



Big Lake Schools ISD 727

Cardiac Emergency Response Plan

Purpose and Integration

The Big Lake School Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) provides a comprehensive strategy for responding to Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) occurring on school property, during school-sponsored activities, and at district events. This plan is an addendum to the Big Lake Schools Crisis Management Plan and shall be incorporated into each building's crisis management procedures for cardiac emergencies.

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
AED	Automated External Defibrillator
CERP	Cardiac Emergency Response Plan
CERT	Cardiac Emergency Response Team
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
SCA	Sudden Cardiac Arrest

Definition of Sudden Cardiac Arrest

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA), as defined by the American Heart Association, is the sudden and unexpected loss of heart function caused by an irregular heart rhythm and can occur with or



without a known heart condition. This disruption prevents effective blood circulation and, without immediate intervention, can result in loss of consciousness, collapse, and death within minutes.

Signs of Sudden Cardiac Arrest may include one or more of the following:

- Unresponsiveness
- Abnormal or absent breathing
- Seizure-like movements
- In some cases, sudden collapse immediately following a forceful blow to the chest

Cardiac Emergency Response Team (CERT)

Big Lake Schools will utilize the existing Medical Emergency Response Team (MERT) structure as the building Cardiac Emergency Response Team (CERT).

Each building administrator shall annually designate available staff members to serve on the CERT. Team membership should include, when possible:

- School Nurse/Licensed School Nurse
- Health Assistant
- Building Administrator
- Office Staff
- Physical Education Staff
- Activities Director
- Coaches
- Custodial/Maintenance Staff
- Staff supervising recess or before/after school activities
- Additional CPR/AED-trained staff

Consistent with American Heart Association recommendations and Minnesota Statutes section 121A.241, each building should maintain at least five CERT members or approximately 10 percent of building staff.

Staff Name	Role	CPR/AED Certification Date
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	Building CERP Coordinator	
	CERT Member	
	CERT Member	
	CERT Member	
	CERT Member	
	CERT Member	

Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)

AED Program

Big Lake Schools maintains Automated External Defibrillators throughout district buildings to provide rapid access during a cardiac emergency. AEDs are strategically placed in accordance with current recommendations to allow rapid retrieval during an emergency.

Detailed AED locations are maintained on building emergency maps and are provided to staff during annual emergency preparedness training. Building AED maps are also available to responding emergency personnel.

AED Registry

In accordance with Minnesota Statutes section 403.51, all public access AEDs owned by Big Lake Schools shall be registered with the National Emergency AED Registry (NEAR) through PulsePoint AED.

Maintenance

The District Nurse Coordinator , in collaboration with the Facilities Department and designated building personnel, is responsible for maintaining the district AED program.



Responsibilities include:

Staff/Department	Responsibility
District Nurse Coordinator	AED registry management, annual program oversight, equipment replacement planning
Facilities Department	Routine inspections, cabinet maintenance, battery and pad replacement coordination
Building Health Office	Monthly readiness checks, documentation, reporting equipment concerns

Building-specific AED inventories, inspection logs, and site maps are maintained separately from this plan and reviewed regularly as part of the district AED maintenance program.

Communication Plan

How to Activate the Cardiac Emergency Response Team (CERT) and Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Roles and Responsibilities

Cardiac emergencies require an immediate, coordinated response. Members of the Cardiac Emergency Response Team (CERT) should be prepared to perform multiple roles if staff members are absent or unavailable at the time of the emergency.

Primary response responsibilities include:

1. A staff member immediately calls 911.
2. A staff member retrieves the nearest AED.
3. A staff member meets EMS at the designated building entrance and escorts responders to the emergency location.
4. A staff member clears the area and manages bystanders to provide privacy and allow emergency responders unobstructed access.
5. Available CERT members begin high-quality CPR, assist with AED application, and rotate chest compressions as needed until EMS arrives.
6. A designated CERT member documents the response timeline, including the estimated collapse time, CPR initiation, AED application, and transfer of care to EMS.



Communication

Effective communication is essential for a rapid and coordinated response. Big Lake Schools utilizes the district overhead paging system and two-way radios to notify the Cardiac Emergency Response Team (CERT). These communication methods provide coverage throughout school buildings and outdoor activity areas.

The following procedures shall be used for all suspected cardiac emergencies:

Initial Alert

Any staff member witnessing a collapse or identifying signs of Sudden Cardiac Arrest shall immediately direct a specific person to call 911 and alert the front office of the cardiac emergency so they can activate the CERT (Cardiac Emergency Response Team).

Internal Notification

The front office will activate the Cardiac Emergency Response Team (CERT) using the district overhead paging system.

Standard Overhead Announcement

"CERT to [specific location]. Cardiac Emergency. 911 has been called."

Examples:

- "CERT to Main Gym. Cardiac Emergency. 911 has been called."
- "CERT to Cafeteria. Cardiac Emergency. 911 has been called."

Building Status

The building administrator or designee shall implement a **Secure Mode** to clear hallways, reduce traffic, protect the privacy of the individual experiencing the emergency, and provide emergency responders with unobstructed access to the scene.

Integration of Local Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Big Lake Schools develops and implements this Cardiac Emergency Response Plan in collaboration with local Emergency Medical Services (EMS), law enforcement, fire department personnel, district health and safety staff, school nurses, athletic staff, and other community emergency partners.



Building emergency diagrams, emergency access information, and AED site maps are maintained by the district and made available to emergency responders upon request.

The **District Nurse Coordinator** serves as the District CERP Coordinator and is responsible for coordinating the annual review of the Cardiac Emergency Response Plan and ensuring updates are distributed to building administrators and CERT members.

Training and Practice Drills

Staff Training

All Big Lake Schools employees will receive annual training on the district Cardiac Emergency Response Plan. Annual review includes:

- Recognition of Sudden Cardiac Arrest
- Activation of Emergency Medical Services (911)
- Activation of the Cardiac Emergency Response Team (CERT)
- Hands-Only CPR awareness
- AED awareness and emergency response procedures

CERT Certification

Members of the Cardiac Emergency Response Team (CERT) are encouraged to maintain current CPR/AED certification through a nationally recognized training organization, such as the American Heart Association or American Red Cross. Certification should be renewed at least every two years.

Student Instruction

Students in grades 7–12 will receive one-time CPR and AED instruction with hands-on practice as required by Minnesota law. Building staff are encouraged to familiarize students with the importance of immediately notifying an adult during a suspected cardiac emergency.

Annual Practice Drills

Big Lake Schools will conduct at least one annual Cardiac Emergency Response Drill at each school building involving staff and students.



Whenever practical, drills should include activation of the CERT, emergency communications, CPR initiation, AED retrieval, and simulated transfer of care to EMS.

The district goal is to complete the emergency response sequence within **five minutes** from recognition of the emergency.

Annual Review

The School Board and CERP Coordinator will review this plan annually to ensure it reflects current evidence-based best practices. Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 121A.241, subdivision 2 (6).

Legal References

- Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 121A.241 Cardiac Emergency Response Plan
- Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 121A.035 Crisis Management Policy
- Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.236 CPR and AED Instruction
- Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 403.51 Automatic External Defibrillation; Registration
- Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 604A.01 Good Samaritan Law

References

American Heart Association. (2025). Cardiac emergency response plan and protocol. https://cpr.heart.org/en/-/media/CPR-Files/Training-Programs/2025-CERP/Cardiac-Emergency-Response-Plan-and-Protocol042025.pdf?sc_lang=en

Evans S, Legg M. (2024). Cardiac emergency response plan: Is your school prepared? NASN School Nurse, 39(4):175-180. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1942602X231201087>