

USE OF TIME OUT ROOMS

I. Authorization to Use Time Out Rooms

Time out rooms may be employed as a means of regulating student behavior in accordance with regulations of the Commissioner and this policy. Questar III has adopted this policy governing the use of time out rooms in Questar III special education programs as part of its behavior management program.

II. Definition

A time out room is a designated area for a student to safely de-escalate, regain control and prepare to meet expectations to return to his or her education program.

III. Use of Time Out Rooms

A. Except as described in paragraph B, below, a time out room may only be used when a student has a behavior intervention plan that includes the use of a time out room and specifies the maximum amount of time the student may be in a time out room as a behavioral consequence, and is designed to teach and reinforce alternative appropriate behaviors for the student, in order to:

1. remove a student to a supervised area to facilitate self-control; or
2. remove a student from a potentially dangerous situation.

B. A time out room may be used for unanticipated situations that pose an immediate concern for the physical safety of a student or others in instances where a student does not have a behavioral intervention plan that includes the use of a time out room, provided that the maximum amount of time the student may be in a time out room is 30 minutes. If a student who is placed in time out does not have a behavior intervention plan, one shall be developed and presented to the student's Committee on Special Education ("CSE") as expeditiously as possible, unless the CSE agrees that a behavior intervention plan is not required.

C. No student shall be placed in a locked room or space, or in any room where the student cannot be continuously observed and supervised. The use of locked rooms or spaces for purposes of time out or emergency interventions is prohibited.

D. Under no circumstances shall a time out room be used for seclusion of the student, where the term "seclusion" refers to placing a student in a locked room or space, or in a room where the student is not continuously observed and supervised.

E. A student placed in a time out room shall be continuously monitored by one or more staff members. Staff members must be able to see and hear the student at all times.

F. A student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) shall 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 and in consideration of the student's age and needs.

G. The building or program principal and the student's designated school psychologist shall be notified in writing in the event a student is placed in a time out room for an amount of time in excess of the maximum amount of the specified on his/her behavior intervention plan. Such information shall be considered when determining the effectiveness of the student's behavioral intervention plan and the use of the time out room for the student.

H. Questar III shall establish and implement procedures to document the use of time out rooms in critical incident reports, including information to monitor the effectiveness of the use of the time out room to modify behaviors. Such information shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

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/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;
4. the name of each staff member monitoring the student in the time out room; and
5. any other information deemed useful to monitor the effectiveness of the use of the time out room in order to decrease specified behaviors which resulted in the student being placed in the room.

I. All Questar III facilities shall maintain logs for each time out room that include, but are not limited to, the following information:

1. the name of each student placed in the time out room, showing the date, time of entry and time of exit from the time out room;
2. the reason the student was in the time out room;

3. the name(s) of staff member(s) monitoring the student in the time out room and, where more than one staff member, the time periods each staff member monitored the student; and
4. The name(s) of staff members assessing whether student has safely de-escalated and regained control in order to return to the student's educational program, and the time of each assessment.

IV. Information for Parents/Guardians

Questar III staff shall inform parents/guardians that a time out room may be used prior to the initiation of a behavioral intervention plan that will incorporate the use of a time out room for the student. Parents/guardians shall be given the opportunity to see the physical space that will be used as the time out room and shall be provided with a copy of this policy.

Parents/guardians shall be notified if their student was placed in a time out room, including but not limited to placement in a time out room as an emergency intervention. Whenever possible, parents/guardians shall be notified on the same day as the time out room placement.

The parent/guardian is a member of the Committee on Special Education (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/guardian reports of alleged inappropriate interventions used in a time out room should be directed to Deputy Superintendent of Questar III or to the Questar III Director of Special Education.

IV. Designation of a Time Out Room

Time out rooms may be designated by the supervising principal, upon approval by the Director of Special Education, the Deputy Superintendent and the Director of Health and Safety, and shall meet the following requirements:

1. The time out room shall have no lock, and the door must be able to be opened from the inside of the room.
2. The room must allow staff members to continuously see and hear a student who is in the room.
3. The room shall be of adequate width, length and height to allow the student to move about and recline comfortably.
4. The room's wall and floor coverings should be designed to prevent injury to the student, and there shall be adequate lighting and ventilation.

5. The temperature of the room shall be within the normal comfort range and consistent with the rest of the building.
6. The room shall be clean and free of objects and fixtures that could be potentially dangerous to a student.
7. The room shall meet all local fire and safety codes.

V. Staff Training

Staff assigned to a Questar III program which may utilize a time out room shall be provided training at faculty meetings and/or in other venues on the appropriate use of a time out room and the requirements of this policy.

References: Education Law, sections 4401; 4402; 4403; 4410
8 NYCRR sections 200.1; 200.22; 201.3

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