

HB 1318

Mr. Chairman and Members of the House Education Committee:

I am Senator Joan Heckaman and I represent District 23. I am here to support HB 1318 that adds protections for students, families, teachers, and administrators through good policy adoption by school boards across the state. HB 1318 requires schools to adopt a written policy regarding the use of restraint and seclusion methods with clear expectations so everyone can understand how these policies would be applied.

Section 1 of the bill established uniform definitions for seclusion and methods of restraint. This provides clarity for educators, parents, administrators, and when applicable, the student. Of importance is the differentiation between seclusion and time-out on lines 20-24 on page 1.

Section 2 is the part of the bill that addresses the adoption of a written policy providing guidance for school personnel. This portion adds another level of consistency of implementation as students and school staff across the state have the same safety protections through training and policy.

Subsection 2 (a) prohibits the use of seclusion as defined on the previous page, the use of mechanical restraint, or chemical restraint.

Lines 6-11 on page 2 address exceptions to prohibitions of physical restraint. Addressed here is the case where physical restraint may be used if a student's behavior poses imminent danger of harm to them selves or other individuals after all other interventions have been unsuccessful.

Subsection 2 (c) prohibits the use of physical restraints that may impair a student's ability to breathe or communicate distress.

Subsection 2 (d) addresses professional development and training requirements on positive behavior interventions and trauma-informed practices as described in line 21.

I would propose that a well-crafted policy provides direction, so everyone involved has the proper understanding and training to address issues as they arise. All students can be educated as to when situations arise and how they can be helpful for their fellow students. Parents are also looking for skills they can use at home when their child has a meltdown. But most important is the education and continual updates educators and administrators need in order to learn to deescalate and defuse student aggression, melt downs, and just plain "bad moments". That gives everyone the power to all help in these situations.

You will hear today the legal premise for this bill, and I ask you to listen carefully to that testimony. It is important-very important. But in the end, please consider all testimony. We can help these students, parents, educators, and administrators make school success possible for all students. But we need to start with policy, work to educate, and then through interventions, get students to the point where they can interact positively every day.

Thank you for your time and I would stand for any questions you may have.