opportunity to provide input into the development of the Individual Program Plan and Student Support Plan.
10) Student Support Plans must include transition plans between spaces and the reintegration of Student.

Seclusion

11) Seclusion is to be used only in emergency or exceptional situations where:
    a) the behaviour of a child/Student poses imminent danger of harm to self and others;
    b) less restrictive interventions are not possible or have been ineffective at ending imminent danger or harm; and
    c) when the threat of imminent danger can be diminished by using Seclusion or Physical Restraint.
12) Seclusion shall:
    a) only be delivered within a secure room, designated expressly for the delivery of Seclusion;
    b) delivered within the context of trauma-aware, and Student-focused care;
    c) be a short-term emergency measure of last resort, used only when all efforts to prevent the use of Seclusion have failed; and
    d) only be used to prevent a Student from harming themselves or others.
13) Students must have the option or means for continual visual and aural monitoring with staff throughout the Seclusion.
14) Explain, to the Student, reasons for initiating, continuing and ending Seclusion throughout the process.
15) Document the Student's observed level of understanding.
16) At regular intervals, at a minimum every two (2) minutes:
    a) have face to face monitoring of the Student; and
    b) two (2) key school staff will review the need to continue Seclusion.
17) Seclusion events will not last more than thirty (30) minutes.
18) If Seclusion lasts more than thirty (30) minutes and the Student continues to pose a danger to themselves or others, follow the identified steps in the Student Support Plan, which may include contacting Parents or calling emergency services.

Ending Seclusion

19) Staff members will implement a step-down process to end Seclusion:
    a) opening the door when it is safe to do so;
    b) enabling the Student to help decide when they are ready to leave the room;
    c) incorporating a period of observation to ensure classroom readiness;

d) provide the Student with the opportunity to make a plan for prevention of escalation in the future; and

e) develop a plan for re-entry into the classroom.

Prohibited

20) Seclusion will not be used:

a) as a Time Out;

b) as a behaviour management strategy;

c) as a consequence/punishment for misbehavior or disruptive behaviour; or

d) if the Student is at risk of serious self-injury or suicide.

Physical Restraint

21) Physical Restraint will be used only by those staff trained in conflict De-escalation, non-violent crisis intervention, and implementing positive behaviour interventions to facilitate defusing conflict and crisis situations and is an emergency containment measure used in exceptional circumstances.

22) All Physical Restraints must be documented, including the description and justification for the use of hands-on restraint, if required for transferring or Escorting a Student into Seclusion.

23) Students must have the option or means for continual visual and aural monitoring throughout the Physical Restraint.

24) Explain, to the Student, reasons for initiating, continuing and ending Physical Restraint throughout the process;

25) Physical Restraint will not last more than thirty (30) minutes.

26) If Physical Restraint lasts more than thirty (30) minutes and the Student continues to pose a danger to themselves or others, follow the identified steps in the Student Support Plan, which may include contacting Parents or calling emergency services.

Ending Physical Restraint

27) Staff members will implement a De-escalation process to end Physical Restraint:

a) enabling the Student to help decide when they are ready to return to class;

b) incorporating a period of observation to ensure classroom readiness;

c) provide the Student with the opportunity to make a plan for prevention of escalation in the future; and

d) develop a plan for re-entry into the classroom.

Prohibited

28) Physical Restraint will not be used:

a) as a behaviour management strategy;

b) as a consequence/punishment for misbehavior or disruptive behaviour; or

c) as corporal/physical punishment.

Time Out

29) Time Out will be delivered by trained staff.

30) The Student will be visible at all times.

31) Key staff will complete a face-to-face review of the need to continue the Time Out.

32) Time Out will not last more than fifteen (15) minutes.

33) A De-escalation process for successful return to class will be implemented.

34) All Time Outs must be documented including when the Time Out starts and ends.

Prohibited

35) Time Out will not be used:

a) as a universal support;

b) as a calming strategy;

c) as a consequence for misbehavior or disruptive behaviour;

d) in a secluded space; or

e) as a recurrent strategy.

Parent Contact

36) Parent(s) / guardian(s) will be contacted about the use of Seclusion, Physical Restraint and Time Out the same day that the Seclusion, Physical Restraint or Time Out occur.

37) If Parent(s) / guardian(s) cannot be contacted, contact will be made as soon as possible after Seclusion or Physical Restraint.

Debrief | Post-incident Reflection

38) Post-incident reflection and review shall be conducted within three (3) days following each Seclusion, Physical Restraint or Time Out intervention.

39) The debrief meeting should include:

a) the principal;

b) staff involved; and

c) the Parent/guardian.

40) When possible, Students will be involved in the debrief/postintervention reflection and review.

41) Principals will ensure staff are made aware of the supports available to them following Seclusion or Physical Restraint intervention.

42) Debriefing notes are filed in a confidential secure location and retained according to the Records Management retention schedule and regulations.

Documentation

43) Each Seclusion, Physical Restraint and Time Out intervention is documented, including:

a) prevention strategies used;

b) details of the incident, including date, time, location and staff involved;

c) details of initiation, observing, and ending Seclusion, Physical Restraint or Time Out;

d) include the Student's level of understanding to explanations;

e) when the Parent / guardian was contacted; and

f) measures taken to promote emotional, psychological and physical safety of Student, peers and staff involved.

Data Analysis

44) The data collected from Seclusion, Physical Restraint and Time Out is analyzed by each school to inform practice.

Reporting

45) Each Seclusion intervention is reported to the director of Inclusive Education.

46) In non-approved sites, principals are expected to notify both the education director of Inclusive Education as well as the education director for their school as soon as possible after the Seclusion incident occurs.

47) Each Seclusion report will utilize the Seclusion, Physical Restraint, Time-out Report form.

Concerns and Complaints/ Appeals

48) Parents must be informed that there is a concerns and complaints and appeals process if they disagree with a decision.

49) The concerns and complaints process as outlined in Administrative Regulation 5007: Concerns and Complaints must be utilized before the appeals process in Administrative Regulation 5008: Appeals is accessed.

Review

50) This policy will be reviewed by CBE system staff in Inclusive Education for accuracy and currency on an annual basis.

8 | History

Approval	August 31, 2020
Next Review	November 2031
Revision/Review Dates	November 30, 2026

9 | Related Information

Administrative Regulations

- AR 6006 | Progressive Student Discipline
- AR 6007 | Suspension and Expulsion

Provincial Legislation

- *Education Act*, S.A. 2012 c. E-0.3
    - *Standards for Seclusion and Physical Restraint in Alberta Schools* [Ministerial Order #042/2019]
- *Protection of Privacy Act*, SA 2024, c P-28.5
- *Access to Information Act*, SA 2024, c A-1.4
- *Mental Health Act*, R.S.A. 2000 c. M-13
- *Workers' Compensation Act*, R.S.A. 2000 c. W-15

Other Supporting Documents

- Use of Seclusion, Physical Restraint, and Time Out Protocol