



MINNEAPOLIS
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Presentation to the Minnesota Legislative Coordinating Commission Seclusion Working Group

October 8, 2025

Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) Overview
3. Guiding Values and History of Prohibiting Seclusion
4. Strategies to Support Students
5. Questions

Introductions

Today's Presenter



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Minneapolis Public Schools

Overview of MPS

About MPS

Our Students and Schools

- MPS serves more than 30,000 students who speak more than 100 languages from birth to adult annually
- MPS serves babies in Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE), adult learners taking GED and Community Education classes, and everyone in between
- MPS has community schools and magnet schools and pathway programs in the arts, language immersion, global studies, STEAM, and montessori
- MPS special education provides birth to 22 programming for around 6,500 students with special needs

2024–2025 school year demographics*

American Indian	5.6%
Asian	3.4%
Black or African American	26.0%
Hispanic or Latino	23.0%
White	36.2%
Two or more races	5.8%
Receive English Learner services	22.5%
Receive Special Education services	18.6%
Eligible for free or reduced meals	56.4%

*Per MN reporting classifications
October 1, 2024; K-12 (pulled 10/1/2025)



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Values and History

Guiding Values and History of Avoiding Seclusion

- MPS has prohibited the use of seclusion since 2011
- Our perspective on seclusion:
 - It does not address root causes of student behavior
 - It does not teach a student better coping strategies or address the underlying reasons for their behavior
 - Rather than de-escalating a situation, confining a child often increases their distress and anxiety, leading to more behavioral problems
- Our focus has been on strategies to support students proactively and in response to a crisis

Our Approach

Instead of reactive discipline, MPS adopted proactive and therapeutic strategies to manage behavior and support students' emotional needs

- **Positive behavior supports:** School-wide frameworks that teach appropriate behaviors and reinforces positive actions
- **De-escalation techniques:** Training staff to recognize early signs of distress and intervene before a crisis occurs
- **Sensory and calm-down rooms:** Providing students with a voluntary, calm space where they can safely regulate their emotions
- **Restorative practices:** Creating a strong sense of community and holding students accountable for repairing harm, rather than using punitive measures

Supporting Students

Supporting Students

Multi-tiered and wide-ranging support system:

- **Sensory rooms:** calming spaces where students can go voluntarily with supervision (over 50 throughout the district)
- **MPS Foundations:** required training for any staff member who works with students that could require redirection and/or social emotional supports (1500 staff trained)
- **Social workers:** directly support students with social-emotional supports and make connections to resources
- **Mental health team:** direct supports for students experiencing mental health crisis

Staff Training

- School districts are required to train staff who work with students with disabilities
- **MPS Foundations** is the Minneapolis Public Schools training program for staff to appropriately support students during redirection and/or in need of social emotional supports
- The training covers the following topics:
 - *MPS' Climate Framework* (guides our work to be a place where students, families, staff and community feel and experience a sense of belonging, safety, wellness and respect)
 - Impact of trauma
 - Regulation and the signs of dysregulation
 - Verbal de-escalation strategies
 - As a last resort in an emergency, the appropriate way to use of physical intervention and follow-up action steps when these restrictive measures must be used

Questions