

Wisconsin Family Ties (WFT), Disability Rights Wisconsin (DRW), WI FACETS, The Arc Wisconsin, and the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) request your support of **SB 527**, a bill to improve the statutes regarding the use of restraint and seclusion for students in Wisconsin.

In February 2016, Wisconsin Family Ties (WFT), Disability Rights Wisconsin (DRW) and WI FACETS produced a report called *Miles to Go* detailing the distressingly high data on restraint and seclusion since the enactment of Act 125 in 2012. Restraint and seclusion were used over 20,000 times statewide in 2013/14; nearly 80% of the students involved were students with disabilities. Our report included recommendations for how to improve state statute to reduce inappropriate use of these practices. We are pleased to recommend the resulting bill, incorporating months of work by a substantial group of education and disability stakeholders.

Link to report: <http://www.disabilityrightswi.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Seclusion-and-Restraint-in-Wisconsin-Public-Schools-District-2013-2014-Miles-to-Go.pdf>

This bi-partisan effort is co-authored by Senator Olsen, Senator Johnson, Representative Quinn and Representative Considine. Several legislators joined to co-sponsor the bill in both the Senate and Assembly; Senator Darling, Bewley, Cowles, Kooyenga, Larson, Schachtner, and L. Taylor and Representatives Dittrich, Bowen, Cabrera, Crowley, Doyle, Edming, Felzkowski, Jagler, Kulp, Milroy, Novak, Ohnstad, Ramthun, Rodriquez, Sargent, Spreitzer, Subeck, C. Taylor, Tittl, Vruwink, Wittke, and Zimmerman.

SB 527 would do the following:

- Require that restraint and seclusion data be reported to DPI as well as school boards (under current law, only school boards receive the data)
- Require schools to convey a written incident report to parents, including the names & titles of covered individuals and law enforcement officers present (current law only requires that parents be notified that the report exists, and does not require law enforcement officer's names to be included)
- Remove the requirement that IEP teams must decide whether restraint/seclusion is likely to be after a first incident and require this IEP meeting after a second incident.
- Require that the principal meet with the staff who participated in the incident to discuss the sequence of events and strategies to prevent future incidents.
- Explicitly prohibit prone restraint
- Clarifies the use of supportive equipment and seats belts in their intended manner do not constitute mechanical restraint.
- Clarify that incidents involving law enforcement officers must be reported in a district's data, even though law enforcement officers are not defined as "covered individuals" in the restraint/seclusion statute
- Specify that the restraint and seclusion law applies also to students who are district-placed into private schools
- Clarify the definition of "incident" for data reporting purposes
- Update the training requirements for an increased focus on de-escalation, and remove the requirement (but not prohibit) the teaching of "hands-on" techniques.