

House Bill 743

By: Representatives Clark of the 98th, Chandler of the 105th, Glanton of the 75th, Cooper of the 43rd, and Peake of the 141st

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 15 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia
2 Annotated, relating to miscellaneous provisions under the "Quality Basic Education Act,"
3 so as to provide for guidelines and other relevant materials to inform students participating
4 in interscholastic athletic activities about the nature and warning signs of sudden cardiac
5 arrest; to provide for definitions; to provide for informational meetings; to provide for
6 removal from an athletic activity under certain circumstances and to establish return to play
7 policies; to require annual review by coaches; to provide for limited liability; to provide a
8 short title; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

10 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 1.**

11 This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Jeremy Nelson and Nick Blakely Sudden
12 Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act."

13 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 2.**

14 Part 15 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
15 relating to miscellaneous provisions under the "Quality Basic Education Act," is amended
16 by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

17 "20-2-324.4.

18 (a) As used in this Code section, the term:

19 (1) 'Interscholastic athletic activity' means interscholastic athletics and practices,
20 interschool practices, and scrimmages related to interscholastic athletics.

21 (2) 'School' means a public or private school in this state, including all charter schools.

22 (b)(1) The Department of Education shall develop and post on its publicly accessible
23 website guidelines and other relevant materials to inform and educate students
24 participating in or desiring to participate in an interscholastic athletic activity, their
25 parents or guardians, and coaches about the nature and warning signs of sudden cardiac

26 arrest, including the risks associated with continuing to play or practice after experiencing
27 the following symptoms: fainting or seizures during exercise, unexplained shortness of
28 breath, chest pains, dizziness, racing heart rate, or extreme fatigue. In developing the
29 guidelines and materials about the nature and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest, the
30 Department of Education may utilize educational videos available at no cost to the state
31 for the purpose of educating coaches about sudden cardiac arrest.

32 (2) A student participating in or desiring to participate in an interscholastic athletic
33 activity and the student's parent or guardian shall, each school year and prior to
34 participation by the student in an interscholastic athletic activity, sign and return to the
35 student's school an acknowledgment of receipt and review of the sudden cardiac arrest
36 symptoms and warning signs.

37 (c) A school shall hold an informational meeting prior to the start of each athletic season
38 for all ages of competitors regarding the symptoms and warning signs of sudden cardiac
39 arrest. At such informational meeting, an information sheet on sudden cardiac arrest
40 symptoms and warning signs shall be provided to each parent or guardian. In addition to
41 students, parents or guardians, coaches, and other school officials, such informational
42 meetings may include physicians, pediatric cardiologists, and athletic trainers.

43 (d)(1) A student who passes out or faints while participating in, or immediately
44 following, an interscholastic athletic activity, or who is known to have passed out or
45 fainted while participating in or immediately following an interscholastic athletic activity,
46 shall be removed from participation in the interscholastic athletic activity at that time by
47 the athletic director, coach, or athletic trainer.

48 (2) A student who exhibits any of the other symptoms set forth in paragraph (1) of
49 subsection (b) of this Code section while participating in, or immediately following, an
50 interscholastic athletic activity may be removed from participation in the interscholastic
51 athletic activity by an athletic trainer, if the athletic trainer reasonably believes that such
52 symptoms are cardiac related. In the absence of an athletic trainer, coaches who observe
53 any of the other symptoms set forth in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of this Code
54 section may notify the parents or guardians of the student so that the parents or guardians
55 can determine what treatment, if any, the student should seek.

56 (3) A student who is removed from participation in an interscholastic athletic activity
57 pursuant to this subsection shall not be permitted to return to participation in an
58 interscholastic athletic activity until the student is evaluated and cleared for return to
59 participation in writing by an appropriate health care provider.

60 (e)(1) Once each school year, each coach of an interscholastic athletic activity shall
61 review the guidelines and relevant materials or view an educational video approved by

62 the Department of Education pursuant to paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of this Code
63 section.
64 (2) A coach shall not be eligible to coach an interscholastic athletic activity until he or
65 she completes the requirements contained in this subsection.
66 (f) No coach shall be liable for his or her actions or inactions under this Code section
67 unless he or she is found to have acted in a grossly negligent or reckless manner.
68 (g) The sponsors of youth athletic activities, as defined in paragraph (4) of subsection (a)
69 of Code Section 20-2-324.1, are encouraged to implement the provisions of this Code
70 section."

71 **SECTION 2.**

72 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.