



## **Emergency Safety Intervention (ESI) Policy**

(Aligned with Utah State Board of Education Rule R277-609)

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety, dignity, and rights of all students and staff by outlining the conditions, procedures, and requirements governing the use of Emergency Safety Interventions (ESIs). ESIs are used only when a student presents an immediate and significant danger of serious physical harm to self or others, and when less-restrictive interventions are insufficient to maintain safety.

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### **2. Definitions**

#### **2.1 Emergency Safety Intervention (ESI)**

A temporary intervention involving physical restraint or seclusion that is used only when a student presents an immediate danger to self or others.

#### **2.2 Physical Restraint**

A personal restriction that immobilizes or reduces a student's ability to move their torso, arms, legs, or head freely.

Physical restraint does not include:

- Physical escort involving the temporary touching or holding of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of guiding a student to another location;
- Prompting;
- Temporary touching to guide or assist;
- Interventions used to prevent accidental injury;
- Devices implemented for medical or safety purposes with parent consent.

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Prohibited restraints include:

- Physical restraint, subject to the requirements of Section R277-608-5, except when the physical restraint is allowed as described in Section 53G-8-301;
- Any technique that restricts breathing;
- Prone (face-down) physical restraints;
- Supine (face-up) physical restraints;
- Pressure on neck, throat, or torso;
- Aversive stimuli;
- Chemical or mechanical restraints, except as consistent with Section R277-608-2;
- Physical restraint that obstructs the airway of a student or restricts a student's ability to communicate.

### 2.3 Seclusion

The involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room where the student is prevented from leaving. Any room on school property may be used for Seclusion provided the room meets applicable safety and fire code and a school staff member trained in ESI observes the seclusion at all times.

Seclusion must not:

- Involve locked doors;
- Extend for more than 30 minutes, per occurrence;
- Occur in a room that is unsafe or unobservable;

## 3. Conditions for Use of ESI

3.1 ESI shall only be used when:

1. A student's behavior poses imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others;
2. Less-restrictive interventions have been attempted or are clearly unsafe or ineffective;
3. The intervention is used only for the period necessary to maintain safety as reasonably understood by the school employee.

3.2 Before any ESI is used, the school shall incorporate:

- Positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS);

- restorative practices;
- teaching and reinforcing expectations; and
- re-teaching behavior expectations to support students.

3.2 ESI shall not be used for:

- Discipline or punishment;
- Coercion, retaliation or humiliation;
- Disruption or disrespect;
- Reasons due to inadequate staffing or for the staff member's convenience.

ESI must be immediately terminated when:

- A student is no longer an immediate danger to self or others;
- A student is in severe distress.

#### **4. Staff Training Requirements**

All school staff who supervise students, or who may be asked to assist in managing a student's behavior, shall receive foundational behavior support training, which shall include behavioral or emotional crisis management, including de-escalation strategies consistent with the LRBI manual incorporated by reference into Section R277-609-7 and policies related to ESI. The foundation behavior support training described in Subsection R277-608-4(1) must be completed within two months or 30 days if working directly with a student with disabilities, of employment and bi-annually, thereafter.

Key identified school employees (i.e. any school employee responsible for managing a student's behavior) shall receive comprehensive ESI training that is research and evidence based in addition to the foundational behavior support training. Only employees who have completed district- or school-approved annual ESI training may implement reasonable and necessary physical restraint or seclusion as set forth in Section 3.1 above or when otherwise appropriate to the circumstances outlined in Subsection 53G-8-301(4). Training shall include:

- Behavioral or emotional crisis management, including de-escalation strategies consistent with the LRBI manual incorporated by reference into Section R277-609-7;
- Crisis response;

- Disengagement strategies;
- The appropriate, safe, and effective use of ESI;
- Proper use and limitations of restraint and seclusion;
- Monitoring procedures;
- Documentation of ESI and reporting requirements.

All staff must be trained yearly in prevention, de-escalation, and regulatory supports.

## **5. Monitoring During ESI**

During any ESI, staff shall:

- Maintain continuous visual observation of the student;
  - Assess physical and emotional status throughout the intervention;
  - Use the least restrictive method possible;
  - Immediately release the student once they demonstrate safety and regulation;
  - Ensure the student's airway, breathing, posture, and circulation are not compromised.
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## **6. Post-ESI Procedures**

### **6.1 Documentation & Reporting**

A written ESI report must be completed on the same school day or within 24 hours and include:

- Reason for ESI and imminent danger description;
- Less-restrictive interventions attempted;
- Type of ESI used;
- Start and end times;
- Student response;
- Staff involved;
- Any injuries or medical concerns;
- Steps taken after release;
- Plans for follow-up supports.

The school shall:

- Document all ESI uses in the student information system;

- Submit required data to the Superintendent and state discipline reporting systems (e.g., UTREx); and
- Maintain records for periodic review.

## 6.2 Parent Notification

If a school employee physically restrains a student and/or places the student in seclusion, the school or the school employee shall provide notice immediately, and may not exceed 15 minutes after use. The notice shall be provided to the student's parent and school administration. If a school employee physically restrains a student and/or places the student in seclusion, the school or the school employee shall provide documentation of the physical restraint to the ESI committee and the student's parent. The notice shall be documented within the student information systems records. If a school employee uses any ESI, the school shall provide a parent with a copy of any notes or additional documentation, including a description of the physical space in which the seclusion occurred or the type of physical restraint that was used, taken during the use of the ESI upon request of the student's parent.

Within 48 hours of the school using an ESI with a student, the school shall provide notice to a parent that the parent may request a copy of any notes or additional documentation taken during the use of the ESI.

A parent may request a time to meet with the school staff and administration to discuss the use of an ESI.

## 6.3 Student Debrief

A supportive debrief shall be conducted with the student as soon as the student is calm. The purpose is to:

- Review triggers and coping strategies;
- Rebuild connection and emotional safety;
- Reinforce self-regulation supports.

## 6.4 Staff Debrief

Staff involved shall participate in a debrief to review:

- What led to the ESI;
- What worked;
- What could be modified;
- Any recommended changes to the Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP).

## **7. Review of Behavior Plans**

If a student requires more than one ESI during a school year, the IEP team, 504 team, or student support team must meet to:

- Review the Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA);
- Update the Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP);
- Consider additional supports, interventions, training, or evaluations.

## **8. Prohibitions and Protections**

This policy prohibits:

- Use of ESI by untrained staff (except in life-threatening emergencies);
- Use of ESI that restricts breathing or communication;
- Isolation without monitoring;
- Seclusion rooms that are locked, unsafe, or hidden from view;
- Use of ESI as a method of instruction, punishment, or behavior control.

Students have the right to:

- Be treated with dignity;
- Access education in a safe and supportive environment;
- Reasonable accommodations;
- Trauma-informed responses;
- A review process and parent notification.

## **9. Oversight and Compliance**

The school administrator is responsible for:

- Reviewing all ESI reports;
- Ensuring parent notification occurs;
- Maintaining ESI records for state reporting;
- Monitoring patterns of use;
- Ensuring ongoing staff training;
- Addressing non-compliance immediately.

The school shall comply with all requirements outlined in USBE Rule R277-609 and related state and federal laws.

## **10. ESI Committee**

An ESI Committee shall be established to:

- Monitor the use of ESI's;
- Develop dispute resolution procedures;
- Recommend staff professional development;
- Ensure compliance with state rules.

Committee membership must include:

- At least two administrators;
- At least one parent/guardian appointed by the Director;
- At least two certified professionals with behavior training.

## **11. Special Education Considerations**

ESI practices must be consistent with:

- A student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan;
- Federal and State special education law;
- Least Restrictive Behavioral Interventions (LRBI) requirements.

## **12. Annual Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed yearly to ensure alignment with updated state rules, best practices in crisis intervention, trauma-informed care, and student safety standards.