

PHYSICAL FORCE

The use of corporal punishment, defined as any act of physical force on a pupil for the purpose of punishing that child, is not acceptable as a disciplinary measure.

Physical interventions that are reasonable and necessary for supervisory control over students may be used only as a last resort. Physical interventions shall not be used when less restrictive interventions can successfully maintain the safety of all persons involved in the incident. Physical intervention involves the use of safe and unharmed control and restraint of a student. Physical interventions may be appropriate in the following situations:

1. For self-defense;
2. To protect other persons from physical injury;
3. To protect property of the school or others;
4. To remove a student who has refused to comply with requests to refrain from disruptive behavior; and
5. To restrain or control a student that is out of control.

The teacher, principal, supervisor, or superintendent may use physical force in the above situations.

The use of prone restraint by school district employees, defined as physical pressure applied to any part of the student's body to keep the student in a face down position on the floor or other surface, is prohibited, except when the use is necessary and reasonable in manner and moderate in degree.

The use of seclusion, defined as involuntary confinement of a student locked alone in a room, is prohibited, unless there is a clear and present danger. Seclusion does not include classroom timeouts, inschool detentions, and/or the use of voluntary break rooms.

Any person delegated to supervise students at a school function away from school premises, and the school bus driver, also have the authority to administer physical force on an insubordinate or disobedient student.

Physical Interventions shall end as soon as the dangerous behavior ends or a medical condition places the student at risk of harm.

Staff members likely to use physical interventions shall be trained in proper crisis prevention and restraint techniques and procedures regularly. The district may require the following staff members to receive training: administrators, self-contained classroom staff, special education staff, counselors, and paraprofessionals. The Superintendent will maintain a log of trained district staff and each person's certification status.

Personnel shall inform immediate supervisors of all instances in which physical force is administered.

In the event that any corporal punishment, prone restraint, seclusion, or physical intervention is used, the following reporting procedures will be followed:

1. A teacher, support staff or administrator involved must file a written report using a specific incident report form. The report will be filed with the building principal and a copy will be sent to the superintendent's office within 24 hours of the incident.
2. The report shall relate all relevant details of the incident, including date, time and place, what action was taken, why the action was taken, and what measures, if any, had been taken to prevent the need for such actions.
3. The parent/guardian will be notified by the end of the day. If circumstances do not allow that, a letter will be sent.
4. The report will be kept on file and be made available to the parent/guardian upon request.
5. The parent/guardian will be given an opportunity to confer with the student, staff members, and the administrators involved in the incident to discuss the situation. The conference will take place at an agreed upon time.

This policy will be reviewed with every new employee. Annually, all employees will receive an overview, along with instructions to access the full policy on the district's website

Legal References:

SDCL 13-32-2. Physical force authorized when reasonable and necessary - Attendance at school functions away from premises - Authority of bus drivers

SDCL 13-32-20. Policy for school district employees on use of restraint and seclusion.

Physical Force Report Form

DIRECTIONS: Answer all questions. Use additional sheets or the other side of the page if more space is needed.

Name of person completing this document: _____

Date of Incident _____ Time of Incident _____

Location of Incident: _____

Summary of Incident

Action Taken: _____

Reason for the Action: _____

Preventive Measures Attempted: _____

Witnesses of the Incident: _____

Date Report is Submitted to Principal and Superintendent: _____

Time Report is Submitted to Principal and Superintendent: _____

Date Parents/Guardians were notified of Incident _____

Time Parents/Guardians were notified of Incident: _____ Attach Letter/Email to report form. Attach parent/guardian response to report form. Attach any meeting notes to report form.