

Dear Appropriations Committee Members,

Please accept this as my written testimony requesting the inclusion of \$150,000 in the FY2026 budget to provide a grant program for Vermont schools most in need of resources to help implement cardiac emergency response plans. As a mother of a child born with a CHD, this is very important to my family. I also started a non-profit and have shared this information with the other parents in our group who feel the same and hopefully can communicate to you as well.

Though more than 200 Vermont schools have AEDs, Vermont's cardiac arrest survival rate is among the lowest in the nation at 7.5%. We need to do more. Additional resources could help boost survival rates by ensuring schools can implement cardiac emergency response plans by having trained lay-responders, especially in rural areas, where EMS response times may be challenged. The funding could be used for AEDs and CPR training.

These cardiac emergency response plans can more than double survival rates. Whether it be a student, athlete, coach or visitor, anyone who has a cardiac arrest at Vermont schools would have a better outcome if lay-responders acted quickly to save their life while rescue is on the way.

There have been 24 cardiac arrests at Vermont schools in the last ten years including at the Milton vs. Barre basketball game on Jan. 3rd at Spaulding where 16 year-old [Milton sophomore Dominic Barcomb was saved](#) due to the cardiac emergency plan, training and quick response of Spaulding's staff and coaches. His life was saved because the school was prepared.

Please help all schools to be prepared. This small investment could literally mean the difference between life and death.

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