

## H.247 Testimony

I appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of H.247 and implementing Cardiac Emergency Response Plans in schools. I am a school nurse at Middlebury Union High School and the Lead Nurse in the Addison Central School District. When I first became aware of this pending legislation and began exploring what a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan would entail, it was one of those moments when I realized that this is so important to have in schools and I wish I had implemented them a long time ago. When I began working in ACSD, only some of our schools had an AED in the building. We have since added one to every school and district building including satellite campuses and our central office. Having an AED available is essential, but going the extra step to have a comprehensive plan and coordinated response to cardiac emergencies will assure the best outcome in the event of a cardiac emergency for a student, staff or visitor in our schools and at sporting events.

Our ACSD schools are in the process of creating and implementing these plans because this is so important. At the beginning of this school year, our Middlebury Union High School community unfortunately lost a beloved teacher to a cardiac related death. This did not occur at school, but it easily could have and is a harsh reminder that cardiac emergencies can happen at any time and we need to be prepared. Just having AEDs in our buildings is not enough. Just having a handful of staff trained in CPR in our buildings is not enough. Many smaller Vermont schools also do not have a school nurse in the building every day as the nurse may be shared among several schools. Not having a school nurse as a first responder and someone to coordinate a response to cardiac emergencies makes having a thorough plan that much more important. You have likely heard the statistics and the importance of response times, administering CPR and utilizing an AED in the outcome of a cardiac emergency. The comprehensive nature of the Cardiac Emergency Response Plan and the components that would be required would help to assure the best outcomes in the event of a cardiac emergency.

Without hesitation, I support this legislation and strongly recommend the passing of this bill that would assure schools have an effective plan in place to protect those in the building in the event of an emergency and at sporting events. I believe it is also important to equitably support schools by providing funding for AEDs, their maintenance and the cost of having members of a Cardiac Response Team remain updated on CPR certification.

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