

CERP

Implementation Resource Guide

A Comprehensive Guide to Cardiac Emergency
Response Plan Implementation and Resources



American
Heart
Association®



Letter

Great news! We are entering the implementation phase of senate bill 2349, the recently passed Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) legislation for schools. This legislation, which aims to reduce death from cardiac arrest in school and athletic settings, is a significant step forward in our ongoing efforts to save more lives from cardiac arrest.

This landmark legislation, approved by the Mississippi Legislature on April 12, 2024, and signed into law by Governor Reeves on April 19, 2024, represents a monumental milestone in our ongoing efforts to save more lives from cardiac arrest.

The implementation phase began on July 1, 2024. Rest assured, we've curated a series of critical resources to support your school or facility's successful execution of the provisions outlined in the CERP legislation. We are here to guide you every step of the way.

These resources include:

- Implementation Guide
- Implementation Checklist
- Implementation Plan & Protocol
- Implementation Training
- Public Awareness Campaigns & Media Resources

For more detailed information on CERP implementation and how you can get involved, please visit [our website](#) or contact Laken Camp at laken.camp@heart.org or (601) 422-9634.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to create a cardiac emergency response plan in your school. Together, we can achieve the goals set forth by SB 2349 and save lives from cardiac arrest.

With Heart,



Laken Camp
State Government Relations Director
American Heart Association

CARDIAC EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS **IN SCHOOLS**

Cardiac arrest is a leading cause of death in the U.S.



356,000+

CARDIAC ARRESTS

occur outside of a hospital annually in the U.S.



40%

OF PEOPLE

get the immediate help that they need



AMONG CHILDREN

23,000

experience cardiac arrest outside of a hospital

You don't need to be a first responder to save a life

- ▶ CPR, if performed immediately, can double or triple a person's chance of survival.
- ▶ In schools with AEDs, approximately **70% OF CHILDREN SURVIVE** cardiac arrest - **7X** the overall survival rate for children.

What is Cardiac Arrest?

Cardiac arrest occurs when the heart malfunctions and stops beating unexpectedly. In seconds, a person becomes unresponsive and cannot breathe. Death occurs within minutes if the person does not receive treatment. But cardiac arrest can be reversible in some victims if it's treated within a few minutes.



Cardiac arrest is an **"electrical"** problem



CERP

WHAT IS A CARDIAC EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN?

A Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) is a written document that establishes the steps to reduce death from cardiac arrest in any setting – a school, community organization, workplace, or sports facility.

WHY DO WE NEED THEM?

More than 356,000 cardiac arrests occur outside of a hospital annually in the U.S., including 23,000 children under the age of 18. Currently, only about 40% of these people get the immediate help they need before emergency responders arrive.

As a result of the Nation of Lifesavers CERP advocacy, a growing number of states nationwide are moving to better prepare schools to respond to sudden cardiac arrests with the creation of cardiac emergency response plans.

[GET THE CERP IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE](#)

CPR

WHAT IS CPR?

CPR – or Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation – is an emergency lifesaving procedure performed when the heart stops beating. Immediate CPR can double or triple chances of survival after cardiac arrest.

WHY IS CPR IMPORTANT?

Keeping the blood flow active – even partially – extends the opportunity for a successful resuscitation once trained medical staff arrive on site.

AED

WHAT IS AN AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR?

An automated external defibrillator (AED) is a lightweight, portable device. It delivers an electric shock through the chest to the heart when it detects an abnormal rhythm and changes the rhythm back to normal.

[GET THE AED GUIDE](#)

IMPROVING CARDIAC EMERGENCY RESPONSE IN MS SCHOOLS

- Review **SB 2349** [here](#).
- Implementation date: **July 1, 2024**
- This legislation ensures schools have a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) in place, listing specific steps to reduce death from cardiac arrest in school and athletic settings. The safety of students, school staff and visitors can be enhanced with a coordinated, practiced response plan where school CERP teams are trained and empowered to administer lifesaving care until Emergency Medical Services (EMS) arrive. This policy effort aligns with our Nation of Lifesavers™ goal to turn bystanders into lifesavers, so that in the time of cardiac emergency anyone, anywhere is prepared and empowered to perform CPR and become a vital link in the Chain of Survival.



FOR INQUIRIES ABOUT SB 2349:

Laken Camp

State Government Relations Director
American Heart Association
laken.camp@heart.org

TO INQUIRE ABOUT AED AND CPR TRAINING:

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University of Mississippi Medical Center
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Mississippi Fire Academy

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(601) 932-2444

RESOURCES

DOWNLOAD THE IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

It is imperative for schools and sports facilities to establish a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP). Click the appropriate checklist below for the minimum steps to include in your implementation.

[Schools Checklist](#)

[Sports Checklist](#)

PLAN & PROTOCOL RESOURCES

Find direction and detailed guidance for Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) implementation for your community, school, or sports facility.

[For Schools](#)

[For Sports Facilities](#)

FIND CPR & AED TRAINING

Find [First Aid CPR & AED training](#) to support the Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) implementation process.

FIND AED RESOURCES

Find resources to purchase and maintain affordable AEDs for Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) support.

We encourage you to connect with our local community impact staff or contact local organizations in your area that could also meet your needs.



MEDIA RESOURCES

Leverage these plug and play media resources to build awareness and garner coverage for your school's cardiac emergency response plan implementation.

[Sample Letter to the Editor](#)

[Sample Media Alert](#)

[Sample Press Release](#)

[Social Media Templates](#)

[School Newsletter Insert](#)



SAMPLE LTE: CERP IMPLEMENTATION

[Insert personal experience]

Every second counts in a cardiac arrest - the recent passing of SB 2349 is not just a legislative step, but a critical lifeline for Mississippi's schools. This pivotal legislation, enacted on April 19, 2024, is designed to save lives. Consider this: of the 23,000 children who will experience cardiac arrest outside of a hospital, about 40% of these events are sports related. This means that the lives of our students are at stake, and every moment is crucial.

The American Heart Association, a member of the Smart Heart Sports Coalition established by the NFL to advocate for all 50 states to adopt evidence-based policies that will save lives from cardiac arrests outside of a hospital among students, is moving forward to support the legislation's implementation phase. While the passage of this legislation marks a significant milestone in heart health, the effective execution of these new policies will ultimately impact lives.

Now, schools have the opportunity to utilize the resources and guidelines to ensure their cardiac emergency response plans are prepared. Whether in the classroom or on the playing field, the presence of a well-trained faculty and staff can be the difference between life and death in a cardiac emergency.

Immediate CPR can double or triple a person's chance of survival. In schools equipped with AEDs, approximately 70% of children survive cardiac arrest – a staggering 7 times the overall survival rate for children. This is not just a statistic, but a testament to the life-saving potential of our actions.

The implementation phase is where the real change happens. During this crucial period, schools must turn the potential benefits outlined in the law into tangible outcomes. The success of these outcomes will be a measure of the life-saving potential of CERPs. This is why I'm standing with the American Heart Association, advocating for Mississippi's new school policies that have the power to save lives from cardiac arrest.

[CLICK TO DOWNLOAD](#)



MEDIA ALERT

[Insert School District or Host Organization] Hosts Local Press Conference to Kickoff Implementation Phase of Cardiac Emergency Response Plan and AED Legislation

Educators, Advocates, and Legislators embark on the implementation of [insert bill], recently passed CPR and AED legislation to save lives in school.

Who: [Insert School District or Host Organization] highlights the implementation phase of legislation that requires all Mississippi schools to have a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) in place, listing specific steps to reduce death from cardiac arrest in school and athletic settings.

Featured Guests/Speakers:

Name - Title/Organization

Name - Title/Organization

Name - Title/Organization

Name - Title/Organization

What: [Insert State or County] Press Conference

When: Date | Time

Where: Address

Why: Educators, advocates, legislators, and families will convene to kick off the implementation phase of [Bill name & details] for CPR and AED training. This critical legislation was passed on April 12, 2024, to save lives. Of the 23,000 children who will experience cardiac arrest outside of a hospital, about 40% of these events are sports related. Whether in the classroom or on the playing field, having a properly trained faculty and staff in place to quickly, and correctly, respond to a cardiac emergency can save lives. CPR, if performed immediately, can double or triple a person's chance of survival. In schools with AEDs, approximately 70% of children survive cardiac arrest – 7 times the overall survival rate for children.

Media: For media inquiries please contact [insert contact email or phone number].

#

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NEXT STEPS FOR NEW MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATION TO PREPARE SCHOOLS FOR CARDIAC ARREST

[Insert State or County] schools move forward to implement new life-saving policies for cardiac arrest

(CITY, Date] - Schools across the state of (insert State) are preparing for the implementation phase of [Insert Bill Name], recently passed Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) legislation for schools.

This landmark legislation, approved by MS Legislature on April 12, 2024, and signed into law by Governor Reeves on April 19, 2024, represents a significant step forward in our ongoing efforts to save more lives from cardiac arrest. This legislation aims to reduce death from cardiac arrest in school and athletic settings, is a significant step forward in our ongoing efforts to save more lives from cardiac arrest. The implementation phase will begin on July 1, 2024.

Insert School District or Host Organization] will host a local press conference to kick off the implementation phase of SB 2349. The district aims to spread the word on critical resources to support schools or facilities' successful execution of the provisions outlined in the CERP legislation.

Who: Insert Details

What: SB 2349 Implementation Press Conference

When: Insert Details

Where: Insert Details

Resources: For media inquiries, please contact [insert contact email or phone number].

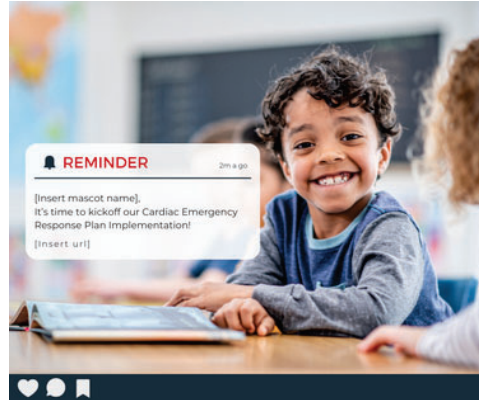
- Implementation Guide
- Implementation Checklist
- Implementation Plan & Protocol
- CERP Training Information

For more detailed information on CERP implementation and how you can get involved, please visit [Website URL].

For Media Inquiries: [Insert contact name – email – phone number]

[CLICK TO DOWNLOAD](#)

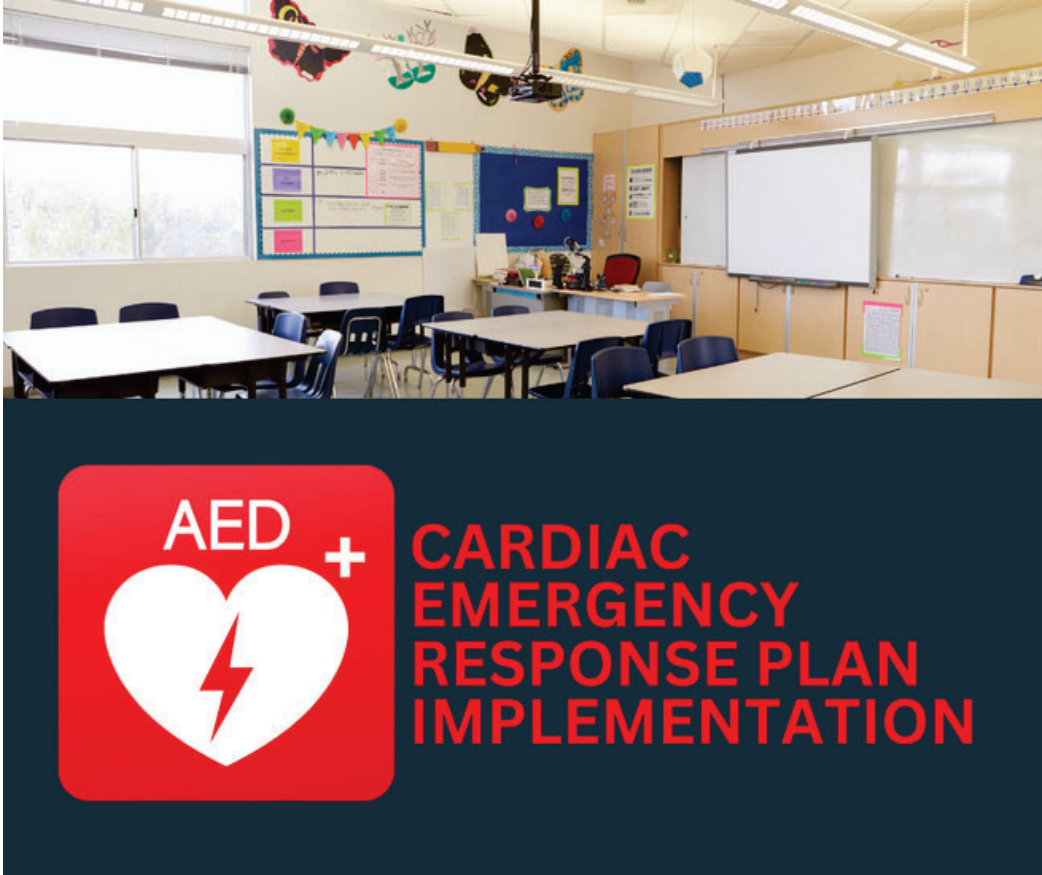
SOCIAL MEDIA SAMPLES



[CLICK TO CUSTOMIZE IMAGES](#)

[DOWNLOAD RECOMMENDED CAPTIONS](#)

SAMPLE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Great news, [insert mascot or school name],

We are entering the implementation phase of SB 2349, the recently passed Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) legislation for schools by our state legislature.

This legislation, backed by advocacy efforts of the American Heart Association, aims to reduce death from cardiac arrest in school and athletic settings, is a significant step forward in our ongoing efforts to save more lives from cardiac arrest.

The implementation phase will begin on July 1, 2024. We will follow the recommended guidelines for a safe and effective implementation phase. Learn more at [insert url].

[CLICK TO CUSTOMIZE IMAGE](#)

[CLICK TO DOWNLOAD COPY](#)

A Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) is a written document that establishes the specific steps to reduce death from cardiac arrest in any setting – be it a school, community organization, workplace, or sports facility. The following guidance will help organizations create, share, practice, activate, and evaluate a cardiac emergency response plan.

1 Create a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan for Your School

All schools and sports facilities should establish a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP). Learn about sudden cardiac arrest, CERPS, and other resources available to guide you. Then, identify the members of the Cardiac Emergency Response Team and start drafting the CERP based on your school's resources and needs.

Learn about sudden cardiac arrest and CERPs.

- Learn about sudden cardiac arrest and CPR at [Heart.org/NationofLifesavers](https://www.heart.org/NationofLifesavers)
- Learn about CERPs at [Heart.org/CERP](https://www.heart.org/CERP)

Review the CERP Guidance

- [For schools](#)
- [For sports facilities](#)

Understand your local resources and organizations that can support your organizational efforts to prepare for and respond to an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest. Local resources can include the following:

- Community organizations, such as local offices of the [American Heart Association](#) or [Project Adam](#).
- Emergency Medical Responders such as your local fire department.
- Local government, such as local health department or elected officials.

Identify the members of the Cardiac Emergency Response Team (CERT). The CERT is a group of staff members who have current CPR and AED training and are designated to respond to and provide basic life support during a cardiac emergency. The following resources can help you organize your team.

- [Developing Cardiac Emergency Response Team](#)
- [CERP Team Roster](#)
- [Sample Timeline for CERP Action Steps](#)

Draft your Cardiac Emergency Response Plan based on the following evidence-based guidance and be familiar with resources to help you draft your plan.

- [For schools](#)
- [For sports facilities](#)
- [CERP Resources by Evidence-based Core Element](#)



Cardiac Emergency Response Plan Implementation Guide

2

Share your Cardiac Emergency Response Plan

Share the CERP at your site. Ensure the plan is integrated with local emergency medical services, fire, and police (if applicable). Post the CERP in key locations throughout the site.

- **Share** the plan with all staff, volunteers (if applicable), organizations using the facility, and other people that are frequently in the location. Post it broadly in high traffic, widely accessible places.
- **Distribute** the cardiac emergency response plan annually and when updates are made.
- **Review** the [CERP Resources](#): Communication of CERP.

3

Practice your Cardiac Emergency Response Plan

Practice the CERP plan using routine drills (like fire and lock-down drills). Doing regular AED drills is the best way to test your Cardiac Emergency Response Plan, your communication system and your response team's readiness. Review the CERP Drill and Evaluation template for [schools](#).

4

Activate your Cardiac Emergency Response Plan

Activate the CERP Team in response to a sudden cardiac event. Remember that the protocol for responding to a cardiac emergency should be posted and readily available.

- [Cardiac Emergency Response Protocol](#)

5

Elevate your Cardiac Emergency Response Plan

- Evaluate your plan to improve the response process and documentation. Review the [CERP Resources](#): Annual Review and Evaluation of the Plan.



CARDIAC EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS **IN SCHOOLS**

Frequently Asked Questions

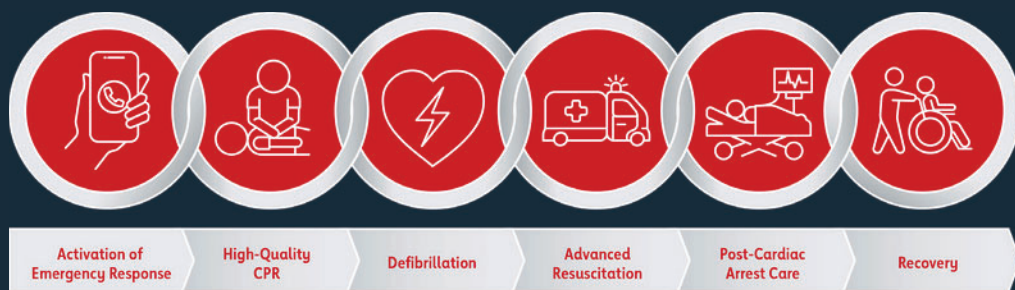
Definitions

CERP

Cardiac Emergency Response Plan - a written document that establishes specific steps to reduce death from cardiac arrest in school settings.

CHAIN OF SURVIVAL

A useful metaphor for the elements of the Emergency Cardiac Care systems concept:



EMS

Emergency Medical Services

AED

Automated External Defibrillator - A lightweight, portable device that delivers an electric shock through the chest to the heart. The shock can potentially stop an irregular heartbeat (arrhythmia) and allow a normal rhythm to resume following sudden cardiac arrest.

WHAT IS A CERP AND HOW IS IT USED?

A 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. It is also important to work directly with local emergency service providers to integrate the CERP into the community's EMS responder protocols.

WHY IS A CERP IMPORTANT?

The safety of students, school staff, and visitors can be enhanced when CERPs are in place and school teams are trained and empowered to administer lifesaving care until emergency medical services arrive. More than 356,000 cardiac arrests occur outside of a hospital annually in the U.S.,¹ and nearly 90% of them are fatal.² A CERP can increase survival rates from cardiac arrest by 50% or more by enabling a trained lay-responder team to take action.³

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN A CERP?

CERPs should include the following steps:

- ▶ Develop a cardiac emergency response team
- ▶ Activate the cardiac emergency response team during an identified cardiac emergency
- ▶ Place and maintain AEDs
- ▶ Communicating the plan throughout the campus
- ▶ Train in CPR and AED use
- ▶ Integrate local EMS with the school or athletic event/facility
- ▶ Review and evaluate the plan each year

AHA has developed three CERP checklists for general workplace and community organizations, schools, and sports facilities. Download the checklist that works best for your organization and establish the specific steps to reduce death from cardiac arrest in any setting.

WHY ARE CERPS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT FOR SCHOOLS AND SPORTS FACILITIES/EVENTS?

A cardiac event can happen anywhere, and schools are a nucleus for a variety of events in all communities. Shared use agreements allow communities to access schools to vote, exercise, garden, cook, host community meetings, and more. In addition to shared use agreements, parents and community members are often at school facilities for school plays, concerts, and athletic events.

With about 49.5 million students enrolled in U.S. public schools in pre-K to grade 12,⁴ about 3 million teachers in the public school system,⁵ and numerous staff, it is important for school facilities to have a plan in place to address cardiac arrest. 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 U.S.⁶ Only 40% are sports related.⁷ AHA recommends implementing emergency response plans for cardiac and other medical events in all schools. In schools with AEDs, approximately 70% of children survive cardiac arrest — seven times the overall survival rate for children.

WHAT'S THE COST OF AN AED?

An AED can range in cost from \$1,200 to \$3,000 depending on the manufacturer. This cost is for the AED itself; the maintenance plan is an additional cost. A maintenance plan is recommended to help ensure the AED is ready for use in case of an emergency. There are ways to lower the cost — school districts can buy in bulk, or they can be donated. The AED has evolved

and is continuing to evolve from its beginnings as a heavy, expensive piece of hospital equipment designed for medical professionals to a more portable, lower-cost, and user-friendly device intended for laypeople.

RESOURCES TO HELP PAY FOR CERPS IN SCHOOLS

CPR and AED training, as well as AED placement and maintenance, will have a cost associated with implementation. Working with state agencies such as the Department of Education or Department of Health will help identify existing grants that could be utilized to support implementation. Appropriations should also be made available to support the development, implementation, and evaluation of CERPs in schools. CERPs should still be in effect where related appropriations are lacking; in these cases, indirect sources of community or EMS-related support could be utilized.

DO SCHOOLS NEED A CERP IF THEY HAVE AN AED?

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 ensures the plan is coordinated with local EMS and is reviewed and updated each year.

WHAT IF SCHOOLS ALREADY HAVE SOME KIND OF EMERGENCY PLAN IN PLACE?

CERPs can be stand-alone guidelines or merged with a school's existing medical emergency response plans. The CERP can be used by school personnel, healthcare providers, boards of education and school safety advocates to better prepare for cardiac arrest.

WHO SHOULD BE TRAINED IN CPR AND AED USE?

Ideally, all school staff should be trained in first-aid, CPR and AED use. However, at the very least, we are asking that all coaches become trained, as well as any additional personnel identified by the emergency response plan. This could be any additional school staff or administrators.

HOW DO CERPS FIT WITHIN THE AHA NATION OF LIFESAVERS™ CAMPAIGN?

Establishing CERPs in all schools and sports facilities/events aligns with AHA's Nation of Lifesavers™ movement to double survival rate from cardiac arrest by 2030. AHA is committed to turning a nation of bystanders into a Nation of Lifesavers™. The long-term goal is to ensure that in the face of a cardiac emergency, anyone, anywhere is prepared and empowered to perform CPR and become a vital link in the Chain of Survival.

Sources

1 Benjamin EJ, Virani SS, Callaway CW, Chamberlain AM, Chang AR, Cheng S, Chiuve SE, Cushman M, Delling FN, Deo R, de Ferranti SD. Heart disease and stroke statistics—2018 update: a report from the American Heart Association. *Circulation*. 2018 Mar 20;137(12):e67-492. Table 16-1.

2 Virani SS, Alonso A, Benjamin EJ, et al. Heart disease and stroke statistics—2020 update: a report from the American Heart Association. *Circulation*. 2020 Mar 3;E139-596.

3 Rose et al. Cardiac Emergency Response Planning for Schools: A Policy Statement. *NASN School Nurse*. 2016 31(5), 263-270. doi: 10.1177/1942602X16655839.

4 Enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools, by level, grade, and state or jurisdiction: Fall 2021. National Center for Educational Statistics. Table 203.40.

5 Public and private elementary and secondary teachers, enrollment, pupil/teacher ratios, and new teacher hires: Selected years, fall 1955 through fall 2031. National Center for Educational Statistics. Table 208.20.

6 Okubo, M., Chan, H. K., Callaway, C. W., Mann, N. C., & Wang, H. E. (2020). Characteristics of paediatric out-of-hospital cardiac arrest in the United States. *Resuscitation*, 153, 227–233. doi.org/10.1016/j.resuscitation.2020.04.023.

7 Jayaraman R, Reinier K, Nair S, Aro AL, Uy-Evanado A, Rusinaru C, Stecker EC, Gunson K, Jui J, Chugh SS. Risk factors of sudden cardiac death in the young: multiple-year community-wide assessment. *Circulation*. 2018; 137:1561–1570. doi: 10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.117.031262.



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