

A Victory for Students: New DOE Guidelines Recognize Migraine Rights

Migraine Advocacy Work Secures New Guidelines from the Department of Education on Migraine and Section 504 Protections for Students

SALT LAKE CITY, UT, UNITED STATES, January 24, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights has issued groundbreaking guidelines recognizing migraine as a disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This marks a pivotal step in protecting the rights of students living with migraine, ensuring they have equal access to education through necessary accommodations.



Did you know 28% of teens and 10% of youth live with migraine? The new Department of Education guidelines will help these kids get the accommodations they deserve.

These changes come at a critical time when awareness of migraine's impact on young people is growing. As of the end of 2024, 1569 schools have enrolled in [Migraine at School](#), a national initiative serving over 1 million students nationwide.

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*Dan Henry, M.D., President,
Danielle Byron Henry
Migraine Foundation*

Migraine and headache disorders are complex neurological conditions that significantly impact school performance. Beyond headache pain, symptoms like cognitive and mood dysfunction, light and noise sensitivity, fatigue, nausea, and memory deficits can severely affect a student's learning ability. Disabling symptoms such as vision impairment, motor control loss, and even loss of consciousness may also occur. This long-awaited guidance ensures children with migraine can access essential accommodations and thrive academically despite these

challenges.

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The guidelines emphasize that students with migraine qualify for protection under Section 504 if their condition substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as concentrating, learning, or communicating. They also provide examples of accommodations schools can implement, including non-fluorescent lighting, access to a quiet space during an attack, and flexibility with attendance policies.

The new Department of Education guidelines originated with the Alliance for Headache Disorders Advocacy’s (AHDA) 2023 [Headache on the Hill](#) (HOH), an annual event that brings together patients, caregivers, and healthcare professionals to advocate for legislative and policy changes. Migraine at School, the foundational initiative of the Danielle Byron Henry Migraine Foundation, supported this effort by providing critical information, statistics, and resources for AHDA’s congressional ask.

Migraine at School’s former Outreach Manager, Izzy King, initiated the conversation with Former Representative Cori Bush (MO), whose office championed the cause. AHDA collaborated closely with Bush’s office, ultimately securing a congressional letter to the Department of Education calling for the creation of these landmark guidelines. This coordinated advocacy highlights the power of partnership in driving meaningful change for children living with migraine.

“Thanks to Headache on the Hill, we now have this recognition from the Department of Education. This is a powerful validation of the struggles faced by children with migraine. It ensures that schools have clear guidance to support our students effectively.” said Amy Graham, Executive Director of Migraine at School.

“I am deeply gratified by the U.S. Department of Education's recognition of migraine as a disability under federal law. This is a monumental step forward for students living with migraine, ensuring they have the accommodations they need to succeed in school. This victory underscores the power of advocacy and the impact of sharing personal stories to drive change. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to Former Representative Cori Bush and all the Members of Congress who signed the Congressional letter that made this guidance possible. We are also profoundly grateful to our incredible volunteer advocates, many of whom were children, from across the country who courageously shared their experiences with lawmakers, as well as, our



partner organizations who signed on in support of this proposal,” said Julienne Verdi, Executive Director of the Alliance for Headache Disorders Advocacy.

About the Alliance for Headache Disorders Advocacy (AHDA)

AHDA is a nonprofit coalition advocating for equitable policies and increased funding for headache and migraine research. Through efforts like Headache on the Hill, AHDA empowers patients and caregivers to become powerful voices for change.

<https://allianceforheadacheadvocacy.org/>

<https://allianceforheadacheadvocacy.org/headache-on-the-hill/>

About Migraine at School

Migraine at School is the foundational initiative of the Danielle Byron Henry Migraine Foundation. The initiative supports students, families, and educators in navigating the challenges of migraine disease through education, advocacy, and free resources.

<https://www.migraineatschool.org/>

<https://www.daniellefoundation.org/>

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