

Seclusion and Restraint

Seclusion and restraint (S&R) refer to the use of isolation or physical restraint in response to certain behaviors in a school setting. Missouri law allows schools to create their own definitions for *restraint*, *seclusion*, and *isolation*, and establish under what circumstances they can be deployed against students. Restraint, seclusion, and isolation have been consistently shown to not improve a student's academic performance or behavior.

Missouri's Current Laws

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has provided the following guidelines for districts:

- S&R should not be used as punishment;
- It should only be used as a last resort; and
- Parents should be notified in a timely manner

These are only guidelines; each district is free to create its own policy and district policies do not always adhere to DESE's recommendations. The current law disproportionately impacts students with developmental disabilities and students of color.

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.

Recommendations

To ensure the safety, well-being, and educational success of all students the Missouri Legislature should pass HB 119 & HB 387 to define, regulate, and limit the use of seclusion, restraint, and isolation statewide.