

Dear Mr. Andrew George,

I am writing to advocate for the continued, carefully regulated use of seclusion specifically within Level IV programs. These programs serve students with the most significant behavioral and emotional needs, and it is essential that staff maintain access to all appropriate tools to ensure safety and support learning.

All students have the fundamental right to be educated, regardless of the complexity of their needs. In order to uphold this right, schools must be equipped to respond effectively when students experience behavioral crises that place themselves or others at risk. In Level IV settings, seclusion remains a necessary intervention when used as a last resort, in accordance with established policies, training, and oversight.

Our communities are experiencing increased exposure to trauma, which has a direct impact on students' ability to process frustration, disappointment, or situations that do not result in their desired outcome. Many students in Level IV programs have witnessed or experienced significant trauma in their home environments. As a result, their problem-solving responses may be rooted in survival behaviors, including aggression or violence, rather than regulation and communication.

In moments of crisis, seclusion can provide a controlled, safe environment that allows a student to de-escalate, regain emotional regulation, and prevent harm. When implemented appropriately, it is not punitive, but protective—supporting both the student in crisis and the broader learning community.

Eliminating seclusion without viable, equally effective alternatives risks compromising safety and undermining the ability of Level IV programs to meet the needs of their students. Maintaining this intervention, alongside trauma-informed practices, staff training, and ongoing review, ensures that we can continue to educate all students while prioritizing dignity, safety, and well-being.

Thank you for your consideration and continued commitment to serving our most vulnerable learners.

Sincerely,  
Katie Wheelock

Special Education Coordinator

River Bend Education District #6049

Level IV administrator