

REGULATION

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Related Entries: JFA, JGA-RB, JGA-EA, JGA-EB
Responsible Office: Deputy Superintendent of Schools
Special Education and Student Services

Classroom Management and Student Behavior Interventions

I. PURPOSE

To set forth procedures concerning the continuum of behavior interventions designed to maintain a positive environment conducive to learning

II. BACKGROUND

The classroom teacher has a primary responsibility for guiding student behavior in order to create a positive learning environment that supports academic achievement. Utilization of positive behavior interventions facilitates the maintenance of an orderly and effective learning climate. Staff use a wide array of positive behavior intervention strategies and supports to guide student behavior and appropriate responsive strategies to maintain a safe and secure environment.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. *Behavior intervention plan* is a proactive plan designed to address problem behaviors exhibited by a student in the educational setting through the use of positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports.
- B. *Conference* is communication between staff, parents, and/or students.
- C. *Continuum of interventions* is a progression of strategies utilized to guide student behavior.
- D. *Corporal punishment*, which is prohibited, is an intentionally inflicted physical penalty administered by a person in authority.
- E. *Exclusion* is the temporary 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.

No period of exclusion may exceed 30 minutes. A “time-out” process constitutes a form of exclusion, suspension does not.

- F. *Functional behavior assessment* is a systematic process of gathering information to guide the development of an effective and efficient behavior intervention plan.
- G. *In-school suspension* is when a student is removed from class for a specified period of time and provided instruction.
- H. Restraints – the intended use of the restraint determines if its use is allowable.
 - 1. *Mechanical restraint*, which is prohibited, is any device or material attached or adjacent to a 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. It is not a protective or stabilizing device.
 - 2. *Physical restraint*, as defined by Maryland state law, is the use of physical force, without the use of any device or material that restricts the free movement of all or a portion of a student’s body. Physical restraint does not include:
 - a) Briefly holding a student in order to calm or comfort the student
 - b) Holding a student’s hand or arm to escort the student safely from one area to another
 - c) Intervening in a fight in accordance with Education Article Section 7-307, *Annotated Code of Maryland*
 - d) Moving a disruptive student who is unwilling to leave the area if other methods such as counseling have been unsuccessful
 - 3. *Protective or stabilizing device* is any device or material attached or adjacent to a 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.
- I. *Seclusion* is the confinement of a student alone in a room from which the student is physically prevented from leaving.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. Staff will employ a full range of effective classroom management strategies designed to create a safe and orderly learning environment that supports academic achievement for all students.
- B. When the student's inappropriate behavior requires the attention of the principal, counselor, school psychologist, pupil personnel worker, or other specialist, the classroom teacher will so inform the principal or designee who will arrange a conference as soon as possible. When feasible, this conference will include the principal or designee, the parents, the classroom teacher, the student, and others when appropriate, to discuss the problem and to explore possible steps to resolve it.
- C. The full range of effective classroom management strategies must consider the cultural and linguistic diversity of the MCPS community.
- D. The classroom teacher-student relationship is integral to student achievement and school success. The foundation of a positive, safe, and orderly educational environment is setting clear, explicit, and high academic and behavioral standards that all students are expected to meet.
- E. When a student's behavior seriously disrupts the instructional program to the detriment of other students, the classroom teacher may temporarily remove him/her from class and refer the student to the principal or designee for appropriate disciplinary action, which may include sanctions such as alternative structure, in-school suspension, or suspension. Prior to readmission, the principal or designee will be responsible for facilitating a resolution. If the principal, after consultation with the classroom teacher, determines that it is necessary, he/she will arrange, as soon as possible, a conference among himself/herself or designee, the teacher, and needed appropriate specialists to discuss the problem and to explore steps to resolve it. If mutually satisfactory steps do not result from this conference, the principal may, after consultation with the classroom teacher, schedule another conference involving the parent(s), community or associate superintendent, and/or a member of student services. The principal will determine when the student will return to class, and he/she or designee will make such determination after consultation with the teacher. If the student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), the process will follow federal and state laws governing special education.
- F. School staff are expected to use a continuum of positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports to increase or decrease targeted student behavior.

- G. Staff shall only use exclusion, physical restraint, or seclusion:
 - 1. After a continuum of positive, less restrictive or alternative approaches have been considered, attempted and determined to be ineffective for the maintenance of a safe, positive learning environment
 - 2. In a humane, safe, and effective manner
 - 3. Without intent to harm or create undue discomfort
 - 4. Consistent with known medical or psychological constraints and limitations and the student's behavioral intervention plan or IEP
- H. The use of corporal punishment is prohibited in MCPS.
- I. The use of mechanical restraint is prohibited in MCPS.
- J. The use of protective or stabilizing devices is permitted under certain circumstances for the purpose of enhancing functional skills, preventing self-injurious behavior, and/or ensuring safe positioning of a person. Staff may use a protective or stabilizing device as prescribed by a health professional or in accordance with the student's IEP or behavior intervention plan.
- K. The use of physical restraint or seclusion is prohibited in Montgomery County Public Schools unless:
 - 1. There is an emergency situation and physical restraint or seclusion is necessary to protect a student or other person from imminent, serious, physical harm after other less intrusive, non-physical interventions have failed or been determined inappropriate
 - 2. The student's behavioral intervention plan describes the specific behaviors and circumstances under which physical restraint or seclusion may be used, and the specific methods of physical restraint or seclusion to be employed
 - 3. The parents of a non-disabled student have otherwise provided written consent to the use of physical restraints or seclusion while a behavior intervention plan is being developed
- L. Designated staff will be trained on how to administer physical restraint.

- M. School personnel may use exclusion to address a student’s behavior if the student’s behavior unreasonably interferes with the student’s learning or the learning of others and/or constitutes an emergency and exclusion is necessary to protect a student or other person from imminent, serious, physical harm after other less intrusive, non-physical interventions have failed or been determined inappropriate.

- N. Parents and school personnel may at any time request a meeting in order to, among other things:
 - 1. Request a Functional Behavioral Assessment
 - 2. Develop, review, or revise a student’s behavioral intervention plan.

- O. The principal is responsible for:
 - 1. At the beginning of each school year, identifying school personnel to receive professional development and serve as a schoolwide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of this regulation
 - 2. Assuring that the exclusion of a student from one or more classes does not constitute a suspension unless it is specifically designated as such in writing by the principal
 - 3. Informing the school staff that corporal punishment is prohibited and that the administering of such punishment is grounds for disciplinary action
 - 4. Notifying the associate superintendent for human resources and the responsible community superintendent of any instance in which corporal punishment has allegedly been administered by an MCPS employee
 - 5. Notifying parents of use of physical restraint or seclusion in writing within twenty four hours of the incident. Additionally, there should be a serious effort to contact the parent by the end of the school day
 - 6. Assuring documentation of each incident of seclusion or restraint is maintained in the educational record

- P. Annually, MCPS will provide professional development to designated school personnel on the appropriate implementation of this regulation. The professional development will include information on the following:
 - 1. Positive behavior interventions strategies and supports

2. Functional behavior assessment and behavior intervention planning
3. Exclusion
4. Restraint
5. Seclusion

Regulation History: Formerly Regulation No. 550-1, August 10, 1976 (directory information updated), revised October 1986; revised September 10, 2004.