

SIMCOE COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

**MEMORANDUM**

2009-2010:

TO: Elementary Principals  
Secondary Principals

FROM: Lindy Zaretsky  
Superintendent of Instructional Services and Leadership

SUBJECT: **GUIDELINES REGARDING PHYSICAL CONTAINMENT OF STUDENTS**

**Background**

Some students with complex needs demonstrate behaviours that present a safety concern to themselves and others. School staff have a variety of resources and processes that support the modification and management of such behaviours, including behaviour plans as part of an IEP, safety plans and personal protective equipment. In addition, staff who work closely with such students have been provided with initial certification and recertification in Behaviour Management Systems Training, which includes a focus on preventative strategies, as well as responses including blocks, releases and physical containment.

**Guidelines for Particular Circumstances**

BMS training stresses that physical containment is a last resort strategy, and should only take place when there is an imminent risk of harm to others or to the student. However, there are situations where a broader view of potential harm should be considered, which will affect the decision regarding physical containment.

In some cases, students who are demonstrating potentially aggressive behaviours are leaving their classroom and are moving around the school. The student may be attempting to access other classrooms and school administrators are alerting teachers to close doors and ensure they are locked. Circumstances like these, particularly if a student is banging on doors and disrupting classroom activities, may also limit other students' access to washrooms and other areas of the school. In such situations, school staff must take the emotional wellbeing of all students and disruption to instruction into consideration. While there continues to be an emphasis on preventative strategies and less intrusive techniques, it is recognized that there may be a need to move to physical containment in these circumstances.

When physical restraint or containment is used, it must be done using the least amount of force necessary and discontinued when there is no longer a risk or if the physical containment itself endangers the health or safety of the student and/or others.

If there is a need to ensure that classroom doors are closed and locked in a particular area of the school, please ensure a message similar to "The office is closed" is used.

Administrators should not use a message that is similar to the Code Red or Lockdown procedure. The words “Code” and “Lockdown” should not be used.

When there is a pattern of documented behaviour similar to that described above, Instructional Services staff should be contacted to assist with the development of a school plan. Please review any plan with your superintendent of education.

Any questions regarding this memo can be directed to the Regional Principal of Special Education: Peter Gumbrell for Areas 1, 2 & 3, at (705) 734-6363 ext. 11488 or [pgumbrell@scdsb.on.ca](mailto:pgumbrell@scdsb.on.ca) or Heather Birchall for Areas 4, 5 & 6, at (705) 734-6363 ext. 11461 or [hbirchall@scdsb.on.ca](mailto:hbirchall@scdsb.on.ca)

April 27, 2010