

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

This Circular will remain in effect unless rescinded or superseded by a subsequent version.

Principals and heads of school should remind staff that the use of corporal punishment in schools is strictly forbidden by Boston School Committee policy as well as by Massachusetts State Law G.L. c. 71, § 37G, which provides:

- (a) The power of the school committee or of any teacher or any other employee or agent of the school committee to maintain discipline upon school property shall not include the right to inflict corporal punishment upon any pupil.
- (b) The provisions of this section shall not preclude any member of the school committee or any teacher or any employee or agent of the school committee from using such reasonable force as is necessary to protect pupils, other persons, and themselves from an assault by a pupil. When such an assault has occurred, the principal shall file a detailed report of such with the school committee.
- (c) The board of education shall promulgate regulations regarding the use of physical restraint for students. Such regulations shall not preclude any teacher or employee or agent of the school from using reasonable force to protect pupils, other persons, and themselves from an assault by a pupil as set forth above in section (b). Such

regulations shall require training of all personnel authorized to administer any forms of restraint. Such regulations shall provide for procedures for notification to the department and to the parents.

Corporal punishment includes but is not limited to the following:

- Slapping or hitting students
- Pulling students by their arms, shoulders, etc.
- Pushing students from one location to another
- Forcibly causing students to sit down
- Grasping students by any body part

Staff may restrain students only to protect students, other persons, or themselves from an assault and may only use such force as is reasonably necessary to repel such an attack. Violation of the policy and law will result in disciplinary measures and may result in the filing of abuse and/or criminal charges.

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