

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

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

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

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

28 (4) 'School' means a public or private school in this state, including all charter schools
29 which includes one or more grades from grades six through 12.

30 (5) 'Student' means a student in grades six through 12.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

83 **SECTION 3.**

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