

Haverhill School Committee  
Policy JKAA

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS

Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of the School Committee and all of the staff members of the Haverhill Public Schools. Further, District students are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint.

When an emergency situation arises and physical restraint is the only option deemed appropriate to prevent a student from injuring himself or herself, another student or school community member, a teacher or employee or agent of the Haverhill Public School District may use such reasonable force needed to protect students, other persons or themselves from injury.

As defined in 603CMR 46.02, restraint is defined as:

1. Extended restraint: A physical restraint the duration of which is longer than twenty (20) minutes.
2. Physical escort: Touching or holding a student without the use of force for the purpose of directing the student.
3. Physical restraint: The use of bodily force to limit a student's freedom of movement.

The use of mechanical, seclusion, or chemical restraint is prohibited unless explicitly authorized by a physician and approved in writing by the parent/guardian.

Physical restraint may only be used when non-physical interventions would not be effective and the student's behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm to themselves and/or others.

The Superintendent will develop procedures identifying:

- \* Appropriate responses to student behavior
- \* Definition of physical restraint
- \* Descriptions and explanations of physical restraint methods
- \* Filing of and investigating complaints
- \* Reporting requirements

The principal will identify staff member(s) to serve as a district-wide resources to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. These staff member(s) will participate in an in-depth training program in the use of physical restraint.

In addition, each staff member will be trained regarding the School's physical restraint policy. The Principal will arrange training to occur in the first month of each school year, or for staff hired after the beginning of the school year, within a month of their employment.

Physical restraint is prohibited as a means of punishment, or as a response to destruction of property, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to the student or others.

The use of "time out" procedures during which a staff member remains accessible to the student shall not be considered "seclusion restraint."

This policy will be made available and provided to all students, staff, and parents within the Haverhill Public Schools Community.

LEGAL REF: 603CMR 46.00