



# Reducing Restraint, Eliminating Isolation

*Spokane Public Schools' Commitment to Student Well-Being,  
Safety, and Emotional Health*



# Learning Outcomes

- ▶ Review Federal and Washington State Definitions and Laws related to Restraint and Isolation.
- ▶ Review the steps Spokane Public Schools took to decrease the overreliance on Restraint and Isolation including developing a professional development plan, and increased staffing allocations.
- ▶ Understand the Impact that reducing restraint and eliminating isolation has had on students, families and staff.
- ▶ Understand the role that District Leadership plays in crisis management and behavioral health.
- ▶ Recognize the role that stakeholder involvement plays in creating systematic change.





# Spokane Public Schools

“Excellence for Everyone through Equity”

29,000 Students	5,000 Staff members	Second Largest Employer in Spokane Washington
Political Landscape	36% Students of Color	56% Free and Reduced Lunch
18% Special education	3% 504	9.5% ELL



# Restraint and Isolation In Washington State



# Definitions

- ▶ **Restraint-** A physical intervention or force used to control a student, including the use of a restraint device, to involuntarily immobilize a student or to restrict a student's ability to move freely.
- ▶ **Isolation (Seclusion)-** The involuntary confinement of a student alone in a any room or area that they are physically prevented from leaving.
- ▶ **Room Clear-** The removal of students and staff from a space where a student's behavior presents imminent risk of harm to themselves, or others and all other de-escalation attempts have failed
- ▶ **District Review Committee (DRC)-** Past SPS practice used to refer students to district wide special programs.
- **Functional Behavioral Assessment-** systematic process that is used to operationally define a behavior, identify factors that support the behavior, and determine the underlying function or purpose of a behavior, so that an effective BIP can be developed. An FBA describes the problem behavior, identifies preceding and subsequent events that control the behavior, and develops and tests a theory of the behavior.
- **Behavior Intervention Plan-** a plan created by appropriately trained professionals for an individual student, composed of positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports, which may include reasonable modifications to the nature of instruction, curriculum, or school routine.





## Presentation Themes

- Interagency Collaboration
- Parent and Community Involvement
- Systematic Change

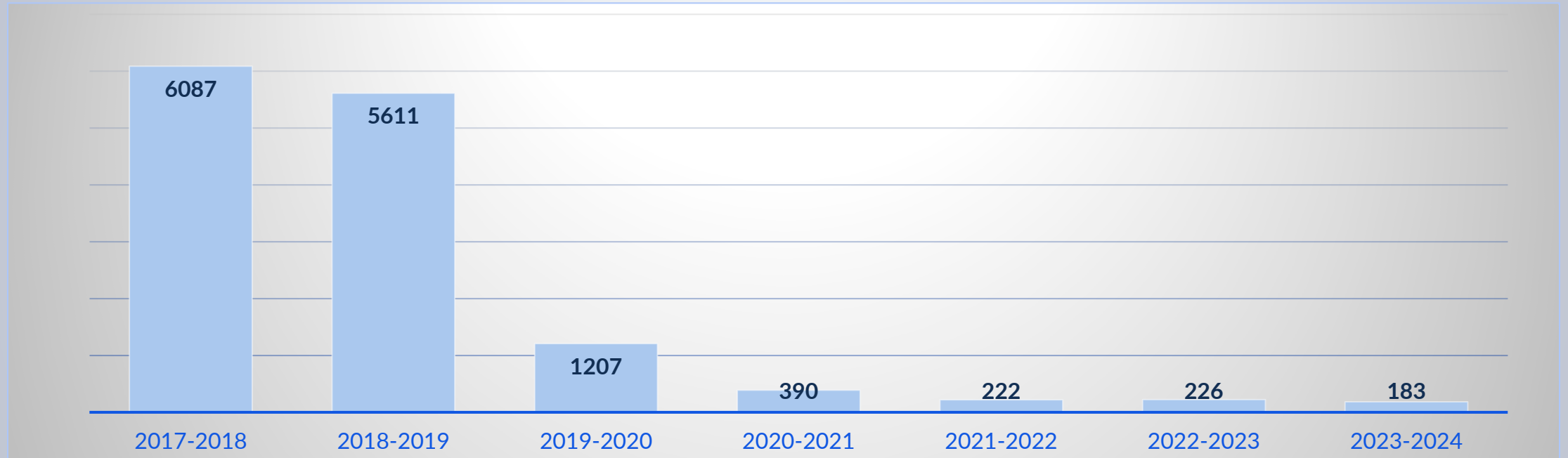




# The SPS Story



# Spokane Public Schools Incidents of R&I





# Is it likelihood of Serious Harm?

- A 5-year-old student kicks a playground aid in the shin and runs around the playground refusing to follow adult directions to return to the classroom.
- A student has stated they were going to hit a classmate and begin to continually hit them in the head despite repeated redirects to stop.
- A 10-year-old student with a history of violent behavior is running the halls of the school yelling profanities.
- A student refuses to go to the calming corner per their behavior plan. The teachers goes to escort them to the calming corner and the student hits the teacher.





## 2018-2019 School Year *Why This Work Now?*

- Two major incidents involving inappropriate use of Restraint or Isolation.
- Parent, and Community Involvement.
- Student safety and emotional health.
- We had to do better!



# First Steps 2018-2020

- ▶ Consulted with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.
  - ▶ Invest in a Trauma Informed De-escalation Training
  - ▶ Review state and federal law with all staff
  - ▶ Provide a copy of the districts Isolation and Restraint Policy during all IEP meetings.
  - ▶ Add Emergency Response Protocols to IEP's where appropriate.
  - ▶ Update the districts Isolation and Restraint Reporting form and Letter sent home to families.



# Leading Change Through Professional Development

- ▶ Adopted Crisis Prevention Institutes Non-violent De-escalation training (CPI) for all special education staff working in self-contained special education classrooms, building administrators, Behavior Specialist, and campus safety specialist- 2000 staff trained through the school year.
  - Any staff member who is involved in either a restraint or isolation incident with a student must be currently trained in CPI.
  - SPS requires yearly re-certification training for all staff listed above.
- ▶ Life Space Crisis Intervention- 40 hours of additional training in the science of behavior and verbal de-escalation and repair.
- ▶ Ukeru- Restraint Free Trauma Informed Program





# SPS U Model for Special Education Staff

- University style system incorporating levels of complexity within Professional Development (100, 200, 300, 400)
- Staff Receive Mandatory Training in:
  - CPI
  - PBIS
  - Foundational Special Ed Program Standards
  - Behavior Intervention Plans
  - Functional Behavioral Assessments





# Staffing Adjustments

- Adjustment to Elementary Behavior Intervention Staffing
- Students per classroom was reduced from 12-14 to 8-10, while adding additional paraeducator support to each classroom.
- Board Certified Behavior Analyst model.
- The district consults with outside community partners when needed if a student's level of behavior supports are beyond the scope of the district's current capacity.



# Placement Decisions

- Multi-Tiered System of Supports process (MTSS)
- Comprehensive evaluations required.
- IDEA placement protocols included throughout the process.
- Placement now determined by the IEP team.



# Reporting Changes

- Improved isolation and restraint reporting form and procedures to include:
  - Notification to parents, and the district.
  - Follow up with all stakeholders including the student, staff, parents.
  - Discussion around how to prevent the need for restraint in the future.
  - Student Wellness Check





# Interagency Collaboration

- Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)
- Disability Rights Washington (DRW)
- Legislative Advocacy
- Spokane Public Schools stepping out ahead





# Community and Parent Advocacy

- Superintendents Work Group on Restorative Practices - 2016 to present
- Every Student Counts Alliance
- Disability Rights Washington



# Department of Justice

- ▶ November 2020- District notified that the DOJ Civil Rights Division is investigating SPS related to restraint and isolation practices.
- ▶ Data Collected spanning 2017- 2022.
- ▶ DOJ Determined:
  - ▶ *The United States' investigation determined that the District discriminated against students on the basis of disability by denying them equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from the District's education program, see 28 C.F.R. § 35.130(b)(1)(i); using eligibility criteria that effectively subject students with disabilities to discrimination, see 28 C.F.R. § 35.130(b)(8); and failing to make reasonable modifications to avoid disability discrimination in the District's program, see 28 C.F.R. § 35.130(b)(7). Specifically, the United States concluded that the District improperly isolated and restrained students with disabilities and failed to use appropriate behavior interventions.*

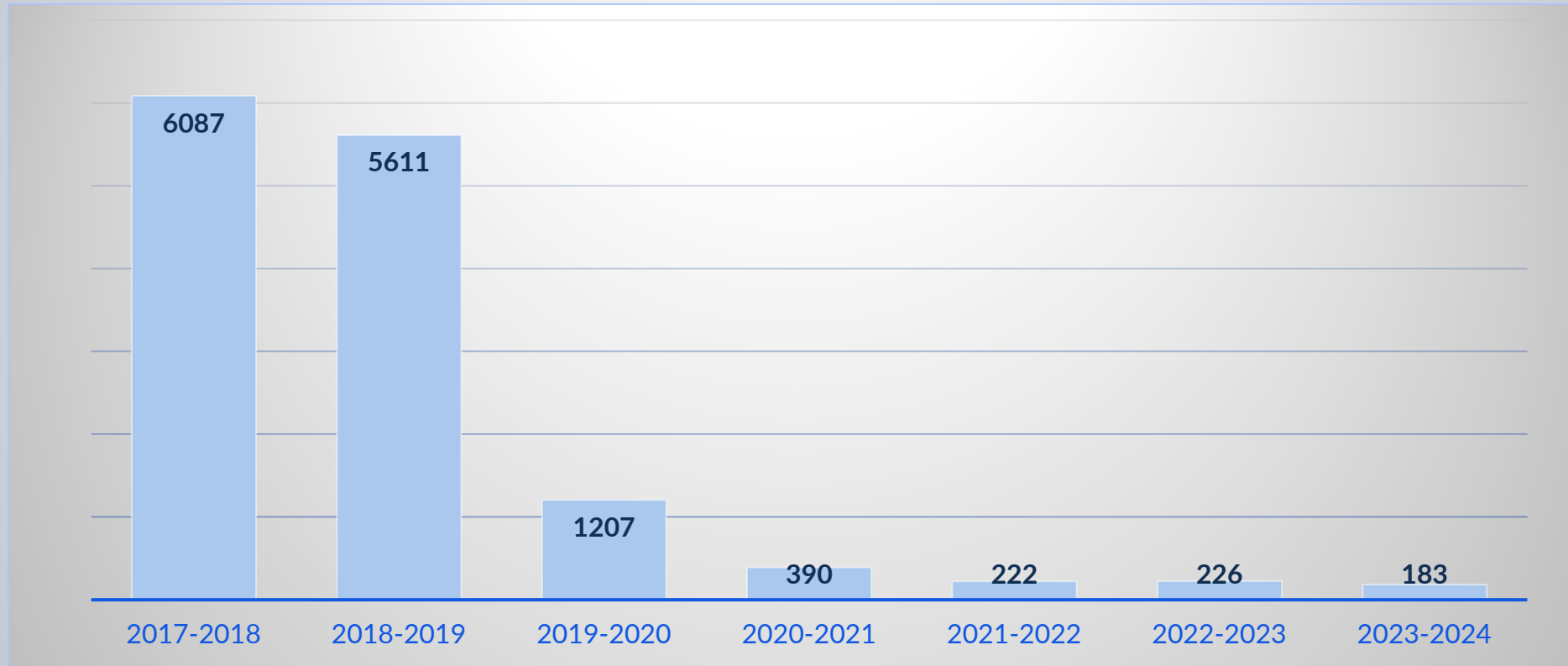


# Settlement Agreement

- Prohibit discrimination based on disability.
- Hire a fulltime Intervention Coordinator dedicated to overseeing the settlement agreement.
- Develop Classroom Behavior Management Plans for Self-Contained Classrooms.
- Prohibit the use of Isolation.
- Prohibit the use of Restraint unless there is imminent likelihood of serious harm.
- Increase documenting and monitoring procedures.
- All Behavior Intervention Plans must be function based.
- Develop a compliant procedure for all stakeholders to report misuse of restraint and or isolation.
- Additional reporting procedures to parents and guardians.
- Compensatory Education and Counseling
- Mandatory Training for staff.
- Enforcement by the DOJ through the 2025-2026 SY.



# Spokane Public Schools Incidents of R&I



# Updated Policy and Procedure

- Removed Use of other Reasonable Force- Per discussions with the DOJ other reasonable force would meet the definition of restraint.
- Definition of Isolation includes specific conditions along with a statement of prohibition.
- Use of Restraint includes additional specific language to clearly define when a restraint can occur and the procedure that needs to be followed.
- Additional reporting details were added.
- Added language referencing requirements for training.
- Created an Appendix at the end that includes State and Federal regulations, including actions that are prohibited by State and Federal law.
- Addition of Room Clear definition- Clearly defines when a room clear would occur, conditions that must be followed, and communication with parents/guardians.



# Additional Staff, Professional Development, and Services and Supports how much does it cost?

Behavior Intervention Teachers	Behavior Intervention Paraeducators	Total Special Ed Budget
13%	19%	38%



Funding Sources: Special Education, Local Levy, ESSER

# A Call to Action



Know your data and prioritize reduction.



Center those most impacted in community engagement.



Review/Update your School Board Policy.



Support local and federal legislation.





# Resources

- ▶ [SPS Policy 3246 Restraint and Isolation](#)
- ▶ [SPS Procedure 3246 Restraint and Isolation](#)
- ▶ [Crisis Prevention Institute](#)
- ▶ [Ukeru](#)
- ▶ [Life Space Crisis Intervention](#)
- ▶ [OSPI Restraint and Isolation](#)
- ▶ [Crisis Response Workgroup Legislative Report](#)
- ▶ [SPS Settlement Agreement with the Department of Justice](#)

## Contact Information

Kristina Baker- Executive Director of Student Support and Special Education  
[KristinaB@spokaneschools.org](mailto:KristinaB@spokaneschools.org)

Becky Ramsey- Executive Director of Assessment, Analytics, and Program Evaluation  
[BeckyR@spokaneschools.org](mailto:BeckyR@spokaneschools.org)

Savannah Warrington- Intervention Coordinator  
[SavannahW@spokaneschools.org](mailto:SavannahW@spokaneschools.org)



# Questions?

