Seclusion and Restraint

Seclusion and restraint is the use of isolation or physical restraint in response to certain behaviors in a school setting. Current policies are loosely structured and disproportionately negatively affect students with developmental disabilities.

Missouri’s current laws

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has provided guidelines:

- Should not be used as punishment;
- Should only be used as a last resort; and
- Parents should be told in a timely manner

However, there is very little accountability and each district is responsible for coming up with its own policies. Local policies do not always adhere to the state guidelines.

Current policies disproportionately affect students with developmental disabilities.

Seclusion and Restraint in Other States

- Illinois has recently banned the use of Seclusion and restraint.
- Kansas has policies in place to limit the use of seclusion and restraint, as well as ban the practice if a student has a known medical condition.
- There is a growing movement amongst the disability community to ban the use of restraint and seclusion, as it can cause harm to students if it is not closely regulated.

Recommendations

To ensure the safety, wellbeing, and educational success of all students the Missouri Legislature should support HB 1568 and HB 1569 to regulate and limit the use of seclusion and restraint in schools across the state of Missouri.