

Dear Members of the Seclusion Working Group,

Thank you for your work to seek a deeper understanding around the use of seclusion in schools as a tool during emergency situations.

Overall, I am in agreement with the "Runway with Support" recommendations that were shared by members of this working group. As a behavior analyst in a district that provides federal setting IV special education services, I have significant concerns about the elimination of seclusion without the time, funding, and resources to provide staff with safe and supportive alternatives during crisis situations. There is no single alternative that provides an instant solution. As we continue to incorporate alternatives to restraint and seclusion into our programming, the amount of time that is required for staff to be able to utilize those alternatives with fidelity must also be considered. We are at a pivotal moment with how we strengthen and improve support for our students and the staff who serve them. The recommendations to provide more mental health oversight, critically examine seclusion data and disproportionate use, and invest time, resources, and funding are essential. Providing staff with high quality training in order to reduce the *need* for seclusion is where we must start. Only then can we truly be prepared to reduce, or even eliminate, the use of seclusion.

I respectfully ask that increased supports for students and educators be carefully considered prior to recommending the removal of an option that helps maintain safety.

Thank you,

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