TO: Public School Directors of Education

FROM: Isabelina Rodriguez, Ed.D., Chief

DATE: October 5, 2015


As you are aware, effective July 1, 2015, the Connecticut legislature passed new legislation for PA 15-141 that places significant limits on restraint and seclusion in Connecticut schools. This new legislation provides revisions to previous restraint and seclusion legislation, the implementation of which is further articulated in the current Special Education Regulations related to restraint and seclusion in schools.

Generally, PA 15-141:

- expands the prohibition of the use of restraint and seclusion except in emergency situations to:
  - all public school students Grades K-12, in addition to:
    - students identified as requiring special education and those students in the process of evaluation to determine special education eligibility (ages 3-21);
- eliminates the use of seclusion as a "broad exception" in the individualized education program and clarifies the requirements for inclusion in a behavioral intervention plan as determined by the planning and placement team;
- provides additional and revised definitions of terms, prohibitions and monitoring requirements;
- prohibits the use of prone restraint;
- requires monitoring of students in seclusion including the requirement that the space be equipped with a window that allows the student a clear line of sight;
- requires reconvening a student’s educational team, including the parent, after a child has been repeatedly restrained or secluded within 20 school days;
- the development of building level crisis intervention teams;
- requires the creation of a district training plan by July 2017 to train all school professionals, paraprofessionals and administrators around the prevention of the use of restraint and seclusion and how to appropriately intervene when necessary.

Connecticut Special Education Regulations were most recently revised and adopted in July 2013 and provide additional requirements related to the implementation of PA 15-141. These regulations will remain in effect where they do not conflict with the intent of PA 15-141.

Further clarification of the revisions noted above can be found in the following document: Guidance Related to the New Legislation on Restraint and Seclusion in Schools. The Model Incident Reports for the use of restraint and seclusion have also been revised to meet the legislated requirement outlined in PA 15-141.

Additionally, the Connecticut State Department of Education is providing a training PowerPoint, Understanding the Laws and Regulations Governing the Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools, for districts to utilize in addressing the districts’ requirement to train all staff members annually regarding the laws and regulations related to the use of restraint and seclusion in schools.

Finally, there are evidence-based strategies and curriculum to support teachers as they work with children to assist in reducing the need for restraint and seclusion. These strategies can be found in the document Recommended Procedures and Practices to Reduce the Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools.

If you have additional questions please contact Colleen Hayles at 860-713-6922 or colleen.hayles@ct.gov.