

Seizure Safe Schools ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

Seizure Safety is School Safety

Protect Students.
Pass Seizure Safe Schools.



CALL TO ACTION

PROTECT STUDENTS. PASS SEIZURE SAFE SCHOOLS.

Now more than ever, it is critical for the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan and our statewide epilepsy community to speak up with one voice in support of Seizure Safe Schools legislation. Students living with epilepsy - and those who may experience a seizure for the first time- deserve safe, informed, and supportive school environments. This legislation will ensure school staff are trained to recognize seizures, respond appropriately, and protect the health and dignity of students. Across Michigan, individuals living with epilepsy, parents and caregivers, educators, healthcare providers, and community advocates are united in urging lawmakers to act. Michigan legislators must hear directly from their constituents, because seizure safety in schools is not optional - it is essential - and now is the time to move Seizure Safe Schools forward.

This **Seizure Safe Schools Act Legislative Toolkit** is designed to equip our advocates with the resources and information needed to educate policymakers and advance seizure safety in Michigan schools. It builds on our collective advocacy efforts by providing clear background on the legislation, why it matters, and how it will positively impact students living with epilepsy and other seizure disorders. This toolkit may be used and shared with Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan board members, professional advisors, community partners, families, educators, and advocates across the state.

Inside, you will find practical tools to help you take action - whether you have just a few minutes or several hours. Action steps range from sending a quick email or completing an action alert to sharing messages on social media or requesting and participating in meetings with your state legislators. Advocacy landscapes can shift quickly, and this toolkit reflects the most current information available. Updates will be made as needed to ensure advocates have accurate and timely guidance. If you have questions or need additional support as you engage in advocacy efforts, please contact our **Advocacy Team** via email at swaid@epilepsymichigan.org.



Background and Call to Action

The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan remains steadfast in its commitment to passing **Seizure Safe Schools** legislation in Michigan. Despite ongoing challenges and opposition, we continue to push forward because student safety cannot wait for another legislative year to pass by; we need your help now.

We are urging community members to contact their Michigan legislators and ask them to support **Senate Bill 434**, the **Seizure Safe Schools Act**. Your outreach truly matters and can play a critical role in moving this life-saving legislation forward. At this time, we are awaiting a hearing date in the Senate, which makes constituent engagement especially important. *Legislators need to hear directly from the people who live and vote in their districts.*

While we typically encourage advocates to reach out to both their House and Senate representatives, this call to action is different. We ask you to focus specifically on the **Michigan Senate** and the **Senate Health Policy Committee**. Outreach is particularly impactful when coming from constituents in the districts represented on the committee.

Below is a list of **Senate Health Policy Committee** members to help guide your advocacy efforts:

- **Cherry, John** (D, District 27) – **Bill Sponsor**
- **Geiss, Erika** (D, District 1)
- **Klinefelt, Veronica** (D, District 11) – **Co-Sponsor**
- **Wojno, Paul** (D, District 10)
- **Hertel, Kevin** (D, District 12) – **Committee Chair**
- **Santana, Sylvia** (D, District 2)
- **Hauck, Roger** (R, District 34)
- **Huizenga, Mark** (R, District 30)
- **Runestad, Jim** (R, District 23)
- **Webber, Michael** (R, District 9)



If you do not see your District Senator listed above, please reach out to them! Hearing from their own constituents is always important, and your voice helps build broader support for the Seizure Safe Schools Act.

How to Identify your Michigan Senator!

One great way is to visit **senate.michigan.gov** available tool.

Step 1

You can also visit the Public Policy Advocacy Page on the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan's website. **epilepsymichigan.org**



Find Your Senator

Enter your Senator's name or your home address below to find your Senator. View a list of all Senators on the [Senators page](#), or locate your Senate district on the [State of Michigan's map tool](#).

SEARCH BY: NAME ADDRESS

Enter name or address...

Search

On the website **senate.michigan.gov** homepage, enter your address in the box:

Step 2

And you will reach a page that looks like this. It provides links to their website, email, and contact information. Your members of the legislature want to hear from you - You are their constituents!

John Cherry (D) District 27 | [MAP](#)

[WEBSITE](#) | [CONTACT](#)

Email: SenJCherry@senate.michigan.gov

Phone: 517-373-0142

Office: Suite 3600, Binsfeld Office Building

COMMITTEES

Agriculture and Natural Resources, Appropriations, DHHS, EGLE, General Government, Health Policy, Housing and Human Services, Labor, Natural Resources and Agriculture



When constituents speak up, legislators listen.

Every conversation, email, and meeting amplifies the epilepsy community's voice and helps drive change.



SEIZURE SAFE SCHOOLS

Recommendation

Pass Seizure Safe Schools legislation to ensure that schools are well-equipped with the tools necessary to provide a safe and enriching environment for students living with epilepsy and seizure disorders.

BACKGROUND

The legislation makes certain that school personnel, including nurses, teachers, and volunteers, are not only prepared but can recognize and respond appropriately and efficiently to the student experiencing a seizure. Even more importantly, the legislation safeguards physician-directed care in the school setting allowing students to access necessary and oftentimes life-saving medication. Lastly, 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.

The model bill has four key components: requiring school personnel to complete a seizure recognition and first-aid response training; mandating that the Seizure Action Plan is made part of the student's file and made available for school personnel and volunteers responsible for the student; ensuring that any FDA-approved medication prescribed by the treating physician is administered to the student living with epilepsy; and a Good Samaritan clause.

ABOUT THE EPILEPSIES

Epilepsy is a disease or disorder of the brain which causes reoccurring seizures. It is a spectrum disease comprised of many diagnoses including an ever-growing number of rare epilepsies. There are many different types of seizures and varying levels of seizure control. Epilepsy is the fourth most common neurological disorder in the country. Approximately 1 in 26 people will develop epilepsy at some point in their lifetime.

25 states & D.C.

have passed seizure safe schools legislation to date

13,600

children living with epilepsy in Michigan¹

11 or more days

of school missed in the past year on average for students aged 6-17 years living with epilepsy²

4,204

students per school nurse in Michigan³

Third

most common school emergency⁴

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
³ National Education Association
⁴ American Academy of Pediatrics

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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WHITNEY KEENAN Government Affairs Consultant, McCall Hamilton | 517.374.2703 | whitney@mccallhamilton.com

Here is how you can take action

5 minutes

Email your Michigan Senator asking them to support Senate Bill 434



Take action through the **Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan's** tool to email your Senator about your request in supporting **Senate Bill 434** the **Seizure Safe Schools Act**. Just enter your address and a few clicks later, press send! We strongly encourage advocates to personalize these messages by sharing information about their own experience as a member of the epilepsy community.

10 minutes

Share with your network on social media

You can amplify the epilepsy community's statement urging support on the **Seizure Safe Schools Act** by posting on your social media channels and tagging your legislators. Graphics and sample social media can be shared directly from the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan's social media channels.



15 minutes

You can help keep the momentum going by reaching out directly to your friends, family, and networks and asking them to do the same. Personal emails, phone calls, and conversations with legislators make a difference - the more voices they hear from the epilepsy community and our supporters, the greater the impact!

Share why **Seizure Safe Schools in Michigan** matters and encourage others to speak up.

Together, we can help make Seizure Safe Schools a reality.



1+ hour

Request a meeting with your Senator's Office

Request a meeting with your Senator's office or attend one of their "Coffee Hours" to share your concerns, explain why **Seizure Safe Schools** matters, and ask for their support.

Each meeting may take about an hour to request, schedule, and attend - but it's worth it! Building relationships with legislators and their staff strengthens year-round advocacy and helps grow them as champions for the epilepsy community. Don't worry if you don't hear back right away; if a week passes, follow up with a reminder and, for extra impact, give the office a call to ask for their support. Every conversation counts!

Tips for phone calls, emails and meetings.

Once you've reviewed the Seizure Safe Schools Position Paper, you're ready to take action! Below, you'll find step-by-step guidance for reaching out to your legislators, including:

- How to approach your communications effectively
- Sample scripts for emails, phone calls, and in-person meetings
- Talking points and tips to make your advocacy clear and compelling

Use these resources to confidently share your voice and help move the Seizure Safe Schools Act forward in Michigan. **Every connection counts!**

Phone Tips | Talking Scripts

Call their office or the State Capitol switchboard at **517-373-2353** to be connected. Once you are connected to your congressional office, below is a phone script to use. (**Note:** Update personal information in [Purple](#))

"Hi, my name is [FIRST AND LAST NAME]. I am a constituent and live in [CITY, STATE]. I am also a member of the epilepsy community and [LIVE WITH EPILEPSY, HAVE A LOVED ONE WITH EPILEPSY, AM AN EPILEPSY HEALTHCARE PROVIDER OR EPILEPSY RESEARCHER, AND/OR WORK AT AN EPILEPSY ORGANIZATION]. Can you please share the name and contact information for the staff person who handles health care issues and then connect me to them?"

Once connected to the staff person:

*"Hi, my name is [FIRST AND LAST NAME]. I am a constituent and live in [CITY, STATE]. I am also a member of the epilepsy community and [LIVE WITH EPILEPSY, HAVE A LOVED ONE WITH EPILEPSY, AM AN EPILEPSY HEALTHCARE PROVIDER OR EPILEPSY RESEARCHER, AND/OR WORK AT AN EPILEPSY ORGANIZATION]. I would like to schedule a virtual meeting with you to discuss your support for **Senate Bill 434**, the **Seizure Safe Schools Act**. Can you share some dates and times that you are available for a meeting? Can you please share your name and contact information in case I need anything before the meeting? Thank you for your time and I look forward to our meeting!"*

Note: Be sure to select a date and time for the virtual meeting, as well as discuss what virtual platform-Zoom, etc.-will be used and how you will get a link for the meeting.

Leaving a message:

*"Hi, my name is [FIRST AND LAST NAME]. I am a constituent and live in [CITY, STATE]. I am also a member of the epilepsy community and [LIVE WITH EPILEPSY, HAVE A LOVED ONE WITH EPILEPSY, AM AN EPILEPSY HEALTHCARE PROVIDER OR EPILEPSY RESEARCHER, AND/OR WORK AT AN EPILEPSY ORGANIZATION]. I would like to schedule a virtual meeting with you to discuss your support for **Senate Bill 434**, the **Seizure Safe Schools Act**. Please call me back at [PHONE NUMBER] or email me at [EMAIL ADDRESS] in order to schedule this meeting. Thank you!"*

Email Tips | Sample Scripts

You can contact your Michigan State Senator in one of two ways:

- By submitting a message through the “Contact Me” webform on the Senator’s official website
- By emailing the health or education policy staff member directly, using the contact information you received when calling the office

Sample Email Script (Customize as Needed)

Subject: Protect Students with Epilepsy – Support SB 434
Representative/Senator [Name],

Every child with epilepsy should be able to walk into school knowing their classroom is a safe, prepared environment. Please support SB 434, the Seizure Safe Schools bill, to ensure that school personnel have the training and tools needed to recognize and respond appropriately when a student experiences a seizure. More than 13,000 students live with epilepsy in Michigan alone. Epilepsy is a neurological disorder characterized by unprovoked, recurring seizures. Roughly 1 in 26 people will develop epilepsy at some point—about the size of an average Michigan classroom. Although epilepsy presents differently in each person, informed, timely action is essential.

For many children, a first seizure happens at school, where quick recognition and intervention are essential. Unfortunately, many school employees report feeling unprepared to respond. Parents must place their trust in school staff, depend on ambulance response times, and often face costly emergency department visits. While some seizures are life-threatening, many can be effectively managed with timely administration of rescue medications, including nasal treatments that are safe and easy to use. Since school nurses have become increasingly rare, there is often no one on site trained to respond to a seizure. This gap can also lead to certain seizures being overlooked, especially those that resemble inattention or daydreaming. Training designated personnel ensures students receive timely, appropriate assistance when needed.

SB 434 is a common-sense solution. This bill would:

- Require school personnel to complete seizure recognition and first-aid response training
- Add an accessible physician- and parent-informed Seizure Action Plan to the student’s file
- Allow trained staff to administer FDA-approved, prescribed rescue medications
- Provide a Good Samaritan for employees acting in good faith

Similar legislation has already passed in 24 states, including our Midwest neighbors in Ohio, Illinois, and Minnesota. Michigan should provide the same level of protection to its students. When a parent drops their child off at school, they deserve the peace of mind of knowing that their child will be safe, supported, and with personnel prepared to provide appropriate aid when every minute matters. Please support SB 434 to make Michigan schools safer for children with epilepsy.

Sincerely,
[Name]
[City, MI]

Additional Tips

- When you reach out to your Michigan State Senator about the **Seizure Safe Schools Act (SB 434)**, you will most often connect with a staff member who advises the Senator on legislation. Occasionally, the Senator themselves may respond or join the meeting, but don't worry if they do not. Building a relationship with staff is just as important - they make recommendations to the Senator about which bills to support and how to vote.
- Legislators and their staff may have varying knowledge about epilepsy, so it's helpful to ask if they have any personal or professional experience with the condition. Keep in mind most meetings are brief -around 15-20 minutes- so concise talking points are key. It's perfectly fine to bring notes to guide your conversation. **Note:** this is a conversation, not a test. As a constituent, your voice matters! If you're asked a question you don't know, simply say, "I don't know, but I can follow up," and do so afterward.
- To keep your message clear and persuasive, consider using the "Hook, Line, and Sinker" approach for your meeting or phone call:

Hook, Line, Sinker Approach

- **Hook:** Capture attention with a brief personal story or why this issue matters to you.
- **Line:** Explain what the Seizure Safe Schools Act does and why it is critical for Michigan students with epilepsy.
- **Sinker:** Clearly ask for their support - encourage the Senator to back SB 434 and communicate that constituent voices are key in moving this bill forward.

This approach helps you stay focused, make a strong impression, and empower your Senator and their staff to take action for seizure safety in Michigan schools.

You are welcome to bring notes and take notes during meetings to help you stay focused and organized.

You may also print this hook, line, sinker note if that helps.



Seizure Safe Schools (SB 434)

Hook

- Who you are and where you're from
- Share your personal connection and story

Line

- Why there is a need for school training
- Urgency, misunderstanding, safety, & care

Sinker

- Support Seizure Safe Schools Act (SB 434)
- Thank them for their time

Advocacy in Action

Thank you for being a strong partners and champion for children and youth with epilepsy. Your support is critical to making classrooms safer across the state, and we appreciate you!

Keep the Momentum Going: More Ways to Support the Epilepsy Community

- Follow, share, and engage with ready-to-use social media content
- Tag your legislators and decision-makers to help move change forward
- Get loud about issues that matter to the you and the epilepsy community
- Tell your story and include the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan to help spread awareness
- Share your story with the foundation and help expand your story to a wider audience, visit epilepsymichigan.org/learn/public-policy-advocacy/advocacy-stories/



Engage with the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan to Support Epilepsy

- Sign up for advocacy alerts and opportunities to take action
- Participate in advocacy efforts at the local, state, and national level
- Ask questions and learn how advocacy works — no experience required
- Is this you? Visit epilepsymichigan.org/learn/public-policy-advocacy/

