

We are against segregation restraints and of children, specifically special needs; it is shown to have detrimental effects on a child's wellbeing and mental health. Our son has suffered from being segregated in this way in the Fargo Public School District. It gave him heightened anxiety and PTSD as a result from restraints and forceful segregation. We strongly believe that the education system lacks the knowledge and tools to support a healthy relationship with special-needs students. Because of generalized segregation, not only during meltdowns, it becomes hard to maintain the relationships needed between both students and teachers.

Special-needs students in particular have to trust the adults around them, and not spending as much time with their teachers and other staff as other students becomes hard to build that trust. Tools and education given to adult staff helps the students build and maintain strong relationships that are needed to have a beneficial school experience. The Advocacy, autism awareness groups, special education courses for teachers to take teach them how to work with a special needs child(ren). More often than not, special needs people need that extra time and attention in order to fully express what they need and want. Seeing as the teacher's job is to give their time and energy to teach students and prepare them for the future, these kinds of courses should naturally be given and used.

The North Dakota Advocacy and autism awareness groups used free of charge will help to educate the educators for the needs of special-needs children. The school districts seem to spend a lot of time and money for extra curricular activities, yet don't spend their time looking into the details for the necessities of special-needs students. That, in itself, is a problem for the student because little is done for support, help, and understanding of their educational needs. Having been to the schools frequently, using IEP guidelines and not having the facility or the administration following said IEP is an insult to the student, parents, and other students in school with the special-needs child. When a child is special-needs starts to escalate, instead of finding the root of the situation, they segregate and punish the student without ever trying to find out how the situation arose. The instructors take a question asked from the student and twist it into an act of defiance instead of teaching and trying to answer the question in order to serve them and the other students as their job entails. The policy of removing the student and the disruption of the classroom is easier to do than it is to find the cause of escalation. This, in turn, only makes the student feel unwanted and left out. It becomes difficult to make friends because all the other students see is the child getting angry, then forced to leave the room. It makes the special-needs child feel left out because their escalation scared the other students. And instead of learning from the instructor as to what should be done, the child is simply sent away. This leads the child to be subjected to ridicule and from their peers and judged by the administration, and possibly bullying as well, which has been a large issue for a while.

Since we've tried seclusion and restraints and the problem hasn't been solved it leads to medical issues, both physical and mental, of the child being secluded. Why not try a different approach from the teachers and faculty and follow the IEPs and see if this doesn't change the problem that we have in the school system? We don't know if it happens in all school districts, but there have been many cases from the North Fargo district. The continuation of making the student feel like it's their fault is not working. That doesn't fix the problem, and in fact makes it worse.

We are asking the senators and legislators to be our voice and hold into account what we're saying and to speak for the children that can't speak and get them the help that they need to become active members of society. People need to remember that companies like Microsoft were derived from and rely on people with special-need's abilities to run as they do today. At the end of the day, these students are people also. They deserve to be treated like the other students.