

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

Michigan PTA Resolution on Supporting Students with Seizures in School

Whereas, Epilepsy is a disease or disorder of the brain which causes recurring seizures. The National Epilepsy Foundation states that Epilepsy is the 4th most common neurological problem – only migraine, stroke, and Alzheimer’s disease occur more frequently. There are many different types of seizures and varying levels of seizure control. Approximately 1 in 26 people will develop epilepsy at some point in their lifetime. At least 13,600 children are living with epilepsy in Michigan (450,000-470,000 children in the United States).

Whereas, A student living with a seizure disorder is more likely to have disrupted learning caused by the effects of seizures and anti-seizure medication: disorientation, memory loss, loss of concentration, alterations in the student’s behavior, fatigue, headaches, and missed days of school.

Whereas, Many schools do not have a full-time nurse or other licensed healthcare professional available to handle medical emergencies, and nursing care duties are often performed by other school personnel. Michigan ranks 48th out of 50 states with a ratio of 4,204 students per school nurse, and only 17.2% of lead health education teachers in Michigan secondary schools receive professional development on epilepsy or seizures.

Whereas, A Seizure Action Plan is an important tool that helps parents and schools partner to keep children safe and healthy during the school day. Studies show that about 1 in 1,000 people with epilepsy die suddenly. A Seizure Action Plan is essential for preventing an emergency and informing others what to do when a student experiences a seizure. It is created specifically for each student’s needs and includes instructions for administering any physician-directed care, including seizure rescue medications which can help prevent death and injury to the brain and body, and also decrease the risk of later cognitive difficulties.

Whereas, Greater awareness about seizure disorders is needed to help prevent seizures and injuries, reduce stigma, and better connect people with a seizure disorder to the care and support they need.

Whereas, The opportunity for academic success is increased when communities, schools, families, and students work together to meet the needs of students with chronic health conditions and provide safe and supportive learning environments; therefore be it

Resolved, That Michigan PTA and its constituent organizations urge that all school personnel receive general training on seizure recognition and response; be it further

Resolved, That Michigan PTA and its constituent organizations urge that a Seizure Action Plan is made part of the student's file for a student who experiences seizures and made available to all school personnel and volunteers responsible for the student; be it further

Resolved, That Michigan PTA and its constituent organizations urge that schools ensure students living with a seizure disorder have access to FDA-approved medication prescribed by the treating physician; be it further

Resolved, That Michigan PTA and its constituent organizations urge schools to bring seizure awareness to the entire educational community so that students living with epilepsy or a seizure disorder can feel safe in school, reach their full academic potential, and build meaningful friendships without fear of being stigmatized.

Rationale for resolution

Schools must be well-equipped with the tools necessary to provide a safe and enriching environment for students living with epilepsy and seizure disorders. School personnel, including nurses, teachers, and volunteers, should be able to recognize and respond appropriately and efficiently to the student experiencing a seizure. Even more importantly, physician-directed care must be available to students in the school setting to ensure access to necessary and often life-saving medication. By bringing awareness to the entire educational community, students living with epilepsy or a seizure disorder can feel safe in school, reach their full academic potential, and build meaningful friendships without fear of being stigmatized.