
Detailed Fiscal Analysis

Ohio departments of Health and Education responsibilities

The bill requires that the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) develop and post on their respective websites guidelines and other relevant materials on sudden cardiac arrest. In doing so, ODH and ODE must consult with the Ohio chapter of the American College of Cardiology and with an organization like the Ohio High School Athletic Association that regulates and conducts interscholastic athletic events. Information about sudden cardiac arrest and treatment is readily available on the websites for organizations like Parent Heart Watch, Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndromes Foundation, and the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation.¹ The bill specifically permits ODH and ODE to use these existing materials. ODH must also approve a sudden cardiac arrest training course offered by an outside entity. Because of the availability of these and possibly other free resources, ODH and ODE will likely incur only minimal administrative costs in meeting the bill's requirements.

Participation in athletic activities

The bill prohibits public and nonpublic schools as well as youth sports organizations from permitting a student to participate in athletic activities until the student submits a form verifying receipt of information about the nature and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest developed by ODH and ODE. School districts may incur a minimal increase in administrative costs related to printing, distributing, and filing these forms.

The bill allows informational meetings about the symptoms and signs of sudden cardiac arrest before the start of each season in a school. It also prohibits a student from participating in an athletic activity if the student's close biological relative had previously experienced a sudden cardiac arrest or if the student is known to have exhibited syncope (a medical term indicating a brief loss of consciousness due to a drop in blood pressure) or fainting unless, in both cases, the student has been cleared for participation by a physician.

A coach in an interscholastic event or a coach of a youth sports organization must remove a student from practice or competition if the student exhibits syncope or fainting and may not allow the student to return until assessed and cleared by a physician or other approved health care provider. School districts may incur a minimal increase in administrative costs for developing and implementing penalties for coaches who violate the provisions in the bill.

¹ www.parentheartwatch.org, www.sads.org, and www.sca-aware.org.

The bill states that employees and volunteers, including coaches, of school districts, community schools, STEM schools, and youth sports organizations are not liable for civil damages related to assessing sudden cardiac arrest, clearing students for participation in athletics, and deciding whether to remove a student athlete from practice or competition for a sudden cardiac arrest, unless an act or omission constitutes willful or wanton misconduct.

Training course for coaches

The bill requires the annual completion of a sudden cardiac arrest training course before an individual can coach an athletic activity. The bill does not state who will pay for this training, but there is a free online educational program on sudden cardiac arrest called CardiacWise.² Coaches are already obligated to meet a number of training requirements, including courses on cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), first aid, and concussions as part of the curriculum required by the State Board of Education to obtain a pupil-activity permit to coach interscholastic athletics.

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² The fifteen-minute course is offered on Sports Safety International's website: <http://www.sportsafetyinternational.org/cardiacwise/>.