



Minnewaska Area W.I.N. Academy

Individualized academic instruction with Outpatient, Intensive Outpatient, and Day Treatment Services

Engage every student, every day!

December 16, 2025

Greetings MN Seclusion Work Group,

First off, thank you for taking the time to consider this very important decision. My role as Principal of WIN Academy, a Level IV Care and Treatment Facility, has been one of the most rewarding of my thirty year career in education. With that being said it is also a role where I have seen the most dire need for appropriate specialized care for our most struggling and vulnerable students.

Staff at WIN Academy consists of highly trained paraprofessionals, appropriately licensed teachers, certified mental health practitioners, licensed mental health professionals and a fulltime SRO Officer. Each student receives an hour of individual mental health skills and an hour of group skills and an hour weekly of therapy. We are certified in CPI Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Training and UKERU, not to mention a certified PBIS school. We have reflection spaces, calming spaces, and large motor OT spaces for students to regulate.

Even with all of those tools and resources we experience behaviors that are dangerous to students and staff. We always respond with a trauma informed lens that uses the least restrictive options needed to keep everyone safe. Decisions to use a restrictive procedure or seclusion space are not taken lightly and are made with input from multiple staff members. Most importantly a mental health professional is always present. We understand more than most that this can be a traumatic event for the student and the staff member however sometimes the seclusion space is the safest space that minimizes the trauma and expedites the route to regulation. It is essential for the student to reach this tension reduction stage to be able process the event therapeutically.

Please consider maintaining seclusion as a tool for Level III and Level IV Settings with the appropriate training, documentation and program review. This is essential to keep students and staff safe in settings supporting, educating and caring for our highest need students. You are always welcome to visit and learn more about our unique program. Thank you for your time and consideration.

With Respect,

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