



Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) 516 West Loockerman St., Dover, DE 19904  
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## **MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** June 12, 2012

**TO:** The Honorable Members of the Delaware General Assembly

**FROM:** Terri A. Hancharick, Chairperson  
GACEC

**RE:** Senate Bill No. 242 Seclusion and Restraint in Public Schools

The Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) has reviewed Senate Bill No. 242 on the use of seclusion and restraint in public schools. Council formed an ad hoc committee to research and identify best practices and develop standards on the use of restraints and seclusion for Delaware public schools. The work of that ad hoc committee has assisted in the development of Senate Bill No. 242. The GACEC **strongly endorses** and supports Senate Bill No. 242.

The GACEC agrees with President Obama in stating that children deserve to receive a world-class education. We also believe that they deserve to learn in a safe environment. In developing standards limiting and outlining how restraints and seclusion may be used, Delaware is taking a necessary step towards ensuring that schools are safe and healthy environments where students can learn. As U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan stated recently, "As education leaders, our first responsibility must be to make sure that schools foster learning in a safe environment for all of our children and teachers." For additional information on restraint and seclusion policy, see the U.S. Department of Education Restraint and Seclusion Resource Document issued May 2012 and the Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders (CCBD'S) position summary on the Use of Physical Restraint Procedures in School Settings revised and approved on July 8, 2009. Senate Bill No. 242 addresses the lack of standards and the misuse of seclusion and restraint in our schools. It will help to keep our kids safer as they learn, develop and participate in instructional programs that promote academic achievement.

Thank you for your time and attention in reviewing our position and commentary. Please feel free to contact me or Wendy Strauss, GACEC Executive Director, if you have any questions.