

1 HB649  
2 168488-1  
3 By Representative Johnson (R)  
4 RFD: Education Policy  
5 First Read: 12-MAY-15

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8 SYNOPSIS: There is no existing law that requires  
9 school officials to provide training to coaches or  
10 provide information to students and parents about  
11 the risks of sudden cardiac arrest while  
12 participating in athletic activities.

13 This bill would require school coaches to  
14 take a sudden cardiac arrest training course and  
15 provide penalties for violations.

16 This bill would require schools to provide  
17 information to students and parents about sudden  
18 cardiac arrest.

19 This bill would also provide procedures in  
20 the event a student exhibits symptoms of sudden  
21 cardiac arrest while participating in school  
22 athletic activities.

23  
24 A BILL  
25 TO BE ENTITLED  
26 AN ACT  
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1           Relating to sudden cardiac arrest; to require  
2 schools to provide information and training to school coaches,  
3 students, parents, and other officials about the risks of  
4 sudden cardiac arrest while participating in athletic  
5 activities.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

7           Section 1. (a) This section shall be known and may  
8 be cited as the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act in School  
9 Sports.

10           (b) As used in this section, athletic activity  
11 includes all of the following:

12           (1) Interscholastic athletics.

13           (2) An athletic contest or competition, other than  
14 interscholastic athletics, that is sponsored by or associated  
15 with a school, including cheerleading, and sports activities  
16 sponsored by school-affiliated organizations.

17           (3) Noncompetitive cheerleading that is sponsored by  
18 or associated with a school.

19           (4) Practices, interschool practices, and scrimmages  
20 for all of the activities listed above.

21           (c) (1) The State Department of Education shall  
22 develop and post on its publicly accessible Internet website  
23 guidelines and other relevant materials to inform and educate  
24 students participating in or desiring to participate in an  
25 athletic activity, their parents or legal guardians, and their  
26 coaches about the nature and warning signs of sudden cardiac  
27 arrest, including the risks associated with continuing to play

1 or practice after experiencing the following symptoms:  
2 Fainting or seizures during exercise, unexplained shortness of  
3 breath, chest pains, dizziness, racing heart rate, or extreme  
4 fatigue.

5 (2) In developing guidelines and materials, the  
6 State Department of Education may use, at no cost to the  
7 state, an educational video created by Simon's Fund for the  
8 purpose of educating coaches about sudden cardiac arrest.

9 (3) Each school year and prior to participation in  
10 an athletic activity, a student participating in or desiring  
11 to participate in an athletic activity and the student's  
12 parent or legal guardian shall sign and return to the  
13 student's school an acknowledgment of receipt and review of  
14 the sudden cardiac arrest symptoms and warning signs  
15 information sheet developed under this subsection.

16 (d) A school may hold an informational meeting prior  
17 to the start of each athletic season for all ages of  
18 competitors regarding the symptoms and warning signs of sudden  
19 cardiac arrest. In addition to students, parents, coaches, and  
20 other school officials, informational meetings may include  
21 physicians, pediatric cardiologists, and athletic trainers.

22 (e) (1) A student who faints while participating in  
23 or immediately following an athletic activity, or who is known  
24 to have fainted while participating in or immediately  
25 following an athletic activity, shall be removed from  
26 participating at that time by the athletic director, coach, or  
27 athletic trainer.

1           (2) A student who exhibits any of the other symptoms  
2 set forth in subsection (c) during an athletic activity may be  
3 removed from participating by the athletic trainer, if the  
4 athletic trainer reasonably believes that the symptoms are  
5 cardiac related. In the absence of an athletic trainer,  
6 coaches who observe any of these symptoms shall notify the  
7 parent or legal guardian so that the parent or guardian can  
8 determine what treatment, if any, the student should seek.

9           (3) A student who is removed from play under this  
10 subsection may not be permitted to return to participation in  
11 the athletic activity until the student is evaluated and  
12 cleared for return to participation in writing by an  
13 appropriate medical professional.

14           (f) At least annually, each coach of an athletic  
15 activity shall complete a sudden cardiac arrest training  
16 course, such as the course provided by Simon's Fund or by  
17 another provider approved by the State Department of  
18 Education. A coach may not perform any coaching activities  
19 unless the coach has completed the training course required  
20 under this subsection during the previous 12-month period.

21           (g) Each local board of education shall establish  
22 the following minimum penalties for violating subsection (f):

23           (1) For a first violation, suspension from coaching  
24 any athletic activity for the remainder of the season.

25           (2) For a second violation, suspension from coaching  
26 any athletic activity for the remainder of the season and for  
27 the next season.

1                   (3) For a third violation, permanent suspension from  
2 coaching any athletic activity.

3                   (h) A coach shall be immune from civil liability for  
4 his or her actions or inactions under this section unless the  
5 coach is found to have acted in a grossly negligent or  
6 reckless manner.

7                   (i) The sponsors of other youth athletic activities,  
8 including, but not limited to, club-sponsored teams are  
9 encouraged to follow the guidance stated in this section.

10                   Section 2. This act shall become effective August 1,  
11 2016.