

Testimony on Behalf of
The North Dakota Seclusion & Restraint Task Force:
Keeping Everyone Safe in Our Schools
For the Interim Education Committee
July 22, 2016

Chairman Schaible and members of the Interim Education Committee, my name is Rose Stoller, from the Consensus Council. I am here today to provide you with an update on the work of the ND Seclusion & Restraint Task Force: *Keeping Everyone Safe in Our Schools*. Since early 2016, the Consensus Council has been providing assistance to the Task Force through planning, facilitation and documentation of their shared work. The Task Force is comprised of over 40 North Dakotans representing a broad range of disciplines and views.

The Task Force meets monthly and, between meetings, has a smaller Planning/Writing Team that follows up on Task Force requests, secures presentations, conducts research and information gathering and any other work as directed by the Task Force. To date, the Task Force has had presentations on best practices in Seclusion & Restraint policies, programs and implementation, from the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI), the ND Youth Correctional Center (YCC) and the developmental disabilities sector. The Task Force will have presentations from the ND Boys & Girls Ranch and the Bismarck Public Schools on their policies and programs at the next meeting, July 28.

At the meeting next week, the Task Force will be asked to consider recommendations for common definitions of key terminology including seclusion, restraint, time out, physical escort, sensory room, emergency, imminent/substantial risk of harm, and dangerous behavior. The Task Force agreed that this is a critical “first step” in assuring that all are using the same definitions to make any gathering of data more accurate.

The Task Force will also receive an overview of a large body of data from North Dakota that has been collected by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) as well as a survey completed by the ND Council of Educational Leaders (NDCEL). The Task Force wants to have an accurate picture of the kinds of data that are required reporting presently, in order to make informed recommendations about any future reporting requirements.

The Task Force will meet in July, August, September and possibly October to finalize shared recommendations. We will keep the Committee apprised of the progress.

Thank you for your time.