



Georgia Department of Education

Policies and Procedures

Policy Title:	<i>Use of Physical Force, State Schools</i>		
Policy Number:	<i>SS-3006 Descriptor Code-JD-2</i>		
Release Date:	<i>10-08-02</i>	Last Revised:	<i>11-22-03</i>

Purpose

To describe the Office of State School's policy in regard to physical force at the Atlanta Area School for the Deaf, the Georgia Academy for the Blind, and the Georgia School for the Deaf.

Applicability

This policy applies to employees at the Atlanta Area School for the Deaf, the Georgia Academy for the Blind, and the Georgia School for the Deaf.

Policy

School discipline requires the guidance of pupils in a way which permits the orderly and efficient operation of the school. The Office of State Schools does not condone the use of physical force by employees when dealing with pupils. Corporal punishment and unreasonable use of physical force are expressly prohibited. It is recognized, however, that it may be necessary for school personnel to use reasonable and appropriate physical force.

General Provisions

Use of Physical Force

1. Reasonable Use of Force:
 - a. Reasonable physical force may be used by school personnel when necessary to restrain, remove, or disarm pupils who present a threat of harm to themselves or others, property damage or theft, or who disrupt school activities.
 - b. Physical force is necessary only when other means of restraint, removal, or disarmament would be ineffective or only after such other means have been attempted and have been ineffective.
 - c. In determining whether the use of physical force is reasonable and necessary, all circumstances shall be considered, including but not limited to, the pupil's age, sex, maturity and previous history, the seriousness of the problem and the threat posed by

the pupil, and the availability and use of other means of restraint, removal, or disarmament not involving the use of physical force.

- d. Examples of force that could be reasonable and necessary include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - i. Using reasonable and necessary force to quell a disturbance or prevent an act that threatens physical injury to any person;
 - ii. Using reasonable and necessary force to obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object within a pupil's control;
 - iii. Using reasonable and necessary force for the purpose of self defense or the defense of others;
 - iv. Using reasonable and necessary force for the protection of property;
 - v. Using reasonable and necessary force to remove a disruptive pupil from the school premises, motor vehicle, or from school sponsored activities;
 - vi. Using reasonable and necessary force to prevent a pupil from inflicting harm on himself or herself;
 - vii. Using reasonable and necessary force to protect the safety of others;
 - viii. Using incidental, minor, or reasonable physical contact designed to maintain order and control; and
 - ix. Using reasonable physical activities associated with athletics.
 - e. When physical force is no longer necessary, it shall be discontinued. Action taken after the fact may be conference, referral, suspension, court action or expulsion.
2. Corporal Punishment and Unreasonable Use of Physical Force Prohibited:
- a. The unreasonable use of physical force occurs as a result of using physical force when it is not necessary to use such physical force, or when it is no longer necessary to use such physical force.
 - b. Corporal punishment is the unreasonable and unnecessary use of physical force. It is defined as the intentional infliction of physical pain used as a means of discipline. Corporal punishment and the unreasonable use of physical force are prohibited.
 - c. Examples of corporal punishment and the unreasonable use of physical force are as follows:
 1. Slapping;
 2. Paddling;
 3. Punching;
 4. Kicking;
 5. Prolonged maintenance of physically painful position.
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3. Reporting:
 - a. School personnel who use physical force against a pupil shall report each incident to School Director.

**Authority and/or
Cross-Reference**

- O.C.G.A. 19-7-5
- O.C.G.A. 20-2-732