



## Updated Action Alert #8 House Education Yellow Shirt Day Date Change

April 28, 2025

Yellow Shirt Day previously scheduled for Tuesday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, will be rescheduled. HB237 is now tentatively scheduled to be heard on **Wednesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, at 9:30 AM**. Committee meeting information has been updated below.



House Education is tentatively scheduled to discuss House Bill 237 (HB237) by Representative Shane Mack on Wednesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>. [HB237](#), as it is written, makes amendments to current special education law which would improve seclusion and restraint practices in Louisiana. Mainly, HB237:

- Bans the use of seclusion
- Gives the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) the ability to review and monitor policies on restraint
- Requires physical restraint only be used by a specialized, properly trained team of school staff
- Requires all schools use the funding they have already been given to install cameras in special education classrooms without the need for a parent request

Advocates have been voicing concerns about Louisiana's seclusion and restraint practices for years. Let's fill the committee room with yellow and let the House Education Committee know change is needed. More information about this issue can be found in the Additional Information section and in this [fact sheet](#).

### How to Take Action

Share your personal story as it relates to seclusion and restraints with the House Education Committee. Share your thoughts about the changes being considered in HB237 and any ideas you have to ensure the seclusion and restraint policies in Louisiana improve supports for students with disabilities.

**Email or call** the Chair and members of the House Education Committee *before the committee meets* Wednesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>

- Find your member(s) of the House Education Committee at the end of this alert.
  - With your comments, please include your name, address, phone number, email address, bill number (HB237) and let them know the specific issues you are writing about.
  - Don't forget to thank the Chair and members for considering the needs of the disability community.

Email [h-educ@legis.la.gov](mailto:h-educ@legis.la.gov) your public comments *before the committee meets* Wednesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>

- With your comments, please include your name, address, phone number, email address, bill number (HB237) and let them know the specific issues you are writing about.
- Don't forget to thank the Chair and members for considering the needs of the disability community.

### Share your Testimony & Attend Yellow Shirt Day

- Wednesday , May 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 AM (Tentative)
- Louisiana State Capitol – House Committee Room 1
- Be sure to arrive early so you can get a seat in the committee room

If you need help with this alert, want to provide testimony, plan to attend Yellow Shirt Day, or want to meet with your legislator(s), contact your [LaCAN Leader](#).

Can't make it for Yellow Shirt Day? You can watch the committee meeting(s) live from the [legislature's website](#). When the meeting is in progress, click the camera icon to access the broadcast.

### Additional Information

On December 11, 2024, the Legislative Auditor released an [audit](#) evaluating LDOE's oversight of the use of seclusion and restraint for students with disabilities, as well as an evaluation of Louisiana's laws and policies related to abuse and neglect of students with disabilities. The report highlighted many concerns advocates have shared with LDOE and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) over the years and clearly shows how the lack of monitoring and oversight of special education services has left students with disabilities vulnerable to abuse and neglect.

The audit cites multiple recommendations for LDOE, including:

- Development of a process to monitor school systems' policies and use of seclusion and restraint;
  - 92% of policies reviewed by the auditor were not compliant with current law.
- Working with the legislature to obtain resources needed to effectively monitor seclusion and restraint (i.e. funding and additional staff);
- Improving processes to verify accuracy of the number of seclusion and restraint incidents;
  - 72% of schools reported no incidences of seclusion or restraint which is inconsistent with reports from parents of students with disabilities.
- Ensuring all school systems' are aware of mandated reporter laws and abuse/neglect by non-caregivers should be reported to law enforcement;
  - Large number of school staff said they would report to a school administrator and not necessarily law enforcement.
- Reviewing schools systems' camera policies to ensure state law is being followed.
  - 60% of schools that received funding for cameras in special education classrooms had not installed any cameras.

HB237, as written, would address many concerns noted in the audit and help improve supports to students with disabilities. Changes include:

- Removing the use of seclusion from state law
- Better defining physical restraint and specifying physical restraint can only be done by a specialized team of school personnel who have been trained in proper crisis intervention strategies
  - Gives LDOE the ability to create a crisis intervention training that can be shared across all districts

- Requiring constant monitoring of students being restrained and include documentation of monitoring in the incident report
- Requiring student who have been restrained see a school nurse or school health designee no later than end of day
- Ensuring parents are notified same day of incident
- More detailed information about what should be included in the incident report
- Requiring video, if available, to be reviewed to ensure compliance with policy and procedures
- Reducing the amount of incidences of restraint from 5 to 3 in a year before triggering a behavior intervention plan review
- Requiring LDOE to review all policies and provide districts with feedback to ensure best practices and compliance with the law
  - Requires the districts to post policies and procedures publicly at the start of each year
  - Requires LDOE to post data on restraint use publicly every quarter
- Installing cameras in all special education classrooms regardless of request

## Confirm Your Action

- Email your [LaCAN Leader](#) after you take action
- Why confirm your action? This helps the Council know how effective we are reaching you with important information and engaging members across our state in advocacy for systems change.

## Tips & Tools for Advocacy

Looking for tips and tools to help you in your advocacy? Check out the Council's [Advocacy 101](#) page. You can also find tips for:

- [Writing/emailing your legislators](#)
- [Calling your legislators](#)
- [Writing your story](#)

## Contact Us

LaCAN is an initiative of the LA Developmental Disabilities Council. If there are any questions about the information in this email, contact the Council by replying to this email, or calling the toll free number listed below:

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# Louisiana Regions

