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MEDICINE HAT PUBLIC BOARD OF EDUCATION OPERATES AS MEDICINE HAT PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION,
AND FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE REFERRED TO AS "MHPSD" AND/OR "DIVISION"

SECTION 600 – Students

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE: TIME-OUT, PHYSICAL RESTRAINT, AND SECLUSION

PROCEDURE CODE:	*612 AP 003*
Policy Reference: 612 – Safe and Caring Environment that Fosters and Maintains Respectful and Responsible Behaviours, Diversity and a Sense of Belonging	**Exhibits:** 612 E 001 – Classroom Management Plan Template 612 E 002 – Use of Physical Restraint Reporting Form

BACKGROUND

Medicine Hat Public School Division (MHPSD) is committed to ensuring a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours for all children, students and staff. Schools that have a positive school culture promote positive behaviour in children and students which can reduce occurrences of challenging behaviours that negatively affect teaching and learning.

The Division supports the responsibilities as defined in the *Education Act*, the *Standards for Time-out in Alberta Schools* and the *Standards for Seclusion and Physical Restraint in Alberta Schools* to establish the safety and well-being of students and staff within a safe and caring environment.

DEFINITIONS:

Behaviour Support Plan means a written plan that is designed to target the underlying reason for behaviour, replace the inappropriate behaviour with an appropriate behaviour that serves the same function, and reduce or eliminate the challenging behaviour.

Functional Behaviour Assessment is a required component of a Behaviour Support Plan and requires specialized expertise and/or additional training to properly conduct and implement the functions of behaviour assessment.

Non-Violent Crisis Intervention means physical and non-physical methods to manage disruptive behaviour and maintain safety for children and students and others. Non-violent crisis

intervention is a blanket term for programs that aim to reduce risk to self and others. The goal of any non-violent crisis intervention program is preserving relationships, ensuring safety, prevention and de-escalation.

Crisis Management Plan means procedures that focus on the prevention of child or student behaviours that are unsafe by staff trained in non-violent crisis intervention. These procedures ensure the safety of staff and students and include a variety of strategies, including but not limited to disengagement, physical escort or physical restraint.

Exclusion Time-out means a time-out in a separate space outside of the classroom or instructional setting and involves removing the child or student to another fully or partially enclosed part of the immediate instructional setting or to another supervised location within the school. Examples of appropriate exclusion areas would include the library, the principal's office, a counsellor's office, or another classroom. Exclusion time-out may only be used after proactive positive behaviour supports have been exhausted.

Non-Exclusion Time-out means a time-out within the classroom or other instructional setting and does not involve the removal of the student from the learning environment or instructional setting.

Physical Restraint means any method of using physical contact for restricting or immobilizing another person's freedom of movement, physical activity or normal access to their body. Physical contact for purposes such as moving a student away from danger or breaking up a fight is not considered physical restraint. Physical restraint does not include physical escort which may involve temporarily touching or holding of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder or back for the purpose of accompanying and supporting a child or student who is beginning to show signs of escalation to walk to a safe location.

Positive Behaviour Supports means a school-wide collaborative effort to design and implement strategies, practices and interventions for promoting positive social and communication skills. It is also useful for teaching, coaching and reinforcing skills required for academic and social success. It involves school-wide, targeted and intensive or individualized behaviour supports.

Seclusion Room means a room, structure, or enclosure in a school for the primary purpose or use of involuntary confinement or isolation of a child or student where the child or student is prevented or incapable of leaving from the room, structure, or enclosure without the assistance of the supervised specialized staff and/or teacher. **Medicine Hat Public School Division does not support the use of Seclusion Rooms.**

Sensory Spaces means spaces within a school that a child or student may select to use for the purposes of self-regulation. The main purpose of the sensory space is to support a student's sensory or emotional needs and the implementation of self-regulation strategies, so that the

student is ready for learning. The sensory space may contain materials to assist a student in calming strategies or may contain materials and activities designed to offer opportunities for enhanced sensory input. For example, squishy balls, visuals of deep breathing, etc.) Students have the flexibility to come and go from a sensory space and/or "Just Right Rooms".

PROCEDURES:

1. Principals will ensure that positive behaviour supports are used within the school to support the creation of a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours. Comprehensive, positive and proactive means of engaging a child or student are to be utilized before the use of exclusion or non-exclusion time-out and to prevent the use of physical restraint.
2. The Division will ensure that school staff have access to the appropriate specialized expertise and related professional learning to implement positive and proactive strategies that reduce the need for exclusion or non-exclusion time-outs and prevent the use of physical restraint.
3. The Division permits the use of exclusion or non-exclusion time-outs. If an exclusion or non-exclusion time-out is used as a strategy as defined in the Standards for Time-Out in Alberta Schools, this must be documented in the child's/student's Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) and the strategies reviewed regularly by school staff responsible for the implementation of the BSP.
4. **The Division does not support the use of seclusion rooms.**
5. The Division supports the use of physical restraint in all schools as a measure of last resort and only as a safety or crisis management procedure. Physical restraint is recognized as an emergency, safety, or crisis management procedure in educational settings, not as a behaviour management procedure.
6. The Division only permits staff trained to implement the techniques of non-violent crisis intervention and procedures in emergency, safety or crisis situations to use physical restraint.
7. Principals will ensure that at least two staff members per school site have current, valid training and can serve as a school-wide resource on the use of positive behaviour supports and physical restraints.
8. Principals will ensure that school staff have access to ongoing training in non-violent crisis intervention, positive behaviour supports, functional behaviour assessments and sensory spaces, as well as any additional training the Division may provide.
9. Principals will ensure that a Behaviour Support Plan is created for students who require it, and that efforts are made to ensure a child or student with severe emotional and/or behavioural needs has access to appropriate mental health and therapeutic services.

10. If an exclusion Time-out is to be used as a behaviour reduction strategy for a child or student who displays challenging behaviour that negatively affects their learning or the learning of others on an on-going or recurrent basis, it is expected that prior to its use, meaningful discussions and informed written parental consent is obtained and documented in the child's or student's Behaviour Support Plan.
11. Physical restraint is only to be used by staff trained in non-violent crisis intervention in situations where the child or student is in danger of hurting themselves or others. All requirements as noted in the *Standards for Seclusion and Physical Restraint in Alberta Schools, Alberta Education, November 2019*, must be adhered to.
12. Staff must complete a Use of Physical Restraint Reporting Form (Exhibit 612 E 002) immediately following any situation where Physical Restraint has been used. A copy must be submitted to the Associate Superintendent. Occupational Health and Safety documentation may also be required depending on the circumstance and outcomes of the physical Restraint. In the case of any injury to a student or staff member, a Safety Report must also be completed.
13. Recurrent use of physical restraint is not to be a regular part of a child's or student's educational program. When the use of physical restraint is required as a safety, emergency or crisis measure, parent or guardian consent must be noted in writing within the crisis management plan developed for the child or student.
14. Schools may create sensory spaces for use by children and students who may choose to access such a space to self-regulate. Any child or student who utilizes a sensory space must be supervised by a staff member at all times. Sensory spaces are not to be used for time-out, seclusion, or as a disciplinary measure as a punishment for inappropriate behaviour.

REFERENCES

Standards for Seclusion and Physical Restraint in Alberta Schools (2019)
Standards for Time-Out in Alberta Schools (2019)
Positive Behaviour Supports

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