USE OF RESTRAINTS IN SCHOOLS

**WHEN MAY A RESTRAINT BE USED IN SCHOOL?**

- Restraint is any method or device used to involuntarily limit freedom of movement, including but not limited to bodily physical force, mechanical devices, chemicals, and seclusion.
- Restraint may be used in emergency situations only, and must be used with extreme caution.
- An emergency exists when there is BOTH:
  - serious, probable, imminent threat of bodily harm to self or others AND
  - other interventions are ineffective.
- The following are examples of when a situation is NOT an emergency:
  - a student destroying property, unless it could lead to harm of self or others
  - the situation could be deescalated by removing others from setting
  - an adult is simply seeking the student’s compliance
  - the student could be escorted safely
  - the student could be held to provide comfort and support.
- Restraints may only be used by trained staff.
  - Students must be released as soon as the emergency ends.

**WHAT IS A HOLD AND WHEN CAN ONE BE USED IN SCHOOL?**

- Holding of a student for less than five minutes by a staff person for the protection of the student or others.
- Brief holding of a student by one adult for the purpose of calming or comforting the student.
- Minimal physical contact for the purpose of assisting the student in completing a task or response.
• Holding for the protection of the student or another person that occurs for longer than five minutes is considered a restraint

• Holding for comfort and support of the student can last longer than 5 minutes without being considered a restraint

**WHAT TYPES OF RESTRAINTS ARE ALLOWED IN SCHOOL?**

• Physical restraint – bodily physical force to involuntarily limit an individual’s freedom is allowed in emergencies if done in accordance with the Restraint Rules

• Seclusion – the placement of a student alone in a room from which egress is involuntarily prevented is allowed in emergencies if done in accordance with the Restraint Rules

• Mechanical – a physical device used to involuntarily restrict movement is NOT ALLOWED

• Chemical – administering medication for the sole purpose of involuntarily limiting movement is NOT ALLOWED

• Prone Position – face down position used in a restraint or in a hold is NOT ALLOWED

**WHAT ARE THE DUTIES OF SCHOOL STAFF REGARDING RESTRAINTS?**

• Restraint may only be used for period of time necessary, and staff may not use more force than necessary

• Staff may only administer restraint when trained in prevention techniques

• *Staff may NEVER use a restraint as punishment or as a threat to control or gain compliance of a student’s behavior*

**WHAT PROCEDURES ARE REQUIRED FOR EACH RESTRAINT?**

• Verbal notification must be given to parents as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the school day that the restraint was used

• A written report must be submitted to the school principal or designee within one school day

• A written report must be sent to parents within 5 calendar days following use of restraint, and a copy placed in student’s file

**COMPLAINT PROCESS FOR IMPROPER USE OF RESTRAINTS ON A STUDENT**

• A complaint can be filed through the Colorado Department of Education’s complaint process at: https://www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/restraintcomplaintrulesforfiling

*** DISCLAIMER: This is not intended as legal advice, but rather for informational purposes only. Always consult a lawyer if you have questions about your legal rights. ***