

Name: The "Dear Colleague Letter and Resource Guide on ADHD"

URL: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201607-504-adhd.pdf>

I request that the Department of Education retain the Dear Colleague Letter and Resource Guide on Students with ADHD, issued July 26, 2016, as active guidance.

This year, my six-year-old son was diagnosed with ADHD, which my wife and I have since learned is the most common mental health disorder among children and teens in the United States today. The news was accompanied with a parallel diagnosis of Generalized Anxiety Disorder, which stems directly from the ADHD. It is of extreme importance to us that he be given every chance to thrive in the public school system.

To date, we have benefitted greatly from the public services and resources that have accompanied his diagnosis, and we strongly believe that he and other children like him should continue to receive the same level – or more – of care and attention that has been offered as a result of this guidance.

ADHD affects the academic progress, social success, self-esteem, and overall happiness of 6.4 million American children. Without support and adequate services to mitigate ADHD symptoms in academic and social settings, a child like ours may suffer poor grades, school failure, and long-term damage to self-esteem and learning.

The Dear Colleague Letter provides clear, well-informed guidance to help teachers and administrators identify and support struggling students with ADHD. It ensures that students with ADHD have access to a free and public education (FAPE), their guaranteed right under U.S. law. In the year since its release, the Dear Colleague Letter has received no legal, political, or scholarly objections. Furthermore, complaints to the Department of Education regarding discrimination against students with ADHD will almost surely continue to decrease as the Dear Colleague letter is adapted and heeded by schools across the country.

When ADHD symptoms are left unaddressed at school, the entire classroom can suffer devastating consequences. By retaining the provisions outlined in the Dear Colleague Letter, the DOE is empowering schools to provide more efficient academic support, save money, and bolster their students' learning opportunities. This provision does not meet the criteria for elimination. It is not "outdated, unnecessary, or ineffective;" it does not "impose costs that exceed benefits;" and it does not "create a serious inconsistency." Indeed, it is essential and should remain in place.

If our son's diagnosis had not been taken seriously, we would be in dire straits right now concerning his education. Instead, he is warmly accepted by his school community and surrounded by individuals who are committed to guiding him and