



American
Heart
Association.

January 17, 2024

Representative A Thomas, Chair
House Education Committee
HB 2494- **Proponent**

Chair Thomas and members of the House Education Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 2494, which would require the board of education in each school district to establish a cardiac emergency response plan (CERP) for each school. CERPs should follow nationally approved and recognized guidelines, ensure appropriate location and use of the AEDs, which includes athletic facilities and venues.

CERPs shall establish the following to respond to a sudden cardiac arrest (SCA):

- Creation of a cardiac emergency response team
- Appropriate location and number of automated external defibrillators (AEDs)
- Training of appropriate school personnel in the use of AEDs
- Training of appropriate school personnel in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)

Sudden cardiac arrest is the leading cause of sudden death in young athletes and most commonly occurs during or just after physical exertion, while engaged in practice sessions, organized competition, or other sports activities. With only seconds to react and every minute crucial, having an appropriate plan in place during a sudden cardiac emergency can make a difference in survival. The American Heart Association supports the establishment of cardiac emergency response plans, including AED access, in all schools for all school activities, practices, and competitions. The establishment of this plan will empower and train school personnel on providing lifesaving care between the time when the victim collapses and emergency medical services arrive. **Each minute following sudden cardiac arrest, survival decreases, however, when treated with defibrillation within 3-5 minutes, survival rates increase 50%-70%.**

CERPs are designed to enhance safety for students, staff, and visitors at schools. To be effective, these plans need to be coordinated, practiced, and evaluated. Although a school's primary mission is to educate, they have the responsibility to keep our kids safe and be prepared in case of emergencies, such as fires, tornados, and other potential mass-casualty events at school. CERPs should extend to provide lifesaving responses during medical crises as well, such as a SCA.

The AHA applauds Chair Thomas for hearing this important legislation and believes that appropriations should be considered by the legislature to support the development, implementation, and evaluation of CERPs in schools through the establishment of a grant fund at KDHE, as written in HB 2494.

Sincerely,
Kari Rinker