

**SENATE . . . . . No.**

---

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

**Mark C. Montigny**

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:*

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying bill:

**An Act Relative to Medical Emergency Response Plans for Schools.**

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Mark C. Montigny

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Second Bristol and Plymouth

# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Nine

## AN ACT RELATIVE TO MEDICAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS FOR SCHOOLS.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 **SECTION 1.** Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the department of  
2 elementary and secondary education shall, in consultation with the department of public health,  
3 develop a Medical Emergency Response Plan initiative in order to promote best practices and  
4 encourage schools to develop programs that reduce the incidence of life-threatening emergency  
5 and promote efficient responses to such emergencies. There is hereby established a need for  
6 medical emergency response plan initiative for all public schools in the Commonwealth. School  
7 nurses, athletic trainers, and teachers are often required to provide emergency care during the  
8 school day and for extracurricular activities, including sports. School medical emergencies can  
9 involve students or adults. All schools have adult faculty and staff, and most schools host large  
10 numbers of adults during extracurricular activities including but not limited to sports events,  
11 drama productions, and community meetings.

12

13 Each year, more than one third of schools may have an emergency that involves an adult and  
14 requires activation of the EMS system. In children and young adults, injuries cause more  
15 childhood deaths than all other diseases combined. Because injuries are the most common life-  
16 threatening emergencies encountered in children and adolescents in or out of schools, teachers,  
17 school nurses and physicians, and athletic trainers should know the general principles of first aid  
18 including, but not limited to, how to ensure scene safety and assess responsiveness, how to use  
19 personal protective equipment when in contact with blood or other body fluids, when and how to  
20 phone the EMS system, and when it is acceptable to move a victim. In addition, first aid rescuers  
21 must be able to control bleeding, recognize and treat shock, immobilize the spine, warm  
22 hypothermia victims, cool heatstroke victims, detect and treat hypoglycemia, support the airway,

23 and provide CPR and use an AED when needed. School nurses, teachers, athletic trainers,  
24 coaches, and staff are responsible for the physical well-being of a large portion of the nation's  
25 children for many hours each day.

26

27 Schools now employ fewer nurses, and school nurses often rotate between schools, so some  
28 schools are without professional medical coverage for hours or days every week. Much of the  
29 responsibility for the physical care of students during a typical school day now rests with  
30 teachers, athletic trainers, coaches, and staff.

31

32 **SECTION 2:** The goal of the Medical Emergency Response Plan for Schools initiative is to  
33 encourage every school to develop a program that reduces the incidence of life-threatening  
34 emergencies and maximizes the chances of intact survival from an emergency. Such a program  
35 will have the potential to save the greatest number of lives with the most efficient use of school  
36 equipment and personnel. The initiative shall include, but not be limited to, the following core  
37 elements:

38

39 1. *Effective and efficient communication throughout the school campus:* Establish a rapid  
40 communication system linking all parts of the school campus, including outdoor facilities and  
41 practice fields, to the EMS system. Establish protocols to clarify when the EMS system and other  
42 emergency contact people should be called. Determine the time required for EMS response to  
43 any location on campus and establish a method to efficiently direct EMS personnel to any  
44 location on campus. Create a list of important contact people and phone numbers with a protocol  
45 to indicate when each person should be called. Include names of experts to help with post-event  
46 support.

47

48 2. *Coordinated and practiced response plan:* Develop a response plan for all medical  
49 emergencies in consultation with the school nurse, the school or school athletic team physicians,  
50 athletic trainers, and the local EMS agency, as appropriate. EMS and emergency dispatchers (9-  
51 1-1 centers) should be made aware of the type of rescue equipment available at the school and its  
52 location. Practice the response sequence at the beginning of each school year and periodically  
53 throughout the year, and evaluate and modify it as needed.

54

55 3. *Risk reduction:* Prevent injuries through safety precautions in classrooms and on the  
56 playground. Identify students, faculty, and staff with medical conditions that place them at risk

57 for development of life-threatening conditions, and train and equip personnel to provide the  
58 appropriate response for those conditions.

59

60 4. *Training and equipment for first aid and CPR:* Ensure that many teachers are trained as CPR  
61 and first aid instructors. Train school staff and graduating high school students in CPR. Teachers  
62 and staff trained in first aid should, at a minimum, be equipped and able to give first aid for life-  
63 threatening emergencies until EMS rescuers arrive.

64

65 5. *Implementation of a lay rescuer AED program in schools with an established need:* Incentives  
66 for the purchase of automatic external defibrillators by school district and standards for the  
67 implementation of a school-based automatic external defibrillator program that utilizes trained  
68 school staff and volunteers and that is coordinated, to the maximum extent possible, with  
69 existing public access defibrillation programs established pursuant to section 12V1/2 of chapter  
70 112 of the General Laws.

71

72 A medical emergency response plan must start with development of a good system of  
73 communication. It also requires development and coordination of a planned and practiced  
74 response, risk reduction, and training and equipment.

75

76 **SECTION 3:** Each school board shall ensure that every school that it supervises shall develop a  
77 written school crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plan, consistent  
78 with the definition provided in this section and submit the plans to the Department of Elementary  
79 and Secondary Education. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall (i)  
80 provide technical assistance to the school divisions of the Commonwealth in the development of  
81 the school crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plans and (ii) refer  
82 to the scientific statements prepared by the American Heart Association, the American Academy  
83 of Pediatrics, and various other national emergency response organizations, that describe the  
84 components of a medical emergency response plan, the training of school personnel and students  
85 to respond to a life-threatening emergency, and the equipment required for this emergency  
86 response.

87

88 **SECTION 4:** On any given day, as much as 20% of the combined US adult and child population  
89 can be found in schools. Life-threatening emergencies in schools are relatively uncommon, but  
90 when they do occur, they require a planned, practiced, and efficient response with provision of  
91 first aid and possible CPR and use of an AED. To maximize survival from a life-threatening  
92 emergency, schools must develop a medical emergency response plan designed to provide  
93 appropriate therapy within the first minutes of the emergency. The medical emergency response

94 plan includes (1) creation of an effective and efficient campus-wide communication system; (2)  
95 coordination, practice, and evaluation of a response plan with the school nurse and physician,  
96 athletic trainer, and local EMS agency; (3) risk reduction; (4) training in and equipment for CPR  
97 and first aid for the school nurse, athletic trainers, and teachers and CPR training for students;  
98 and (5) in schools with a documented need, establishment of an AED program.

99

100 The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall report to the General Court on the  
101 success of this initiative in establishing Medical Emergency Response Plans in local school  
102 districts 180 days after the implementation of this act.