



P.O. Box 7222, Madison, Wisconsin 53707

Date: November 19th, 2019

To: Senate Committee on Education
From: The Survival Coalition of Wisconsin Disability Organizations

RE: Support for SB 527

Senator Olsen, Senator Darling and Committee Members:

The Survival Coalition of Wisconsin Disability Organizations is comprised of over 30 statewide groups representing people with all disabilities and all ages, their family members, advocates, and providers of disability services. Organizations in our coalition represent and work with students with disabilities and their families across the state and support these common-sense changes in SB 527 for the seclusion and restraint law

An investment in quality public education for every child with a disability should result in a safe and healthy environment. In two recent surveys conducted by the coalition, Wisconsin parents of children with disabilities are reporting significant dissatisfaction with special education supports and services. Giving parents access to information and open communication is a key component in developing relationships and overall satisfaction for families with their school district.

SB 527 will provide improved access to information about seclusion and restraint for families through annual reporting to DPI. In addition, parents will also receive a written incident report that includes detailed information about the event. Required de-briefing will provide another layer of protection for students and allow school personnel to consider what to do better next time for the student. By updating training to focus more specifically on de-escalation, staff will have a greater understanding of how to diffuse a situation before it becomes an emergency situation. These changes make progress toward reducing the over 20,000 incidents of seclusion and restraint annually on students in our public schools.

Survival Coalition appreciates Senators Olsen and Johnson and Representative Quinn and Considine for authoring this bi-partisan bill, which will help protect students with disabilities. Please support SB 527 and pass it out of committee.

Sincerely, Survival Co-Chairs:

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