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## **Disability Advocacy Groups to DeVos: Our Children Must Be Included in School Safety Debate**

**WASHINGTON, DC** – In response to U.S. Department of Education excluding disability advocacy groups from the invitation-only summit on school climate, school discipline and school safety convened on April 4, 2018, Kim Musheno, chair of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities issued the following statement:

“We are extremely disappointed that the summit did not include the disability advocacy community. The issues of school climate and school discipline are of extreme importance to the disability community and affect students with disabilities in all aspects of school. For example, students with disabilities are more than twice as likely to be suspended as their non-disabled peers, are more likely to be chronically absent, are almost four times as likely to be held back in high school, and while students with disabilities (served under IDEA) comprise 12% of the overall student population, they represent 67% of students subjected to restraint and seclusion.<sup>1</sup> It is simply not acceptable for the U.S. Department of Education to intentionally exclude our community and not recognize that issues around school discipline climate and safety have a disparate impact on students with disabilities. Any event focused on school climate must be inclusive of the six million children with disabilities receiving special education in our nation’s schools.”

**About CCD:** CCD advocates for federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration, and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society. We see these principles as critical elements in a society that recognizes and respects the dignity and worth of all its members.

[www.c-c-d.org](http://www.c-c-d.org)

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<sup>1</sup> Civil Rights Data Collection, 2013-2014, U.S. Department of Education, at: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-2013-14.html>