

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Disability Law Colorado Complaint Prompts DOJ Probe into Douglas County Schools’ Discrimination and Seclusion Practices

[Denver, CO | Jan. 14, 2025] Building upon a complaint filed by Disability Law Colorado (DLC) The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Civil Rights Division is conducting an in-depth investigation into the Douglas County School District (DCSD).

The investigation comes amid broader scrutiny of the school district’s handling of claims alleging harassment, bullying, and discrimination targeting students based on their race, national origin, religion, or disability. DOJ investigators are meeting with parents, students, and community members in Colorado this week to hear firsthand accounts of their experiences in the district.

DLC’s 2022 complaint alleged that the district implemented restrictive practices, such as seclusion, and required students to "earn" time with their peers through a one-size-fits-all behavior management system. Following a Colorado Department of Education (CDE) investigation, DCSD was required to take corrective action, including providing individualized compensatory services to affected students and revising policies to comply with state law.

“Children are hurt both physically and emotionally when they are restrained and secluded at school. It is time to revisit these practices,” said Emily Harvey, DLC Co-Legal Director. “We applaud the DOJ for taking our complaint seriously and visiting Colorado to speak directly with impacted families. We hope this investigation will lead to lasting changes in DCSD and throughout the state of Colorado.”

The DOJ investigation underscores the need for systemic reforms to ensure compliance with federal and state laws protecting students' rights to a safe and equitable education. Parents, students, and community members are encouraged to share their experiences with the DOJ by emailing community.dcsd@usdoj.gov or calling **888-394-6317**.

For further information, contact **Felix Ortiz** at **720-202-9871** or FOrtiz@DisabilityLawCO.org.

###

About Disability Law Colorado: Disability Law Colorado is a nonprofit civil rights organization, authorized by federal law to combat discrimination, abuse, and neglect. We aim to make Colorado the best place in America to live and work with a disability.

Press Contact:

Felix Ortiz

Communications Manager

Disability Law Colorado

Email: fortiz@DisabilityLawCO.org

Phone: 720-202-9871