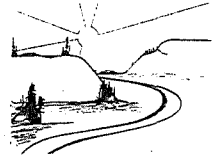




JEFF SMITH

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR – 31ST DISTRICT



Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 349

Senate Committee on Health

December 7, 2023

Chair Cabral-Guevara and members of the committee, thank you for agreeing to hear this bill, and for giving me the opportunity to speak on its behalf.

Senate Bill 349 was introduced in response to numerous instances of our state's student athletes undergoing Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) as a result of strenuous physical activity. As recently as July, 16-year-old, Ty Wall suffered from Sudden Cardiac Arrest while at a basketball game at Arrowhead Union High School. Luckily for Ty, there was an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) nearby, which saved his life.

When these sudden emergencies occur, response time is essential in order to save lives. Reducing that response time can be done successfully with the help of AEDs. AEDs help restore breathing through controlled electric shocks, and have both written and visual instructions, so even those with no prior experience and training can save a young athlete's life.

This bill requires AEDs to be accessible at all athletic events in K-12 public and private schools, as well as the University of Wisconsin System athletic events. We have the opportunity to ensure lifesaving AEDs are readily available when and where they are most needed.

We all appreciate the dedication our student athletes show on and off the field. They deserve our support for their commitment to competition, community and cooperation. This is a crucial step, and we must prioritize and protect our student athletes across the state. Having AEDs is a small price to pay to save the lives of students who go beyond their studies and enrich our community schools and campuses.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
**JIMMY
ANDERSON**
47TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Dear Chair Cabral-Guevara and Members of the Senate Committee on Health,

Thank you for holding a public hearing on Senate Bill 349, requiring an AED (or Automatic External Defibrillator) at youth athletic activities operated or sponsored by a public or private school and at athletic events of University of Wisconsin System institutions.

Even though we often think of student athletes as invincible paragons of health and fitness, strenuous physical activity puts them at risk of Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA). Though these life-threatening episodes are thankfully relatively rare, kids die from SCA on the court and on the field every year. SCA is the leading cause of death in young athletes across the U.S., killing one American high school student every two to three days.

Fortunately, we have tools that can save these lives. An Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is a portable, battery-operated medical device that is used to restore normal heartbeat through carefully calculated electric shock. AEDs are extremely effective in these terrifying moments; the Journal of the American College of Cardiology found that, in American schools with AED programs, SCA survival rates increased dramatically - from under 10% to about 70%. Experts in sports medicine have stressed the necessity of taking immediate action to minimize the time between collapse and defibrillation. Every additional minute of delay has been shown to decrease a patient's chance of survival by 10%.

In order to minimize response time and save lives, this bill requires an AED to be present and accessible at all youth athletic activities hosted by public or private schools - as well as at athletic events at University of Wisconsin System institutions. AEDs are equipped with written and visual instructions or prompts, making them easy to use - even for bystanders with no prior experience or training. And in fact, Wisconsin students are already trained to use AEDs - 2015 Wisconsin Act 390 requires school governing bodies to include CPR and AED instruction in all health courses grades 7-12.

In 2019, 16-year-old Waukesha North High School student-athlete Kai Lermer died from Sudden Cardiac Arrest while playing basketball. Kai had an undiagnosed heart condition that wasn't detected during normal physical exams. In the aftermath of this horrible tragedy, Kai's family and Wisconsin legislators on both sides of the aisle came together to pass 2021 AB 82 (now 2021 Wisconsin Act 210), which requires DPI to develop and distribute informational sheets on the risks of SCA to student-athletes and their families, thereby raising awareness and promoting electro-cardiogram testing.

This law is a critical step, and it shows that Wisconsin lawmakers care deeply about protecting the health of student athletes. Now, we have the opportunity to expand upon this success and do even more. We have made great strides in educating and training Wisconsinites to act quickly and effectively to save lives - we just need to make sure AEDs are present and available where they are most needed.

Thank you for hearing testimony in support of SB 349. I look forward to hearing feedback and moving forward to protect Wisconsin students.

Jimmy Anderson
State Representative
47th Assembly District



December 7, 2023

Senate Committee on Health

**Department of Public Instruction Testimony
2023 Senate Bill 349**

Thank you, Chair Cabral-Guevera and members of the committee, for the opportunity to provide testimony for information only on Senate Bill 349 (SB 349). My name is Kevyn Radcliffe, Legislative Liaison for the Department of Public Instruction (DPI).

DPI supports the goal of SB 349 to save lives by having automatic external defibrillators (AED) available at all public and private high school-related athletic events. However, we cannot in good conscience support yet another unfunded mandate for our cash-strapped schools.

Under this bill, school districts and private high schools could incur substantial costs to purchase AED devices, train staff, and develop plans for the use of AEDs at high school athletic activities. To get an idea of the costs to districts and private schools of implementing SB 349, DPI staff researched the cost of purchasing AED machines, training, and related supplies. According to their website, [AED Superstore has a School Package for a ZOLL AED](#) with a storage cabinet and pads for both children and adults for \$2,081. Training costs were between \$446 to \$781. Basic adult replacement pads cost \$67, and pediatric pads cost \$117.

Other vendors sell AEDs and related products at a range of price points; [one example is School Health](#):

- ZOLL Semi & Fully Automatic AEDs: \$2,632 to \$2,976 per AED.
- ZOLL Trainer: \$518 to \$880.
- Cabinets to securely store an AED: \$376.
- Carrying case: \$163.00.
- Battery (requires replacement every 5 years): \$240.
- Pads that can be used on adults or children: \$240.
- Adult-only pads: \$236.
- Child-only pads: \$138.

AEDs require monthly maintenance to ensure that AED batteries are in working order and that components are functional. AED electrodes and pads are not reusable. Pads expire after 2 years due to deterioration of the gel adhesive. Schools will need to have protocols in place for routine maintenance to ensure that the AED machine is ready when needed.

Estimating the cost per high school is difficult because the bill requires an AED at each athletic event. Since schools may have multiple sporting events in a single day at different locations, schools would need to have multiple machines and trained staff at each event.

According to the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) Senior High Handbook, all paid coaches are required to be certified in First Aid, CPR, and AED operations. For schools who participate in the WIAA, presumably their paid coaches could fulfill the staffing requirement. However, for schools who have volunteer coaches or do not participate in the WIAA, they will incur costs for training and staff time at athletic events.

Other challenges to be addressed in implementation include:

- Proper storage from the elements for outdoor events may be unavailable. Rural schools do not have concession stands or press boxes in which AED devices could be stored.
- The availability of AED machines and replacement parts may be in short supply. Wisconsin school nurses have reported difficulty in finding replacement pads and batteries.

DPI would be pleased to change our position to support SB 349 if fully funded. As policymakers, you have options to help address this barrier. Strategies leveraged in the past include creating a statewide purchasing pool or grant program and/or leveraging Cooperative Educational Services Agencies (CESAs) to distribute, train, and maintain the devices within their respective regions. This problem is not without solutions, but the bill as drafted does not present those solutions, leaving our schools open to unfunded liability and yet another mandate without support from this body.

Even as the state sits on billions of dollars of surplus cash, money remains the primary barrier to providing a prompt and effective response to cardiac emergencies at high school athletic events.

If you have questions or would like additional information, please contact Kevyn Radcliffe, Legislative Liaison, at kevyn.radcliffe@dpi.wi.gov or (608) 264-6716.

TO: Senate Health Committee
FROM: Nicole Hudzinski, Government Relations Director, American Heart Association
DATE: December 7, 2023
RE: SB 349, requiring an AED at youth athletic activities

Good morning, Chairwoman Cabral-Guevara and members of the committee. My name is Nicole Hudzinski, and I am the government relations director here in Wisconsin for the American Heart Association. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 349 which requires AEDs at youth athletic activities.

I want to start by thanking Senator Smith and Representative Anderson for introducing this legislation and drawing attention to sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) and the importance of a strong chain of survival.

When talking about cardiac arrest, I like to remind people that cardiac arrest is different than a heart attack. A heart attack occurs when blood flow to the heart is blocked. You can think of it as a plumbing issue. The longer the person goes without treatment, the greater the damage to the heart. Sudden cardiac arrest occurs when the heart malfunctions and stops beating unexpectedly. You can think of it as an electrical issue. Death occurs quickly if the person does not receive immediate CPR.

Cardiac arrest is a medical emergency. What happens in the minutes after someone collapses will determine if they live or die. Every minute without CPR, the chance of survival drops by 10 percent. And ultimately, what the individual needs is in for an automated external defibrillator (AED) to shock their heart back into a normal rhythm.

Before I get into details about what we advocate for, I want to highlight a few important statistics:

- More than 365,000 cardiac arrests occur outside of a hospital each year in the United States, and only 10% survive.
- Specific to youth, it is estimated that there are more than 23,000 children under the age of 18 who experience cardiac arrest outside of a hospital each year in the United States. Almost 40% of these events are sports-related, leaving 60% that are not.
- Nine out of ten cardiac arrest victims who receive a shock from an AED in the first minute live.
- In schools with AEDs, approximately 70% of children survive cardiac arrest— that's 7 times the overall survival rate for children.

With that in mind and thinking specifically about improving survival when cardiac arrest occurs in schools, I'd like to share what we advocate for.

The American Heart Association advocates for every school to have cardiac emergency response plans (CERP) covering both the school day and school sponsored extracurricular activities. A CERP is a written document that establishes specific steps to reduce death from cardiac arrest. It can be stand-alone guidelines or merged with a school's existing medical emergency response plans. It should be posted at key locations throughout the school and practiced regularly. It is also important to work directly with local EMS providers to integrate the CERP into the communities EMS protocols.

Specifically, at a minimum, CERPs should contain the following core elements:

- Establishing a cardiac emergency response team
- Activating the team in response to SCA
- Implementing AED placement and routine maintenance (similar to fire extinguishers protocols)
- Disseminating the plan throughout the school campus
- Maintaining ongoing staff training in CPR and AED use
- Practicing using drills (akin to fire and lockdown drills)
- Integrating local EMS with the plan
- Ongoing and annual review and evaluation of the plan

A common question we get is: Do schools need a CERP if they have an AED? The answer is YES! Having an AED is an important part of an emergency response plan, but it is not enough by itself. A CERP ensures that the AED is regularly maintained and that school responders are trained in emergency response, including CPR and how to use the AED. A CERP also creates a response team, to ensure multiple actions can occur simultaneously— someone calls 911, someone starts CPR, someone goes to get the AED, and someone goes to the door to greet first responders— all time critical actions that need to happen quickly and simultaneously.

Here in Wisconsin, we are fortunate to have an organization that works with schools on implementing CERPs. The organization, called Project ADAM, began in 1999 after the death of Adam Lemel, who was just 17-years-old when he collapsed and died while playing basketball. Adam's parents, and Whitefish Bay residents, teamed up with Children's Wisconsin to create Project ADAM to assist schools and communities in establishing a practiced plan—one that includes the core elements I listed above— to be prepared to respond to cardiac arrest. Project ADAM is an amazing resource available to schools throughout the state.

Before I close, I want to take us back to January 2, 2023. The Buffalo Bills were playing the Cincinnati Bengals when Darmar Hamlin suffered cardiac arrest on live TV. Thankfully, he was surrounded by a team who recognized what was happening and immediately jumped into action. They had the training they needed and knew exactly what to do, quickly. Today, less than a year later, Darmar is back on the field playing football.

Schools are the nucleus for a variety of events in all our communities, and parents and community members are often at school facilities for school plays, concerts and athletic events. It is important schools have a plan in place to address cardiac arrest, both during the school day and at extracurricular activities.



CARDIAC EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS **IN SCHOOLS**

Each year, more than 356,000 cardiac arrests occur outside of a hospital in the U.S., 90% of which are fatal. That's because only about 40% get the immediate help they need before emergency responders arrive.

You do not have to be trained as a first responder to save a life.

What is a CERP?

A Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) is a written document that establishes specific steps to reduce death from cardiac arrest in school settings. It can be stand-alone guidelines or merged with a school's existing medical emergency response plans. It should be posted at key locations throughout the school and practiced regularly.

The safety of students, school staff, and visitors can be enhanced when school CERP teams are trained and empowered to administer lifesaving care until emergency medical services arrive.



Empowering a Nation of Lifesavers™

The American Heart Association is working to turn bystanders into lifesavers, so that in the time of cardiac emergency anyone, anywhere is prepared and empowered to become a vital link in the chain of survival and provide CPR.

THAT MEANS:

- ▶ Ensuring every school and athletic event/facility has a CERP in place.
- ▶ Working directly with local emergency service providers to integrate the CERP into the community's EMS responder protocols.



JOIN THE NATION OF LIFESAVERS™ BY

Visiting yourethecure.org/nationoflifesavers

or

Texting **LIFESAVERS** to 46839

Did You Know?

23,000 CHILDREN

experience cardiac arrest outside of a hospital each year in the U.S.

ONLY 40%

are sports related.

CERPs can **MORE THAN DOUBLE SURVIVAL RATES** from cardiac arrest by empowering people nearby to take action and:

DIAL 911



START CPR



USE AN AED



In schools with AEDs,

70% OF CHILDREN

survive cardiac arrest. That's **7x** the overall survival rate for children.



American
Heart
Association.

Cardiac Emergency Response Plan Schools Checklist

The American Heart Association (AHA) wants all students and educators to learn First Aid, CPR and AED to create the next Generation of Heartsavers® prepared to act in an emergency, putting more qualified lifesavers in our schools and communities.

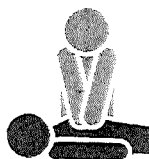
About 9 in 10 cardiac arrest victims who receive a shock from an AED in the first minute live. During cardiac arrest, CPR can double or triple a person's chance of survival.

It is imperative for schools to establish a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP). The following checklist contains the minimum steps to include in your plan:

- Establish a school Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) and Team.
- Share** the CERP at your school site. Ensure the plan is integrated with local emergency medical services, fire and police (if applicable). Post the CERP in key locations throughout the school.
- Implement Automated External Defibrillator (AED) placement and a routine maintenance schedule within the school (similar to fire-extinguisher protocols)
- Schedule and maintain ongoing school faculty and staff training in First Aid CPR AED
- Educate as many people as possible in Hands-Only CPR (which can be used for teens and adults). If feasible, include information on rescue breathing and/or conventional CPR in your schools.
- Practice** the CERP plan using routine drills (similar to fire and lock-down drills)
- Activate** the CERP Team in response to a Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA)
- Review and evaluate the school emergency plan on a consistent annual basis. If an SCA event occurs, debrief immediately post-event to identify opportunities for improvement.
- Download the detailed AHA [CERP](#) implementation plan information



Share



Practice



Activate