**Virginia Board of Education Agenda Item **

**Agenda Item: E**

**Date: September 23, 2021**

**Title: First Review of *Approved Training Programs for the Treatment of Students with a Seizure Disorder***

**Presenter: Dr. Samantha Hollins, Assistant Superintendent, Department of Special Education and Student Services**

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**Purpose of Presentation:**

Action required by state or federal law or regulation.

**Executive Summary:**
The 2021 Virginia General Assembly passed [SB 1322](https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?211+ful+SB1322S1+hil) (DeSteph) that addresses seizure management and training of school personnel for students with a known seizure disorder. In addition to setting parameters related to seizure management plans, this legislation directs each local school division to require biennial training of all school nurses on the treatment of students with seizures and seizure disorders, using a Virginia Board of Education (BOE)-approved online course of instruction for school nurses. It also requires each local school division to require biennial training of all school employees with direct student contact on the treatment of students with seizures and seizure disorders, using a BOE-approved online course of instruction for school employees. Additionally, SB 1322 requires the BOE-approved training programs to be fully consistent with training programs and guidelines developed by the Epilepsy Foundation of America and any successor organization.

For the past several years, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has identified and promoted the Epilepsy Foundation of America’s free training for school nurses and school employees as the gold standard seizure disorders training programs. Links to these free training programs for school nurses and school personnel are posted on the [VDOE School Health Office](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/office/index.shtml) webpage and disseminated to school personnel via training and technical assistance efforts.

This legislation formalizes the recommendation of training programs that have been in place for several years to support school nurses and other school staff in the recognition and response to a seizure disorder. Furthermore, this legislation mandates that local school divisions require this training be completed by school nurses and school personnel with regular student contact on a biennial basis.

The proposed *Approved Training Programs for the Treatment of Students with a Seizure Disorder*supports Priority 1 of the [Board of Education Comprehensive Plan](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/plan/index.shtml), “Provide high quality, effective learning environments for all students,” specifically:

* Actively foster equitable, supportive, and safe academic, disciplinary, and physical environments and encourage the engagement of all families in the academic lives of their children; and
* Support and promote wrap-around services and mental and physical wellness and intervention programs to increase opportunities for all students to achieve.

 **Action Requested:**

Action will be requested at a future meeting. Specify anticipated date below:

October 21, 2021

 **Superintendent’s Recommendation:**The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education receive for first review the *Approved Training Programs for the Treatment of Students with a Seizure Disorder.*

**Previous Review or Action:**

No previous review or action.

**Background Information and Statutory Authority:**
Seizures are one of the most common neurological problems affecting children and youth.

The goal of seizure management treatment is to control, stop, or reduce how often seizures occur. Based on the most recently available voluntary data collection of school health data (2018-2019 school year; 94 school divisions reporting), there are at least 5,103 students with seizure disorders in Virginia public schools.

The 2021 General Assembly passed [SB 1322](https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?211+ful+SB1322S1) (DeSteph) to amend and reenact § 8.01-225 of the *Code of Virginia* and to amend the *Code of Virginia* to add [§ 22.1-274.6](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title22.1/chapter14/section22.1-274.6/) relating to public schools; seizure management and action plan; and biennial training as follows:

1. *“The parent or guardian of a student with a diagnosed seizure disorder may submit to the local school division a seizure management and action plan developed by the student's treating physician for review by school division employees with whom the student has regular contact. The seizure management and action plan shall (i) identify the health care services the student may receive at school or while participating in a school activity, (ii) identify seizure-related medication prescribed to the student that must be administered in the event of a seizure, (iii) evaluate the student's ability to manage and understand his seizure disorder, and (iv) be signed by the student's parent or guardian, the student's treating physician, and the school nurse.*
2. *Each local school division shall require all school nurses employed by the division to complete, on a biennial basis, a Board of Education-approved online course of instruction for school nurses regarding treating students with seizures and seizure disorders that includes information about seizure recognition and related first aid. Approved training programs shall be fully consistent with training programs and guidelines developed by the Epilepsy Foundation of America and any successor organization.*
3. *Each local school division shall require all employees whose duties include regular contact with students to complete, on a biennial basis, a Board of Education-approved online course of instruction for school employees regarding treating students with seizures and seizure disorders that includes information about seizure recognition and related first aid. Approved training programs shall be fully consistent with training programs and guidelines developed by the Epilepsy Foundation of America and any successor organization.”*

The *Code of Virginia* [§ 22.1-274.6](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title22.1/chapter14/section22.1-274.6/) (effective July 1, 2022) directs each local school division to require biennial training of all school nurses on the treatment of students with seizures and seizure disorders. The *Approved Training Programs for the Treatment of Students with a Seizure Disorder* formalizes the long-standing VDOE recommendation of the free training programs provided by the Epilepsy Foundation of America. Links to the training programs for school nurses and school personnel are posted on the [VDOE School Health Office](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/office/index.shtml) webpage and disseminated to school personnel via training and technical assistance efforts.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

Upon the Board of Education’s adoption of the *Approved Training Programs for the Treatment of Students with a Seizure Disorder,* the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) will make it available to school divisions on the Department’s website.

**Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources:**

There is no anticipated impact on the Virginia Department of Education’s fiscal and human resources nor on local school division resources.



## INTRODUCTION

The 2021 General Assembly passed [Senate Bill 1322](https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?211+ful+SB1322S1) (DeSteph) to amend and reenact
§ 8.01-225 of the *Code of Virginia* and to amend the *Code of Virginia* to add [§ 22.1-274.6](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title22.1/chapter14/section22.1-274.6/) relating to public schools; seizure management and action plan; and biennial training as follows:

1. *“The parent or guardian of a student with a diagnosed seizure disorder may submit to the local school division a seizure management and action plan developed by the student's treating physician for review by school division employees with whom the student has regular contact. The seizure management and action plan shall (i) identify the health care services the student may receive at school or while participating in a school activity, (ii) identify seizure-related medication prescribed to the student that must be administered in the event of a seizure, (iii) evaluate the student's ability to manage and understand his seizure disorder, and (iv) be signed by the student's parent or guardian, the student's treating physician, and the school nurse.*
2. *Each local school division shall require all school nurses employed by the division to complete, on a biennial basis, a Board of Education-approved online course of instruction for school nurses regarding treating students with seizures and seizure disorders that includes information about seizure recognition and related first aid. Approved training programs shall be fully consistent with training programs and guidelines developed by the Epilepsy Foundation of America and any successor organization.*
3. *Each local school division shall require all employees whose duties include regular contact with students to complete, on a biennial basis, a Board of Education-approved online course of instruction for school employees regarding treating students with seizures and seizure disorders that includes information about seizure recognition and related first aid. Approved training programs shall be fully consistent with training programs and guidelines developed by the Epilepsy Foundation of America and any successor organization.”*

The *Code of Virginia* § 22.1-274.6 directs each local school division to require biennial training of all school nurses on the treatment of students with seizures and seizure disorders, using a Virginia Board of Education (BOE)-approved online course of instruction for school nurses. It also requires each local school division to require biennial training of all school employees with direct student contact on the treatment of students with seizures and seizure disorders, using a BOE-approved online course of instruction for school employees.

This bill has a delayed effective date of July 1, 2022.

## Approved Training Program for Licensed School Nurses

The *Code of Virginia* § 22.1-274.6 requires all BOE-approved training programs for licensed school nurses to be fully consistent with training programs and guidelines developed by the [Epilepsy Foundation](https://www.epilepsy.com/living-epilepsy/our-training-and-education) of America and any successor organization.

The [Seizure Training for School Nurses](https://www.epilepsy.com/living-epilepsy/our-training-and-education/seizure-training-school-nurses-caring-students), provided online and on-demand by the Epilepsy Foundation of America, is a program designed to provide the school nurse with information, strategies, and resources that will enable licensed school nurses to better manage the student with seizures by supporting positive treatment outcomes, maximizing educational and developmental opportunities, and ensuring a safe and supportive environment. The program consists of seven modules to assist the school nurse in learning to effectively manage seizures in a school environment.

Local school divisions shall require school nurses employed by the school division to complete the [Seizure Training for School Nurses](https://www.epilepsy.com/living-epilepsy/our-training-and-education/seizure-training-school-nurses-caring-students) on a biennial basis. This training is available on the Epilepsy Foundation of America website, as well as on the [VDOE School Health Office](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/office/index.shtml) webpage.

## Approved Training Program for Unlicensed School PERSONNEl

The *Code of Virginia* § 22.1-274.6 requires all BOE-approved training programs for unlicensed school personnel to be fully consistent with training programs and guidelines developed by the [Epilepsy Foundation](https://www.epilepsy.com/living-epilepsy/our-training-and-education) of America and any successor organization.

The [Seizure Training for School Personnel](https://www.epilepsy.com/living-epilepsy/our-training-and-education/seizure-training-school-personnel) provided online and on-demand by the Epilepsy Foundation is designed for unlicensed school staff who work with children and youth in school settings. This program provides an overview of seizures and epilepsy, seizure first aid, seizure action plans, rescue therapies, seizure emergencies, and how to support students in school settings. This course is appropriate for teachers, aides, coaches, administrators, and unlicensed staff or anyone who works in the school setting.

Local school divisions shall require school employees with regular contact with students to complete the [Seizure Training for School Personnel](https://www.epilepsy.com/living-epilepsy/our-training-and-education/seizure-training-school-personnel) on a biennial basis. This training is available on the Epilepsy Foundation of America website, as well as on the [VDOE School Health Office](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/office/index.shtml) webpage.