

# Alaska Legislature

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### ***Sponsor Statement***

#### ***House Bill 210***

Alaska currently has no statewide policy regarding how children can be physically restrained and/or secluded in schools. Placing students in positions where they are immobilized or put into a room by themselves are emotionally charged subjects that require our attention. The conditions under which these actions are allowed are vague and require clarification. The three areas that require clarification include: what constitutes physical restraint and seclusion; under what conditions physical restraint and seclusion can be exercised; what actions are required of school personnel.

Students need to attend a school that is safe. Parents need to know if their child was involved in an incident of restraint or seclusion and the reasons for these actions need to be clearly defined. School personnel and administrator need to know that the actions they take to protect the safety of their students were justified and that they will not be held liable for carrying out their duties correctly.

HB 210 is a balance approach to ensure school safety. It requires that a school district's safety plan be made available to parents and the public. If an incident of restraint or seclusion occurs, the student's parents need to be informed within 24 hours of the incident. With the exception of emergency situations, only those who have undergone training approved by the Department of Education and Early Development can engage in physical restraint and seclusion. Each school district needs to report the number of times students were restrained and secluded on an annual basis.

HB 210 will protect students from the physical harm and the emotional trauma that comes from the improper use and frequency of techniques; keep parents abreast of what happens to their child, and support teachers and school personnel who have to make incredibly difficult decisions during crisis situations. By ensuring a statewide, consistent set of expectations, guidelines, and requirements, we make our schools safer for everyone. I would respectfully appreciate your support.