

Gate City Charter School for the Arts Limited Use of Restraint Policy

Purpose

Gate City Charter School for the Arts (GCCSA) is committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment. In accordance with **RSA 126-U:5 through 126-U:12**, the use of physical restraint shall be strictly limited, employed only when necessary to protect the physical safety of a student or others, and never used as a disciplinary measure.

Definitions

- **Restraint:** The involuntary physical restriction of a student's movement by school personnel. This does not include brief physical contact to promote safety, provide comfort, escort a student, or assist in instructional activities.
- **Seclusion:** The involuntary placement of a student alone in a room from which they are physically prevented from leaving. **Seclusion is prohibited** in New Hampshire schools.
- **Dangerous Behavior:** Behavior that presents an imminent risk of physical harm to the student or others.

Policy Statement

1. **Prohibition on Seclusion**
 - GCCSA does not permit the use of seclusion under any circumstances.
2. **Limited Use of Restraint**
 - Physical restraint may only be used when:
 - A student's behavior poses an imminent risk of harm to themselves or others; and
 - Less restrictive interventions have been ineffective or are not feasible.
 - Restraint will never be used for discipline, punishment, convenience, or as a substitute for adequate staffing or programming.
3. **Staff Training**
 - Staff expected to use restraint in emergency situations will receive training in state-approved crisis intervention and de-escalation techniques.
 - All staff using restraint will be trained annually in prevention, positive support, and alternatives to restraint.

Procedures for Use of Restraint

1. **Prevention First**
 - De-escalation strategies and positive behavior interventions will always be attempted before restraint is considered.
2. **During Restraint**

- Only the least amount of force necessary will be used.
 - Restraint will end immediately once the risk of harm has passed.
 - Staff will continuously monitor the student's physical and emotional status.
3. **After Restraint**
- The student will be assessed for injury or trauma.
 - A debriefing will occur with staff and the student as appropriate.
 - The incident will be documented in writing.

Documentation & Notification

- **Immediate Verbal Notice:** Parents/guardians will be verbally notified as soon as possible, and no later than the same day the restraint occurs with good faith efforts.
- **Written Notice:** upon request a written report will be provided to parents/guardians within **5 business days**.
- **DOE Reporting:** All restraint incidents will be documented in the school's restraint log and reported annually to the NH DOE, per RSA 126-U and Ed 1202.
- **Board Oversight:** Aggregate restraint data will be reported to the Board of Trustees annually for review and policy monitoring.

Oversight and Review

- The Director (or designee) will serve as the Restraint Compliance Officer, ensuring proper training, documentation, and reporting.
- This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if required by changes in law or DOE guidance.