

**Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School Policy**  
**S35: Seizure Management**  
**Adopted: August 17, 2023**

**1) DEFINITIONS**

- a) **Emergency Seizure Medication** - medication administered to stop seizures quickly. (Epilepsy Foundation)
- b) **Health Care Professional** - a Doctor of Medicine or osteopathy, Physician's Assistant, or Advanced Practice Nurse licensed by the state of Georgia.
- c) **Seizures** - sudden, temporary, bursts of electrical activity in the brain that can change or disrupt the way messages are sent between brain cells. These electrical bursts can cause involuntary changes in body movement or function, sensation, behavior, or awareness. (Epilepsy Foundation)
- d) **Seizure Action Plan (SAP)** - a document developed and signed by the parent or guardian of a student being treated for a seizure disorder and the physician responsible for the student's seizure disorder treatment. Such a document shall set out the support and services the student may need while at school or participating in a school-related function and outline procedural guidelines that provide specific directions about what to do in emergencies.
- e) **Seizure Disorders/Epilepsy** - a brain disorder that causes recurring, unprovoked seizures. A diagnosis of epilepsy may be made if you have two unprovoked seizures or one unprovoked seizure with a high risk of more. Not all seizures are the result of epilepsy. Seizures may relate to a brain injury or a family trait, but often the cause is completely unknown. The word epilepsy means the same thing as a seizure disorder; it does not indicate the cause or severity of the person's seizures. (Epilepsy Foundation)  
*Note: all references to seizure disorders include epilepsy.*
- f) **Trained Seizure Action Plan Personnel (Trained SAP Personnel)** - school employee trained following O.C.G.A. § 20-2-779.3. Such employee shall not be required to be health care professionals.

**2) OVERVIEW**

- a) These guidelines are to help schools and school districts establish a safer learning environment for students with seizure disorders. These materials are based on the belief that students with a seizure disorder can participate in all academic and non-academic school-related activities. For students with a seizure disorder to be

successful in school, a comprehensive health plan must be collaboratively developed by families, students, school personnel, and health care professionals. The Individualized Health Plan (IHP) implements the Seizure Action Plan (SAP) provided by the health care professional, including the provider's orders, and provisions appropriate to each student's needs during the school day and for other school-related activities. The IHP must be based upon and consistent with the SAP.

### **3) REQUIREMENT FOR SAFE MANAGEMENT OF STUDENTS WITH EPILEPSY OR SEIZURE DISORDERS IN THE SCHOOL SETTING**

Safely managing students with seizures in a school setting requires careful planning, preparation, and collaboration among school staff, parents, guardians, and health care professionals. The following are key requirements for ensuring the safety and well-being of students with seizures in the school environment.

- a) The parent or guardian of a student being treated for a seizure disorder may seek support and services for the student's seizures while the student is at school or participating in a school-related function by annually submitting to the school at which the student is enrolled, a copy of a SAP.
  - i) A parent or guardian of a student who elects to seek support and services for the student's seizures while the student is at school or participating in a school-related function shall submit a SAP upon such student's enrollment, by the beginning of each school year the student is enrolled, as soon as practicable following the student being diagnosed with a seizure disorder, or following a change to such diagnosis or such plan.
  - ii) A SAP submitted on behalf of a student by a parent or guardian seeking support and services for the student's seizures while the student is at school or participating in a school-related function, shall be reviewed by the local school system or school upon such student's enrollment, by the beginning of each school year the student is enrolled, and as soon as practicable following the student being diagnosed with epilepsy or a seizure disorder, or following a change to such diagnosis or such plan.
- b) Following the request of a parent or guardian of a student being treated for a seizure disorder and the reviewed submission of such student's SAP, a school nurse or, in the absence of a school nurse, Trained SAP Personnel, shall be onsite at each school where a student with an SAP is enrolled and shall be available during regular school hours to provide support and services to the student in accordance with the student's SAP. In the event the school nurse or Trained SAP Personnel are unavailable to provide such support and services, other school personnel shall be authorized to commence emergency procedures, including, but not limited to, contacting 911 emergency services.
- c) For purposes of field trips or school-related functions which parents or guardians are

permitted to attend, the parent or guardian of a student with an SAP, or a designee of such parent or guardian, may accompany such student in lieu of a school nurse or Trained SAP Personnel.

- d) A copy of the SAP for each student with an SAP enrolled in a school shall be readily available at all times to school personnel working in the main office and school clinic.
- e) A copy of the SAP for each student with an SAP attending a field trip or other school- related function away from the school shall be readily available to school personnel with designated responsibility for supervision of such students.
- f) As provided in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-779.3, the activities in Section (3) of this document shall not constitute nursing practice and shall be exempted from all applicable statutory and regulatory provisions that restrict what activities can be delegated to or performed by a person who is not a licensed health care professional. These activities are incident to or within the scope of the duties of the school employee's position of employment and involve the exercise of judgment or discretion on the part of the school employee.

#### **4) TRAINING OF SCHOOL EMPLOYEES IN THE CARE OF STUDENTS WITH EPILEPSY OR SEIZURE DISORDERS**

- a) In accordance with Georgia law, at least one member of school personnel per grade at each school attended by a student being treated for seizure disorder shall receive the following training.
- b) The training should be coordinated and provided by a health care professional and shall be based on guidelines developed by the Georgia Department of Education.
- c) Each local school system and charter school governing body shall provide to all bus drivers responsible for the transportation of a student being treated for epilepsy or a seizure disorder with notice of the student's condition, the student's emergency contact information, the student's parent or guardian contact information.
- d) Training for the school nurse and Trained SAP Personnel shall include, at a minimum:
  - i) Basic understanding of epilepsy and seizure disorders.
  - ii) Recognizing medical and treatment issues associated with epilepsy and seizure disorders that can affect the educational process for students being treated for epilepsy or a seizure disorder.
  - iii) Assessing the student's understanding of and ability to manage their epilepsy or seizure disorder.
  - iv) Recognizing common symptoms associated with epilepsy and seizure disorders.
  - v) Recognizing complications that require emergency assistance.
  - vi) Providing support and services, including, but not limited to, first aid, to students under a seizure action plan.

- vii) Maintaining communication with the student, the student's parent or guardian, the school nurse, and the student's teachers.

## **5) SEIZURE ACTION PLAN (SAP)**

### **a) SAP: Components**

- i) Identify the student's particular diagnosis of epilepsy or seizure disorder and describe such student's specific symptoms, including typical frequency, length, characteristics, and, if applicable, any precursors or triggers.
- ii) Identify the support and services school personnel may need to provide the student while at school or participating in school-related functions, including support and services in response to emergency conditions.
- iii) List and describe the student's daily and emergency medications related to such student's treatment for epilepsy or a seizure disorder and any other medications deemed relevant by the parent or guardian and the physician responsible for such student's epilepsy or seizure disorder treatment, including but not limited to, any emergency medications prescribed by such physician.
- iv) Identify any special considerations and safety precautions to be considered by the local school system, school, or school employees to facilitate the student's access to and participation in the education program and school-related functions.
- v) Describe the student's understanding of and ability to manage their epilepsy or seizure disorder.
- vi) Include complete and updated contact information for the student's parents or guardians and the physician responsible for such student's epilepsy or seizure disorder treatment.
- vii) Include a statement of acknowledgment and release from the student's parent or guardian authorizing the sharing of medical information between such student's physician and other health care providers and authorizing the designated school nurse to share medical information with other school employees as necessary.
- viii) Be signed by the student's parent or guardian and the physician responsible for such student's epilepsy or seizure disorder treatment.

### **b) SAP: Timeline**

The SAP shall be submitted to and reviewed by the local school system or school:

- i) Before or at the beginning of each school year;
- ii) Upon student enrollment, if such student enrolls after the beginning of the school year; or
- iii) As soon as practicable, following the student being diagnosed with epilepsy or a seizure disorder or following a change to such a diagnosis or such a plan.

## **6) EMERGENCY MEDICATION GUIDANCE**

The following medication rules and procedures have been developed to address the administration of emergency seizure medication including, but not limited to the following:

Diazepam (Valium®), Lorazepam (Ativan®) Midazolam (Versed®).

These medication rules and procedures apply to students during regular school hours, school-sponsored activities, and after-school events. procedures shall be communicated to parents and guardians, students, and all school personnel as appropriate.

- a) The school nurse or Trained SAP Personnel shall ensure a proper medication order from a licensed prescriber, annually at the beginning of each academic year or when needed. Whenever possible, the medication order shall be obtained, and the medication administration plan shall be developed before the student enters or reenters school.
- b) Prior to the administration of emergency anti-seizure medication to a student by a school nurse or Trained SAP Personnel, the student's parent or guardian shall annually provide the school with:
  - i) Written authorization from the student's parent or guardian to administer the medication at school; and
  - ii) Written statement from the student's physician, which shall include the student's name, the name and purpose of the medication, the prescribed dosage, detailed seizure symptoms, the method and frequency of administration, the specific circumstances under which the medication may be administered, any potential adverse response, and a protocol for observing the student after a seizure.
- c) Any changes to the prescribed medication will require new authorizations.
- d) The school nurse and Trained SAP Personnel will complete at a minimum of every two years of seizure training on administering emergency seizure medication.
  - i) Another treatment option for drug-resistant or refractory seizures is a Vagus Nerve Stimulator (VNS). The FDA approved VNS therapy in patients four years and older with focal (partial) seizures which are not well-controlled with medicines. The VNS is implanted under the left chest wall and programmed to give pulses at regular intervals to help prevent seizures.
  - ii) When a seizure occurs, a magnet is swiped over the device, increasing stimulation. Patients are provided with a handheld magnet to control the stimulator. Extra stimulation is delivered when the magnet is swept over the pulse generator site. Patients cannot generally feel the pulses.

## **7) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

- a) A student's school choice shall in no way be restricted because the student has a seizure action plan.
- b) A school employee shall not be subject to any penalty or disciplinary action for refusing to serve as trained seizure action plan personnel.
- c) No physician, nurse, school employee, local school system, or charter school governing body shall be liable for civil damages or subject to disciplinary action under professional licensing regulations or school disciplinary policies as a result of the activities authorized or required by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-779.3 when such acts are

committed as an ordinarily reasonably prudent physician, nurse, school employee, local school system, or charter school governing body would have acted under the same or similar circumstance

- d)** Students with an SAP may also be eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or the IDEA.