



March 10, 2025

Senator Mary K. Kunesch
Chair, Senate Education Finance Committee
Minnesota Senate
St. Paul, MN

Dear Chair Kunesch and Members of the Senate Education Finance Committee:

I am writing to ask for your support of Senate File 1457, legislation that will require cardiac emergency response plans in schools.

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%.**

With thousands of students enrolled in Minnesota's public and charter school systems, plus numerous staff, it is important for school facilities to have a plan in place to address cardiac arrest. These plans not only benefit the students and staff, but the number of community members, parents and supporters that come to school for events and other meetings.

The AHA applauds Senator Bonnie Westlin for authoring this important legislation and extends our appreciation to you and the committee for hearing this bill.

I ask for your support of this life-saving legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul L. Weirtz".

Paul L. Weirtz
State Government Relations Director
American Heart Association