

**Action Alert: Autistic Student Voted Out of Class in Florida**

**Category : Preventing Abuse, Neglect, and Bullying**

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Hello,

As some of you may already be aware from [news articles](#) and [blog posts](#) on the topic, last week a Morningside Elementary Kindergarten teacher had students "vote out" of the class a 5-year old autistic student named Alex Barton. According to [the news article](#), the teacher had each of Alex's classmates, including his sole friend in the class, state publicly what they disliked about him and then announced that they would take a vote to remove him from the class. Alex has not been back to school since and has suffered significant emotional trauma as a result of this incident. Regardless of who you are or what your connection to the autistic and autism communities might be, I think we can all agree that this is unacceptable.

We need to band together to prevent future such abuses from occurring, to ensure that this teacher is properly disciplined and to encourage this school to adopt both a strong bullying prevention policy and training on respect for all forms of diversity aimed at both teachers and students. As such, we've provided contact information below for you to write to communicate your outrage. Please be polite yet firm in your comments, pointing out the unacceptability of such actions when aimed at any student, as well as the need for this school to adopt policies to prevent this from happening in the future. This is an opportunity to drive home the message that we will not stand by while one of our own is abused. We ask that you please cc: [info@autisticadvocacy.org](mailto:info@autisticadvocacy.org) in your e-mails to the school district so we can keep track of the strength and sources of this response. Remember: abusive messages hurt our cause - please be respectful in your comments.

**Contact info:**

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[Thanks to Paula C. Durbin-Westby for compiling this contact information and for members of the autistic and autism communities who have supported this effort.]

Regards,

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