

Senate Bill 60

By: Senators Martin of the 9th, Hufstetler of the 52nd, Albers of the 56th, Miller of the 49th, Kennedy of the 18th and others

**AS PASSED SENATE**

**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 high school students  
 4 participating in interscholastic athletic activities about the nature and warning signs of  
 5 sudden cardiac arrest; to provide for definitions; to provide for informational meetings; to  
 6 provide for removal from an athletic activity under certain circumstances and to establish  
 7 return to play policies; to require annual review by coaches; to provide for limited liability;  
 8 to provide a short title; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other  
 9 purposes.

10 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:**

11 **SECTION 1.**

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

14 **SECTION 2.**

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

18 "20-2-324.4.

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

20 (1) 'Athletic association' means any association of schools or any other similar  
 21 organization which acts as an organizing, sanctioning, scheduling, or rule-making body  
 22 for interscholastic athletic events in which public high schools in this state participate.

23 (2) 'Health care provider' means a licensed physician or another licensed individual under  
 24 the supervision of a licensed physician, such as a nurse practitioner, physician assistant,  
 25 or certified athletic trainer, who has received training on the nature and warning signs of  
 26 sudden cardiac arrest.

27 (3) 'Interscholastic athletic activity' means interscholastic athletics and practices,  
28 interschool practices, and scrimmages related to interscholastic athletics.

29 (4) 'School' means a public or private high school in this state, including all charter  
30 schools.

31 (5) 'Student' means a student in grades nine through 12.

32 (b) The Department of Education shall develop and post on its publicly accessible website  
33 guidelines and other relevant materials to inform and educate students participating in or  
34 desiring to participate in an interscholastic athletic activity, their parents or guardians, and  
35 coaches about the nature and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest, including the risks  
36 associated with continuing to play or practice after experiencing the following symptoms:  
37 fainting or seizures during exercise, unexplained shortness of breath, chest pains, dizziness,  
38 racing heart rate, or extreme fatigue. In developing the guidelines and materials about the  
39 nature and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest, the Department of Education may utilize  
40 educational videos available at no cost to the state for the purpose of educating coaches  
41 about sudden cardiac arrest. In the event that an athletic association in this state provides  
42 such guidelines and relevant materials on its website, the Department of Education shall  
43 not be required to duplicate such materials and shall be deemed to have met the provisions  
44 of this subsection.

45 (c) A school shall hold an informational meeting twice per year regarding the symptoms  
46 and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest. At such informational meeting, an information  
47 sheet on sudden cardiac arrest symptoms and warning signs shall be provided to each  
48 student's parent or guardian. In addition to students, parents or guardians, coaches, and  
49 other school officials, such informational meetings may include physicians, pediatric  
50 cardiologists, and athletic trainers.

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

56 (2) A student who exhibits any of the other symptoms set forth in subsection (b) of this  
57 Code section while participating in, or immediately following, an interscholastic athletic  
58 activity may be removed from participation in the interscholastic athletic activity by an  
59 athletic trainer, if the athletic trainer reasonably believes that such symptoms are cardiac  
60 related. In the absence of an athletic trainer, coaches who observe any of the other  
61 symptoms set forth in subsection (b) of this Code section may notify the parents or  
62 guardians of such student so that the parents or guardians can determine what treatment,  
63 if any, such student should seek.

64 (3) A student who is removed from participation in an interscholastic athletic activity  
65 pursuant to this subsection shall not be permitted to return to participation in an  
66 interscholastic athletic activity until such student is evaluated and cleared for return to  
67 participation in writing by a health care provider.

68 (e)(1) Once each school year, each coach of an interscholastic athletic activity shall  
69 review the guidelines and relevant materials and view an educational video approved by  
70 the Department of Education pursuant to subsection (b) of this Code section, or as  
71 provided by an athletic association.

72 (2) A coach shall not be eligible to coach an interscholastic athletic activity until he or  
73 she completes the requirements contained in this subsection.

74 (f) This Code section shall not create any liability for, or create a cause of action against,  
75 a local board of education, the governing body of a nonpublic school, or the governing  
76 body of a charter school or the officers, employees, or volunteers of any such entities for  
77 any act or omission to act related to the removal or nonremoval of a student participating  
78 in an interscholastic athletic activity pursuant to this Code section; provided, however, this  
79 subsection shall not include health care providers unless they are acting in a volunteer  
80 capacity.

81 (g) The sponsors of youth athletic activities, as defined in paragraph (4) of subsection (a)  
82 of Code Section 20-2-324.1, are encouraged to implement the provisions of this Code  
83 section."

84 **SECTION 3.**

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