

POLICY Board of Education of Queen Anne's County

Responsible Office: Curriculum & Instruction

STUDENT BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to promote positive behavior interventions and to establish procedures to ensure the uniform use of exclusion, and physical restraint as forms of student behavior interventions in schools are limited to necessary/critical situations.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

In accordance with COMAR 13A.08.04, The Board of Education of Queen Anne's County will encourage school personnel to use an array of positive behavior interventions, strategies, and supports to increase or decrease targeted student behaviors. School personnel shall only use exclusion or restraint after less restrictive or alternative approaches have been considered and attempted or determined to be inappropriate. Such interventions would only be utilized in a humane, safe, and effective manner without intent to harm or create undue discomfort. Interventions will be consistent with known medical or psychological limitations. It is understood emergency situations in which exclusion or restraint may be necessary to protect the student or other persons from harm.

III. DEFINITIONS

The terms behavior intervention plan, exclusion, seclusion, physical restraint, mechanical restraint, and protective or stabilizing device shall have the meanings ascribed to them in COMAR 13A.08.04.

- A. *Behavior Intervention Plan* – A proactive, data-based, structured plan that is developed as a result of a functional behavioral assessment which is consistently applied by trained staff to reduce or eliminate a student's challenging behaviors and to support the development of appropriate behaviors and responses.
- B. *Exclusion* – The removal of a student to a supervised area for a limited period of time during which the student has an opportunity to regain self-control and is not receiving instruction including special education, related services, or support.
- C. *Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)* – The systematic process of gathering information to guide the development of an effective and efficient behavior intervention plan for the problem behavior. The FBA includes the identification of the functions of the problem behavior for the student; description of the problem behavior exhibited in the educational setting; and identification of environmental and other

factors and settings that contribute to or predict the occurrence, nonoccurrence, and maintenance of the behavior over time.

D. *Mechanical Restraint* - Any device or material attached or adjacent to the student's body that restricts freedom of movement or normal access to any portion of the student's body and that the student cannot easily remove. A mechanical restraint does not include a protective or stabilizing device.

E. *Physical Restraint* – A personal restriction that immobilizes a student or reduces the ability of a student to move their torso, arms, legs, or head freely that occurs during school hours.

Physical restraint does not include:

1. Briefly holding a student to calm or comfort the student;
2. Holding a student's hand or arm to escort the student safely from one area to another;
3. Moving a disruptive student who is unwilling to leave the area if other methods such as counseling have been unsuccessful; or
4. Intervening in a fight on school grounds in accordance with Education Article §7-307, Annotated Code of Maryland

F. *Protective or Stabilizing Device* – Any device or material attached or adjacent to the student's body that restricts freedom of movement or normal access to any portion of the student's body for the purpose of enhancing functional skills, preventing self-injurious behavior, or ensuring safe positioning of a person. Protective or stabilizing device includes:

1. Adaptive equipment prescribed by a health professional, if used for the purpose for which the device is intended by the manufacturer;
2. Seat belts; or
3. Other safety equipment to secure students during transportation in accordance with the public agency or nonpublic school transportation plan.

G. *Seclusion* – The confinement of a student alone in a room, an enclosure, or any other space from which the student is physically prevented from leaving during school hours. This does not include separating a student by placing the student:

1. Into a nonlocked room from which the student is allowed to leave; or

2. Within a separate location in a classroom from which the student is not physically prevented from leaving.
- H. Trauma-Informed Intervention – An approach to behavior intervention that is informed by the recognition that the experience of trauma, including the experience of violence, abuse, neglect, disaster, terrorism, and war, may have a significant impact on an individual’s physical and emotional health and ability to function.

IV. POLICY ELEMENTS

Each child is valued as a contributor in the education process and schools must ensure that children are treated with respect and dignity and that the learning environment is safe for all students and staff. When there is a need to manage aggressive or violent behavior of students in emergency situations, there must be a balance between maintaining an effective and safe learning environment for children and school staff and safeguarding the rights and protections of students.

In Maryland, “School personnel are encouraged to use an array of positive behavior interventions, strategies, and supports to increase or decrease targeted student behaviors” [COMAR 13A.08.04.03]. The use of exclusion and restraint may be used only after less intrusive, nonphysical interventions have failed or been determined not to be appropriate.

Positive behavior interventions, strategies, and supports are defined as “the application of affirmative school-wide and individual student specific actions, instruction, and assistance to encourage educational success” [COMAR 13A.08.04.02]. Positive behavior interventions, strategies, and supports focus on proactive ways of preventing targeted challenging behaviors instead of reacting to a challenging behavior after its occurrence. If positive behavior interventions, strategies, and supports are implemented appropriately, the use of restraint as set forth in COMAR, should be truly limited to unavoidable emergency situations.

Positive behavior interventions, strategies, and supports may include but are not limited to:

- A. Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS)
- B. Initiatives which promote character development, positive school climate, pro-social behaviors, etc.
- C. School-wide guidance programs
- D. Use positive/proactive language
- E. Provide clear and consistent visual schedules, calendars, consistent routines, etc. so that the person knows what is coming next.
- F. Provide a safe place and teach when to use it. For example, a calming room or corner, and/or objects or activities that help to calm (e.g. bean bag) provide opportunities to regroup and can be helpful in teaching self-control.

- G. Teach skills and replacement behaviors
- H. Social skills training
- I. Mentoring
- J. Therapeutic Aggression Control Techniques (TACT2) strategies
- K. Student Services Team interventions
- L. Behavior Contracts
- M. Behavior Intervention Plans

V. IMPLEMENTATION

The Board directs the Superintendent to implement this policy.

VI. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed by the Responsible Office every four years after its initial adoption and/or last revision, or as legislative updates are signed.

VII. SPECIFIC REFERENCES TO TITLES, DEPARTMENTS, OR LAWS

Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.08.04, Student Behavior Interventions

Education Article, §§2-205, 7-301, 7-303—7-305, 7-307, 7-308 and 7-1101—7-1104, Annotated Code of Maryland

Maryland State Department of Education Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services, Technical Assistance Bulletin #18, Revised September 2012

Maryland State Department of Education Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services, Technical Assistance Bulletin #19-02, Revised July 2019

Maryland State Department of Education Division of Student Support, Academic Enrichment, and Educational Policy: Student Behavior Interventions: Restraint & Seclusion, July 22, 2019

VIII. EFFECTIVE DATE

Date: June 7, 2023



Patricia Saelens, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Queen Anne’s County Public Schools

HISTORY:

Initial Adoption	05/05/2021	Revised	04/12/23	Reviewed	04/12/23	Next Review	06/07/2027
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