

DATE: June 7, 2022

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Annual Seclusion Room Update

ORIGINATOR: Kathy Muhlethaler, Assistant Superintendent

RESOURCE STAFF: Ian Crichton, Ann Parker, Jana Pedersen

REFERENCE: [Standards for Seclusion and Physical Restraint in Alberta Schools](#)
[HAH.AR Division Seclusion Rooms and Use of Physical Restraint](#)

ISSUE

On May 25, 2021, the Board passed a motion:

That data on the use of seclusion and restraint are reported to the Board annually, along with work on systemic changes so that these practices are no longer needed or used.

BACKGROUND

The Standards for Seclusion and Physical Restraints in Alberta Schools are the basis for our Division's Administrative Regulation HAH.AR Seclusion Rooms and Use of Physical Restraint. The Division has established practices and standards that prioritize the safety and well-being of students and staff within a welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy learning environment providing clear standards and expectations with respect to the use of seclusion rooms and physical restraint in the Division. Seclusion rooms and physical restraint are only to be used by staff who have met the training standards. Training provides staff with the skills to safely recognize and respond to crisis situations, focusing upon proactive approaches and de-escalation techniques.

CURRENT SITUATION

The Division continues to support the development of staff capacity to ensure a positive, proactive approach to supporting students with complex behavioural needs. This is approached through prevention with a focus on de-escalation, diffusing challenging behaviours and building positive relationships. Despite a focus on prevention, a crisis or safety management plan may be necessary in exceptional situations where a student's behaviour has the potential to put their safety or the safety of others at serious and imminent risk of physical harm and when de-escalation, preventative strategies or alternative interventions are ineffective. The use of seclusion and/or physical restraint is a last resort as in a crisis or emergency situation.

Support for staff training is a shared responsibility between central administration and school principals. The Division provides professional learning to meet Division training standards through Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NVC) and three complex behaviour modules. The complex behaviour professional learning modules A, B and C provide positive behaviour interventions and strategies through all tiers of the pyramid of intervention:

- Module A: provides a foundational look at positive behaviour supports and universal strategies that can support and promote mental health in the classroom.
- Module B: builds on the foundations of Module A and provides information about how complex behaviours develop, and some of the precipitating factors that can impact a student in the classroom such as executive functioning, regulation and trauma.
- Module C: provides in-depth instruction regarding Individual Behaviour Support Plan (IBSP) creation and building a supportive collaboration between family and school to support students with complex behavioural needs, including data tracking, and developing specific strategies for supporting students.
- In 2021–2022, 558 Division staff attended one or more of the complex behaviour modules.

Module	A: Universal	B: Targeted	C: Specialized
September 2021–May 2022 Number of Staff Participants	236	167	155

NVCI training includes conflict de-escalation training and techniques through online theory modules and virtual/in-person physical competency sessions.

NVCI September 2021–May 2022 Number of Staff Participants	
Online Theory Modules	1343
Physical Competency Training	1028

Alberta Education requires school Divisions to track and provide data each month on the use of operational seclusion rooms in each school. Currently, there are 78 schools that have one or more operational seclusion rooms; for a total of 151 operational seclusion rooms.

With respect to the tables below, please note the following:

- The 2019–2020 data reflects September to mid-March due to the transition to emergent remote learning for all students on March 16, 2020.
- The 2020–2021 data reflects in-person learners with approximately 30 per cent of Division students learning online.
- The 2021–2022 data reflects in-person learners with approximately five per cent of Division students learning online.
- Unique Students refers to the number of different students using the seclusion room that month (the same student may have used a seclusion room more than once).

Seclusion Room Data

	RECORD OF USE SELF-SELECTED					
	2019–2020		2020–2021		2021–2022	
	Monthly Self-selected - use of seclusion room	Monthly Self-selected Unique Students	Monthly Self-selected - use of seclusion room	Monthly Self-selected Unique Students	Monthly Self-selected use of seclusion room	Monthly Self-selected Unique Students
September	538	146	113	57	246	65
October	816	119	104	39	142	62
November	329	50	81	36	143	63
December	144	25	64	33	61	38
January	255	14	91	44	104	41
February	132	15	80	36	158	68
March	77	6	78	39	104	53
April	n/a	n/a	100	43	106	42
May	n/a	n/a	41	24	n/a	n/a
June	n/a	n/a	92	40	n/a	n/a
TOTAL	2291	375	844	391	1064	432

In the table below, the data indicates an overall downward trend for non-self-selected seclusion room use from 2019–2020 to 2021–2022.

	RECORD OF USE NON-SELF-SELECTED					
	2019–2020		2020–2021		2021–2022	
	Monthly Seclusion Room usage (non-self-selected)	Monthly Seclusion Room Unique Students	Monthly Seclusion Room usage (non-self-selected)	Monthly Seclusion Room Unique Students	Monthly Seclusion Room usage (non-self-selected)	Monthly Seclusion Room Unique Students
September	267	93	73	31	115	46
October	391	89	92	37	108	62
November	282	36	90	36	141	57
December	250	15	61	31	109	53
January	240	17	61	32	110	47

February	205	29	60	30	208	62
March	76	5	99	41	215	71
April	n/a	n/a	46	36	187	55
May	n/a	n/a	48	24	n/a	n/a
June	n/a	n/a	76	36	n/a	n/a
TOTAL	1711	284	706	334	1193	453

The seclusion room data from September 2021 to April 2022 data indicates there were 2257 uses of these spaces across the Division:

- 1064 (or 47.14 per cent) of uses were self-selected
- 1193 (or 52.86 per cent) of uses were non-self-selected

The Division created a process to collect physical restraint data and provided staff with training relative to the collection of this data. The 2021–2022 school year is the first year that the Division has collected comprehensive physical restraint data.

With respect to the Physical Restraint table below, the data is separate from the self-selected and non-self-selected seclusion room use data.

	Physical Restraint		Seclusion and Physical Restraint	
	2021–2022			
	Total Incidents	Unique Students	Total Incidents	Unique Students
September	50	36	30	25
October	81	45	31	27
November	76	44	54	43
December	41	25	32	24
January	44	21	11	11
February	81	35	39	29
March	68	34	45	31
April	75	43	51	36
TOTAL	516	283	293	226

KEY POINTS

- The Division continues to provide professional learning and build staff capacity relative to supporting students with complex behavioural needs.
- Positive and proactive strategies with a focus on de-escalation are always to be used first to prevent the use of seclusion and/or physical restraint.
- Overall, the data indicates a downward trend for non-self-selected seclusion room use from 2019–2020 to 2021–2022.

- The use of seclusion and/or physical restraint is a last resort in a crisis or emergency situation when a student's behaviour has the potential to put their safety or the safety of others at serious and imminent risk of physical harm and de-escalation, preventative strategies or alternative interventions are ineffective.
- This is the first year for the collection of comprehensive physical restraint data across all schools.

JP:kd