Restraint and Seclusion State Summaries

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RERAINT AND SECLUSION STATE SUMMARIES

February 25, 2010 by cpehrson

The use of restraints and seclusion as a means of managing disruptive behaviors in schools has been a topic of widespread interest recently.

The U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, issued a letter July, 2009 to the Chief State School Officers urging states and territories to “develop or review and, if appropriate, revise their state policies and guidelines prior to the start of the 2009-2010 school year.”

His directive to schools was “to ensure that every student in every school under its jurisdiction is safe and protected from being unnecessarily or inappropriately restrained or secluded.” Duncan also urged them to publicize these policies and guidelines so that administrators, teachers and parents understand and consent to the limited circumstances under which these techniques may be used.

The U.S. Department of Education has recently released a summary of the state laws, regulations, policies and guidelines regarding the use of restraint and seclusion techniques in place in schools across the nation.

The report shows that 16 states or territories have no clear policies, guidelines or laws in place, although 33 indicated that plans to develop or revise laws or guidelines are under way.

The Utah report showed that there are “No policies or guidance addressing seclusion and restraint. The Utah State Board of Education Rules require the state to develop, review regularly, and provide to local school boards and charter school governing boards model policies to address disruptive student behavior.”

To view your state’s report, you can visit the state-by-state website.