


The Legal Center for People  
with Disabilities  and Older People

*Colorado's Protection & Advocacy System*

March 12, 2007

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**The Legal Center Demands School District Eleven and The Colorado Department of Education Take Action To Address 45 Incidents of Restraint and Seclusion in Elementary School**

On March 9, 2007 The Legal Center filed a report with School District Eleven in Colorado Springs and The Colorado Department of Education finding that staff at Will Rogers Elementary engaged in the improper use of restraint and seclusion of five elementary aged students with disabilities on 45 different occasions.

“When kids are physically forced in to a time out room and later made to sit in their own blood or urine, there is a serious problem” stated Heidi Van Huysen, attorney with The Legal Center. “While some of these students have behaviors that can be difficult to work with there is no excuse for the kind of egregious mistreatment that occurred.”

The Legal Center initiated its abuse and neglect investigation at Will Rogers Elementary after receiving complaints from concerned parents. “District Eleven has been very cooperative throughout our investigation, and I have no reason to think they would be any different in the face of our findings and suspect they will move forward with our recommendations,” stated Ms. Van Huysen. The Legal Center is proposing that District Eleven ensure that staff complies with the Colorado Law and the Colorado Department of Education’s rules governing the use of restraint and seclusion.

Not only is The Legal Center looking to District Eleven to address these allegations, it is insistent that The Colorado Department of Education take action and comply with its statutory duty to monitor school compliance with school statutes, rules and regulations. The CDE has express authority to monitor and ensure that schools comply with policies, procedures and practices relating to the education of children with disabilities. The CDE can deny funding, order repayment of misspent federal funds, withhold or terminate further financial assistance or suspend payments to ensure for compliance with its rules.

The Legal Center for People with Disabilities and Older People, a nonprofit organization established in 1976, uses the legal system to protect and promote the rights of individuals with disabilities and older adults through direct legal representation, advocacy, education and legislative analysis.

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