

Below is a link to the video testimony of Sara Schultz in opposition to HB 3835:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5TxagIMg-0Q>

Sara Schultz gives testimony on HB 3835, sharing her son's traumatic experience being secluded, isolated, and restrained at school, and discusses the dangerous impacts of potentially loosening laws that prevent seclusion, isolation and restraints.

Please refer to the enclosed written statement for further details.

Hello, my name is Sara Schultz from Portland, OR. I'm the parent of nine year old twins. I'm testifying on behalf of all children who have no voice in the legal system, but in particular, on behalf of my son, Keith who experienced restraint, isolation and seclusion while attending Portland public schools.

Keith is a bright and curious kid who loves Legos, dogman, playing tag and audiobooks.

He and his twin sister attended daycares from the time they were 2 years old to 4.5 when the pandemic hit. They had various nannies when we were between childcare. He did not have any problems during those years.

Keith and his twin sister started kindergarten the fall of 2020, online at the time, and later in person. The fall of first grade at his initial IEP evaluation, he was immediately placed in a special education social emotional skills classroom at Buckman elementary in Portland. He was six years old, first grade. The first 16 days that he was at Buckman, he was restrained about 29 times. He was not allowed to walk anywhere without having his hand or arm held. He was put in a "calm-down" room all the time, where the staff would sit inside the room in front the door, blocking themselves with gym mats while he ran around alone in an empty classroom. They'd call me to pick him up. When I arrived, he'd crawl under a desk built into the wall, crying. I'd crouch on the floor next to him until he could calm down. We'd clean up the room and go home. This happened countless times. He once came home with handprints on his arm from Buckman, and was made to work with the same staff member the next day -a heavysset, over 6ft tall man- even though I requested that he not work with Keith after that.

I wish I could say this only occurred at Buckman, but we were moved around many schools at PPS and he experienced the same treatment at Pioneer and Sabin elementary. The staff said it was not "seclusion" because they were inside the room, or they'd be standing outside the room, with the door ajar. At Sabin, the "calm-down" room was tiny- maybe 8ft by 9ft windowless room -probably a former closet - with a crash pad on the floor, and a small 1ft by 1ft window in the door, where kids would be forced to go in to "calm-down". One of the times I picked him up at Sabin, two large adults stood outside the room with the door ajar while he cried under the crash pad in the calm down room. I don't believe the adults acted with the intent to harm the kids, but they did harm them.

I had to pull Keith out of school repeatedly because school was not safe for him. I pulled him out in October of 2022, February of 2024, and this year I did not enroll him at all.

Keith won't let anyone hold his hand anymore. This started shortly after he moved to Buckman, because of the excessive control they used, including holding his hand all the time.

This year we attend our neighborhood school, Vernon. He goes to his specially designed instruction 7 times a week, 30 minutes at a time, in small groups with other kids and the special education teacher. I'm doing neural reprogramming, teaching him that the school can be a safe place, that there are good people there, that people won't always hurt him. Nothing bad has

happened to him at Vernon. He is allowed to walk to the bathroom by himself, go to the special ed teachers room by himself and wait for me by himself while I volunteer in his twin sister's classroom. I've seen him loosen up, even smiling at school. In the past, when he entered a school, he'd visibly shrink, keep his hoodie up, and stop talking.

He goes to therapy every week. He's finally old enough to talk to someone. On the drive there last week, he told me how they held his arms behind his back. He demonstrated in the backseat of the car how they crossed his arms across his chest and held him, and told me how he wants to hold their arms down too, and send them to the calm down room.

Keith works with several tutors, and has learned to read since leaving public school. I tell him, Miss Kristi, Miss ReShawn, Miss Alex, Miss Renee, they are all teachers. They are safe, they are good to you. They love you. I remind him of all the good teachers, his sped teacher, Mr. Dan. We talk about the safe people at Vernon, the secretary, Miss Janet, the principal, Mr. Keefer, the aides, his twin sister's teacher, Mrs. Belcher who is so kind to him. They are all part of the reprogramming of felt safety he needs after experiencing so much trauma at school.

Our story is one of many. I have countless friends in Portland with kids who've had the same experience as my son.

I am vehemently opposed to loosening restrictions on restraint and seclusion. These things have the potential to cause lifelong trauma. Children cannot fend for themselves- there is no way a little sixty pound kid can protect themselves from an adult. It is up to us to protect them. Laws can do that. This law is moving in the wrong direction- we should be getting rid of seclusion and restraint- not making it easier.

Thank you for your time today.

Sara Schultz  
Portland OR