

SUBJECT: USE OF TIME OUT ROOMS

"Time out" is a technique used to interrupt an unacceptable behavior by removing the student from the situation where the misbehavior is occurring. The State Education Department (SED) does not regulate the use of time outs, but does regulate the use of a separate room where a student may be removed for a time out.

Except as provided below, the District will not employ the use of time out rooms as a means of regulating student behavior.

A time out room is defined "as an area for a student to safely deescalate, regain control and prepare to meet expectations to return to his or her education program." If a time out room is used, it must be used in conjunction with a behavioral intervention plan (that is designed to teach and reinforce alternative appropriate behaviors). The student is then removed to a supervised area in order to facilitate self-control. Time outs may also be used in unanticipated situations that pose an immediate concern for the physical safety of a student or others. Unanticipated or emergency use requires proper documentation, in accordance with Commissioner's regulations.

The District has adopted and implemented the following policy and procedures governing school use of time out rooms as part its behavior management approach consistent with Commissioner's regulations, including the physical and monitoring requirements, parental rights, and individualized education program (IEP) requirements for students with disabilities.

At a minimum, the use of time out rooms will be governed by the following rules and standards:

- a) The District prohibits placing a student in a locked room or space or in a room where the student cannot be continuously observed and supervised. The time out room will be unlocked and the door must be able to be opened from the inside. The use of locked rooms or spaces for purposes of time out or emergency interventions is prohibited.

Staff will continuously monitor the student in a time out room. The staff must be able to see and hear the student at all times.

Under no circumstances will a time out room in a school program be used for seclusion of the student, where the term "seclusion" is interpreted to mean placing a student in a locked room or space or in a room where the student is not continuously observed and supervised.

- b) Factors which may precipitate the use of the time out room are clearly defined in each students individualized education program (IEP) and Behavior Intervention Plan (B.I.P.)

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- c) Time limitations for the use of the time out room are clearly defined in each students individualized education program (IEP) and Behavior Intervention Plan (B.I.P.)

Further, a student's IEP will specify when a behavioral intervention plan includes the use of a time out room for a student with a disability, including the maximum amount of time a student will need to be in a time out room as a behavioral consequence as determined on an individual basis in consideration of the student's age and individual needs.

School administration or other personnel will be notified in the event a student is placed in a time out room for excessive amounts of time; and this information will be considered when determining the effectiveness of the student's behavioral intervention plan and the use of the time out room for the student. Whether the student requires a debriefing following the use of a time out room will be left to the staff knowledgeable about the individual student.

- d) Staff training on the policies and procedures related to the use of time out rooms will include, but not be limited to, the following measures:
1. The Director of Special Education will be responsible to the Superintendent for establishing administrative practices and procedures for training all District personnel responsible for carrying out the provisions of Commissioner's regulations relating to the use of time out rooms, including members of the Committee on Special Education (CSE) and Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE).
 2. Specific training programs and activities can be seen in the District's Professional Development Plan.
- e) Data collection to monitor the effectiveness of the use of time out rooms:

District schools will establish and implement procedures to document the use of time out rooms, including information to monitor the effectiveness of the use of the time out room to decrease specified behaviors. This data would be subject to review by the SED upon request.

Data collection should appropriately include, but is not limited to, the following information:

1. A record for each student showing the date and time of each use of the time out room;
2. A detailed account of the antecedent conditions or specific behavior that led to the use of the time out room;
3. The amount of time that the student was in the time out room; and
4. Information to monitor the effectiveness of the use of the time out room to decrease specified behaviors which resulted in the student being placed in the room.

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SUBJECT: USE OF TIME OUT ROOMS (Cont'd.)**f) Information to be provided to parents.**

The District will inform the student's parents prior to the initiation of a behavioral intervention plan that will incorporate the use of a time out room for a student, and will give the parent the opportunity to see the physical space that will be used as a time out room and provide the parent with a copy of the school's policy on the use of time out rooms.

Additionally, parents should be notified if their child was placed in a time out room. Minimally, whenever a time out room is used as an emergency intervention in accordance with Commissioner's regulations, the parent will be notified of the emergency intervention. This notification will be provided the same day whenever possible.

The parent is a member of the CSE and the use of a time out room must be included on the student's IEP. The parent receives prior notice as to the recommendations on a student's IEP and may request due process in the event the parent does not agree with the CSE recommendations.

Parent reports of alleged inappropriate interventions used in a time out room should be directed to school administrators.

Physical Space Used as a Time Out Room

The physical space used as a time out room must meet certain standards.

- a) The room will provide a means for continuous visual and auditory monitoring of the student.
- b) The room will be of adequate width, length, and height to allow the student to move about and recline comfortably.
- c) Wall and floor coverings should be designed to prevent injury to the student, and there will be adequate lighting and ventilation.
- d) The temperature of the room will be within the normal comfort range and consistent with the rest of the building.
- e) The room will be clean and free of objects and fixtures that could be potentially dangerous to a student and will meet all local fire and safety codes.