



<b>STUDENT AND EMPLOYEE SAFETY – PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND PHYSICAL INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES</b>	
<b>Superintendent Responsible:</b> Superintendent of Education, Specialized Services	<b>Initial Effective Date:</b> 2019/10/28
<b>Last Updated:</b> 2023/06/30	<b>Next Review Date:</b> 2026/06/30

**Purpose**

To provide a process for employees who may require the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and/or physical intervention techniques when interacting with students.

**Guiding Principles**

Occasionally there are students who may direct intentional or unintentional aggression towards employees and students that may result in injury. Grand Erie District School Board (Grand Erie) has a duty to respect the rights and ensure the safety and dignity of students and employees. Grand Erie’s Accessibility Plan requires “the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to enhance accessibility for individuals who work, learn and participate in the school board community and environment”.

*The Occupational Health and Safety Act* requires employers to take all precautions reasonable in the protection of a worker. This protection may include the implementation and use of PPE as part of a plan to increase employee safety. The Act also provides a duty to workers to use or wear protective devices or clothing as required by their employer.

In the event of student aggression, regardless of whether it has resulted in an injury, Administrators should refer to Maintaining Employee Safety While Working with Students Procedure (HS-007). The following process should be followed for the implementation and use of PPE for increasing employee safety.

**1.0 Process**

1.1. Implementation of PPE

1. When an incident occurs that results, or may result, in injury, the employee promptly notifies the Administrator(s), the Health and Safety site representative, and the union Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) Representative.
2. The Administrator(s) contacts the appropriate Teacher Consultant - Special Education who will contact the Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Coordinator to issue the appropriate equipment.
3. The Teacher Consultant – Special Education, Lead Educational Assistant or ABA Coordinator will deliver PPE to the school and distribute to the appropriate employee(s) to ensure proper fit and coverage. Records of the PPE distributed to the necessary employee(s) will be maintained by the Special Education Department. It is the responsibility of the employee using the PPE to return it to the appropriate Special Education – Teacher Consultant when it is deemed no longer necessary or requires a replacement.
4. All appropriate employees will be provided with instruction and training on the care, use, maintenance, and limitations of the PPE. Training will be coordinated through the Health and Safety Officer and documentation of training will be kept in the health and safety office for as long as the equipment is issued to the employee.
5. The Teacher Consultant – Special Education coordinates the prompt involvement of the assigned Behaviour Counsellor, who will collaborate with the Administrator(s)

- and appropriate school employees to develop or revise Behaviour and/or BeSafe Plans, which include specific direction regarding the use of PPE.
6. All employees working with the student must read and understand the current Behaviour and/or BeSafe plan.
  7. Employees in the classroom will record behaviour data and provide regular updates, as requested by the Behaviour Counsellor.

The Administrator(s) will ensure that there is a regular PPE update at Resource Team meetings in schools where equipment has been assigned. The Teacher Consultant - Special Education will track and ensure the return of equipment to a central board location when it has been determined it is no longer necessary (see removal process below).

#### 1.2. Adjustment or removal of PPE

The Behaviour Counsellor, in consultation with the Administrator(s), the Teacher Consultant – Special Education, Health and Safety Officer, union JOHSC representative, special education support employees, and all classroom employees directly involved with the student will participate in a meeting to discuss any proposed adjustment or removal of PPE being used. The Behaviour and/or BeSafe Plans must be revised to reflect any changes to the need for PPE if it occurs.

Before considering removal or adjustment of personal protective equipment the following needs to be in place and considered:

1. Employees working directly with the student are trained and current in Behaviour Management Systems (BMS).
2. Behaviour plans and/or BeSafe plans are in place and being followed by all appropriate employees. These plans outline how to prevent and respond to the student's behaviour and what PPE, if any, is required.
3. Injury and behaviour data indicate that incidents of aggression are decreasing or are occurring at a low level (frequency and intensity) and staff members are confident that they can minimize injury through use of BMS strategies.
4. Injury and behaviour data will continue to be monitored and behaviour and/or BeSafe plans, including PPE, will be modified as needed following the process described above.

#### 1.3. Steps to Adjustment or Removal of PPE

The removal of PPE should first occur in the student's classroom environment. Removal of PPE in other areas of the school should not begin until classroom employees are confident that they can manage behaviour in the classroom without equipment.

When possible, start the process of removing equipment by first having the employee(s) wear the prescribed equipment under clothing so that it is not visible to the student (i.e., arm guards, shin pads), or have face guards on helmets raised.

Employees remove one piece of equipment at a time. Begin with equipment that, if removed, would result in the least amount of risk to the employee(s) if an aggressive incident were to occur, i.e., wrist guards, arm guards, shin guards, body protectors, and then neck and head gear. All equipment must be easily accessible to employees, if needed.

Employees will consult with the Administrator(s), the Teacher Consultant- Special Education and the Health and Safety Officer if incidents of injury decrease and student behaviour data indicates that behaviour incidents are decreasing or at a low level (intensity, frequency, and duration). After consultation, the employee(s) may begin to move outside of the classroom without the equipment. Equipment must continue to

be accessible. Employees will carry necessary equipment with them when they are out of the classroom. If it is not possible for the employee(s) to carry equipment, they must have two-way radios or cell phone with them to call for equipment if required.

Movement to activities in the community without safety equipment should be considered with caution. Employees need to feel confident that they can prevent injury and manage student behaviour in a community setting. In the Behaviour and/or BeSafe plan there should be a clear plan for managing behaviour if the student's behaviour escalates in the community (access to equipment and transportation if needed etc.).

## **2.0 Physical Intervention Techniques**

Employees are expected to use early prevention and intervention strategies whenever possible in order to respond to a situation well before it escalates to the point where physical intervention techniques would be required. Early intervention includes the recognition of a student's early symptoms of anxiety or agitation. During this phase, a supportive and empathetic approach by employees may defuse or de-escalate the potential crisis.

Students whose behaviour escalates beyond the anxiety or agitated level may display defensive behaviour or a loss of rational control. During this phase employees should maintain a controlled and professional manner while setting behavioural limits that are clear, concise and enforceable, and allow the student time to respond.

Approaches such as these may reduce the likelihood that a student will demonstrate behaviour that is unsafe toward themselves or others which may require a physical containment.

The use of physical intervention techniques, as outlined in the principles of Behaviour Management Systems (BMS), may be required on some occasions as a short-term solution to immediate danger to other students/employees.

Examples where physical intervention may be required include, but are not limited to:

- an employee(s) is required to intercede in a physical dispute between students
- a student requires assistance in following directions from an employee(s) to release an object in his/her possession (i.e., in danger of harming themselves or others)
- an employee(s) is required to intervene in an attempt to minimize personal injury to themselves, other employees, or students when a student is being physically aggressive
- an employee(s) is required to intervene when a student is harming themselves

For students that exhibit regular episodes of behavior that impact the safety of themselves or others, early prevention and intervention strategies, as well as appropriate responses during escalated situations (e.g., the use of physical containment), will be documented in the student's Behavior and/or BeSafe plan.

## **3.0 Guidelines for Physical Containment (Physical Restraint)**

3.1. "Behaviour Management Systems" (BMS) is used in Grand Erie as the primary means of behaviour management support. This program has been developed by educators through the Ontario Education Services Corporation and is sanctioned by the Ministry of Education. Training in BMS is offered by trained Grand Erie employees.

3.2. Physical containment (physical restraint) is a safety procedure approved by BMS and employed to protect employees and students.

3.3. Physical containment strategies are developed as short term, brief interventions that are employed by trained employees.

- 3.4. To ensure that these techniques are used in a visibility constructive manner, the employees should maintain personal self-control and composure throughout the application.
- 3.5. Employees may counsel students to help them understand how their actions could escalate to a containment situation, however the use of containment should not be used as a threat.
- 3.6. Other students should not be involved in the application of a physical containment and should be removed from the situation, where possible. Every attempt should be made to remove other students from the immediate area.
- 3.7. During any physical intervention, the employee(s) should reassure the student that the intervention is being used for reasons of safety until the immediate safety risk has passed. Under circumstances where such communication could intensify the student's unsafe behaviour, the employee(s) may choose to reassure the student after self-control has been recovered.
- 3.8. Appropriate follow-up and debriefing should occur with all employees and students involved subsequent to the use of physical containment in an effort to resolve conflict and avoid the need to utilize physical containment in the future.
- 3.9. The Administrator(s) must consider if disciplinary action is appropriate with regard to the student.

#### **4.0 Reporting Procedures**

1. Parent(s)/caregiver(s) must be informed of the circumstances where a physical containment could be a possibility (e.g., Strategies classes). This information must also be included in the student's Behaviour and/or BeSafe plan.
2. When a physical containment has been employed, the parent(s)/caregiver(s) of the student must be notified. Notification may be in person, by phone, using the daily communication log, or by any mutually acceptable means. A copy of the completed Physical Containment Report will be sent to parent(s)/caregiver(s) by regular mail and/or email as soon as possible following the incident.
3. The Physical Containment Report will be maintained in the Ontario Student Record.

#### **Reference(s):**

- Workplace Violence Policy (HS-02)
- Workplace Violence Procedure (HS-002)
- Workplace Violence Manual (HS-02-M)
- [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)



**Physical Containment Report  
Student Information**

This form is to be completed for every occurrence of physical intervention. It is to be completed by the staff involved in the administration of physical restraint and submitted to the Administrator/designate within one working day of the incident.

**SECTION A**

Date: (YY/MM/DD)	School:
Student's Name:	D.O.B.: (YY/MM/DD)
Name of Administrator/designate informed of restraint:	Name of parent/caregiver informed of restraint:

Date and time contacted:  
(YY/MM/DD)

**Staff who administered physical restraint:**

Name(s):	Title:
Observer Name(s):	Observer Title:
Restraint start time:	Restraint finish time:

**SECTION B**

**Precipitating incident:**

Location/Antecedents:	
Student behaviour precipitating restraint:	
De-escalation attempts:	

<b>SECTION C</b>	
<b>Details of restraint:</b>	
Justification for restraint:	
Type of restraint used:	
Student reaction to restraint:	
How restraint ended:	
Injury to student: (identify any medical action taken)	
Injury to staff (identify any medical action taken)	
Incident Accident Report has been completed: YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	

<b>SECTION D</b>
<b>Follow up:</b>
Student disciplinary sanctions:
Parent/caregiver comments/concerns:

<b>Signature of Staff Completing Physical Restraint Incident Report</b>	<b>Printed Name of Staff Completing Physical Restraint Incident Report</b>	<b>Date (YY/MM/DD)</b>
---	--	------------------------

<b>Signature of Administrator/Designate</b>	<b>Printed Name of Administrator/Designate</b>	<b>Date (YY/MM/DD)</b>
---	--	------------------------

Notice of Collection: The personal information provided on this form and any other correspondence relating to involvement in board programs is collected by the Grand Erie District School Board under the authority of the Education Act and Regulations (R.S.O. 1990 c.E.2) as amended. The information will be used to register the student in a school, for the collection of applicable student/activity fees, as well as for any consistent purpose. Information is shared with employees such that they may carry out their job duties. In addition, the information may be used or disclosed to comply with legislation, for compelling circumstances affecting health and safety or discipline, as required in circumstances related to law enforcement matters, or in accordance with any other Act. For questions about this collection, contact the board's Privacy Officer, Grand Erie District School Board, 349 Erie Avenue, Brantford, Ontario, N3T 5V3, Telephone 519-756-6306 ext. 281178. (Revised May 2023)

Original - OSR  
 Copy – Superintendent of Education  
 Copy – Parent/Caregiver

**Filed in OSR**  
**Retention: E + 3 years**

(E = no further appeal + 3 years for adults, or if student is under the age of 21, kept until 21<sup>st</sup> birthday)