

Education Advocacy Coalition for Students with Disabilities

SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL 549: EDUCATION—PUBLIC SCHOOLS--SEIZURE ACTION PLANS

MARCH 3, 2020

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Education Advocacy Coalition for Students with Disabilities (EAC), a coalition of more than 25 organizations and individuals concerned with education policy for students with disabilities in Maryland, submits this testimony in support of Senate Bill 549, which would require an individualized, written seizure action plan for each student with a seizure disorder attending a public school. The bill would also require training for school personnel and age-appropriate seizure education for students.

EAC members have represented or worked with many students who have seizure disorders and who require seizure care, including the administration of seizure rescue medication during the school day. The ease with which it has been possible to get these services onto a student's individualized education program (IEP) has depended on the particular school district and the particular IEP team. Statewide requirements would help significantly in clarifying that rescue medicine must be administered as a "routine" health task and that it can be administered by trained but unlicensed school personnel. Rescue medicines such as Diastat and Nazylam are intended to be used by families and other lay people in order to avoid trips to the emergency room; in the experience of EAC members, some IEP teams and districts have been reluctant or have refused to administer rescue medicine to students with IEPs who have seizure disorders, insisting instead on calling 911 or they have administered the rescue medicine and called 911, even if it is not necessary to do so. The EAC also supports seizure education for staff and for students; this will help decrease the stigma still associated with seizures and will also help members of a student's school community support a student who may have a seizure during school hours.

For these reasons, the EAC supports Senate Bill 549. For more information, please contact Leslie Seid Margolis, Chairperson, at 410-727-6352, ext. 2505 or at lesliem@disabilityrightsmd.org.

Respectfully submitted,

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