

LB639 Seizure Safe Schools Act

LB639 Summary

LB639 has three core components:

- Train school personnel on seizure detection and first aid response;
- Mandate Seizure Action Plans be on file for every student diagnosed with epilepsy or a seizure disorder, and require those plans be available to all personnel responsible for the student;
- Ensure the administration of medications approved by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration;

LB639 passed from the Education Committee on a 7-0-1 vote and has no fiscal impact.

Seizure Action Plans

As noted by the CDC, Seizure Action Plans contain the essential information school staff may need to know in order to help a student who has seizures. It includes information on first aid, parent and health care provider contacts, and medications specifically for that child. Seizure Action Plans are an important tool that help parents and schools partner to keep children safe and healthy during the school day¹.

The Seizure Action Plan form is attached to this fact sheet.

LB639 would improve the care that students with epilepsy receive in school, and provide a safer learning experience

According to the CDC, approximately one in 10 people will have a seizure at some point in their life². Children, particularly under the age of 10, are in a window of prime vulnerability, and many first-time seizures happen within the walls of a school. Of the 3.4 million Americans with epilepsy, approximately 470,000 are children³. Using the national rate of epilepsy, it's likely that a school of 1,000 students will have 6 students diagnosed with epilepsy⁴.

In addition to seizures, students with epilepsy have a great risk of injury, suicide and early death, as well as greater prevalence of depression and anxiety⁵.

As a best practice, the CDC recommends educating school nurses, teachers, staff, and students about epilepsy and its treatment, seizure first aid, and possible stigma associated with epilepsy⁶. Additionally, 38.2% of Nebraska teachers reported that they would like to receive professional development in the area of epilepsy and seizures. However, only 20% of Nebraska teachers reported that they had received an epilepsy training within the past two years⁷.

Five states (Kentucky, Indiana, Texas, Illinois and New Jersey) have adopted laws addressing epilepsy and seizures in schools.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/npao/epilepsy.htm>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/epilepsy/about/first-aid.htm>

³ <https://www.epilepsy.com/release/2019/9/epilepsy-foundation-rolls-out-seizure-safe-schools-initiative-nationwide>

⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/npao/epilepsy.htm>

⁵ <https://www.epilepsy.com/living-epilepsy/schools-and-seizure-preparedness>

⁶ <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/npao/epilepsy.htm>

⁷ https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/profiles/pdf/2014/2014_profiles_report.pdf