
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 945	Hearing Date:	April 15, 2026
Author:	Weber Pierson		
Version:	April 6, 2026		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Therresa Austin		

Subject: School curriculum: physical education framework: cardiopulmonary resuscitation: automated external defibrillators.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) to consider including content on the importance of compression-only cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automated external defibrillators (AED), as specified, during the next regularly scheduled revision of the Physical Education (PE) Curriculum Framework.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Requires the governing board of a school district or the governing body of a charter school to include instruction in performing compression-only CPR within a health course, as specified, if the governing board or body requires a health course for graduation from high school. (Education Code (EC) § 51225.6)
- 2) Requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to provide guidance on how to implement such instruction, including, but not limited to, who may provide instruction. (EC § 51225.6)
- 3) Encourages school districts and charter schools to provide pupils general information on the use and importance of an AED. Specifies that the physical presence of an AED in the classroom is not required. (EC § 51225.6)
- 4) Establishes high school graduation requirements, including three years in English, two years in math, and two years of PE, and permits school districts to establish graduation requirements which exceed those required by the state. (EC § 51225.3)
- 5) Requires the state board and the Curriculum Development and Supplemental Materials Commission (now known as the IQC), during its first revision of the PE Curriculum Framework, to include self-defense instruction and safety instruction for pupils in grades 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12. (EC § 51223.3)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) This bill requires the IQC to consider including content on the importance of CPR and AEDs, as specified, during the next regularly scheduled revision of the PE Curriculum Framework.
- 2) Makes a series of findings and declarations related to the importance of expanding access to CPR and AED instruction.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “Every minute after cardiac arrest, survival drops by 7 to 10 percent. More than 350,000 people suffer cardiac arrest outside a hospital each year in the United States, and nearly 90 percent don’t survive. Cardiac arrest isn’t rare and it doesn’t just affect older adults. About 23,000 children experience cardiac arrest outside of a hospital. Emergency responders typically arrive in 6 to 12 minutes, but irreversible brain damage can begin in just 3 to 5 minutes. That gap is where bystanders can save lives. Schools are the most effective place to train the next generation of lifesavers. Even a single 20-minute CPR training dramatically increases a student’s willingness to act in an emergency. While CPR and AED usage is already being taught, a vulnerable segment of the population is NOT receiving this education in high school. By requiring this education as part of a graduation requirement, we can ensure parity and safety in California high schools.”
- 2) ***The IQC and the State Board of Education (SBE).*** The Legislature has vested the IQC and the SBE with the authority to develop and adopt state curriculum and instructional materials. The IQC develops curriculum frameworks through a process involving practitioners and experts who have an in-depth understanding of curriculum and instruction, including the full scope and sequence of the curriculum in each subject and at each grade level, constraints on instructional time and resources, and the relationship of curriculum to state assessments and other measures of student progress. Changes are frequently made in response to public comment. The frameworks are then adopted by the SBE in a public meeting.

The resulting curriculum framework is intended to serve as a guidance document for educators and administrators on how to plan for and provide quality, skills-based, standards-aligned instruction on the various content areas.

The SBE also adopts, in a public process, instructional materials aligned to those frameworks for grades K-8. School district governing boards and charter schools then adopt instructional materials aligned to these standards and frameworks.

The respective revision and adoption processes have traditionally occurred on a regular schedule, giving schools a predictable timetable to plan and budget for changes to the curriculum. Local adoption of new curricula also involves significant local cost and investment of resources for professional development.

- 3) ***CPR and AED related content in the 2019 Health Education Framework.*** In 2016, the Legislature passed AB 1719 (Rodriguez, Chapter 556, Statutes of

2016), requiring local educational agencies (LEAs) that have a health course graduation requirement for high school to provide instruction on performing compression-only CPR. While this instructional requirement only speaks to applicable high school settings, the *2019 Health Education Framework for California Public Schools: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve (Framework)* identifies several grade bands where educators are encouraged to weave age-appropriate CPR and AED instruction within their curriculum. For instance:

- a) Transitional kindergarten (TK) through third grade: the Framework provides sample learning activities to help students understand heart emergencies, how to call for help, and how CPR can help keep a heart beating until medical personnel arrive.
- b) Fourth through sixth grade: the Framework encourages educators to partner with their school and local guest speakers to host a “Responding-to-Emergencies Day,” complete with drills and demonstrations of life-threatening situations, 9-1-1 calls, CPR performance, and direction on how to find the closest AED.
- c) Seventh through eighth grade: the Framework encourages educators to teach students about the warning signs of cardiac arrest as a way to connect students’ interest in sports and recreational activities to health education. The Framework also notes that compression-only CPR training can be provided to students in grade levels seven and eight in partnership with local chapters of organizations like the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, local emergency medical service providers, or credentialed school nurses.
- d) Ninth through twelfth grade: In addition to outlining the CPR instruction required by AB 1719, the Framework also provides examples of injury prevention and safety learning activities that help students practice health literacy by reviewing warning signs and risk factors of a potential heart condition and encouraging students to advocate for themselves.

Health education content is required for students in all grade levels; however, *how* the content is delivered is the decision of LEAs. LEAs decide whether or not to provide a health education course, the length of that course, and whether or not it is a graduation requirement.

This bill seeks to address the inequity that may present itself when an LEA does not offer a dedicated high school health education course through which the CPR and AED instruction may be provided. While LEAs are not universally required to offer high school health education courses, they *are* required to provide PE courses in order to meet the two-course statewide graduation requirement.

Following this logic, this bill requires the IQC, during the next revision of the PE Framework, to consider including content on the importance, performance, and use of CPR and AEDs. Again, curricular frameworks are intended to serve as a guidance document for educators on how to provide standards aligned instruction. Educators are not required to follow frameworks exactly. However,

including CPR and AED content within the PE Framework may provide educators with the support they need to ensure that such instruction can be better integrated into their individual curriculum and course plans.

- 4) ***The Curriculum Guidance Study and future of curriculum development and adoption.*** The 2025-26 budget, through AB 121 (Committee on Budget, Chapter 8, Statutes of 2025), included \$1 million for a Curriculum Guidance Study to evaluate the processes by which other states develop curriculum guidance, and to make recommendations about how to improve and streamline California's processes across all content areas. The report is required to include, among other topics:
- a) The roles and responsibilities of the CDE, the IQC, the SBE, the Legislature, LEAs, educators, parents and guardians, and the public; and
 - b) The processes and cycles for developing, revising, and adopting content standards, curriculum frameworks, and other instructional guidance, and how available instructional time in elementary and secondary schools is considered.

This report is to be completed by January 1, 2027.

- 5) ***Prior and related legislation.***

AB 1719 (Rodriguez, Chapter 556, Statutes of 2016) requires school districts and charter schools serving students in grades 9 through 12, commencing with the 2018-19 school year, to include instruction in CPR if they require a course in health education for graduation from high school.

SB 1290 (Kehoe, Chapter 703, Statutes of 2010) requires the SBE and the Curriculum Development and Supplemental Materials Commission to include self-defense instruction, as defined, and safety instruction, as defined, in the next revision of the PE Framework for pupils in grades 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12.

SUPPORT

American Heart Association (co-sponsor)
 Eric Paredes Save a Life Foundation (co-sponsor)
 California Association of School Police Chiefs
 California Coalition of School Safety Professionals
 California Society for Respiratory Care
 California Teachers Association
 Capital City CPR
 CFT – A Union of Educators & Classified Professionals, AFT, AFL-CIO
 Emergency Medical Services Administrators' Association of California
 Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake
 Heartshield Project
 Kyle J. Taylor Foundation
 Los Angeles School Police Management Association
 Los Angeles School Police Officers Association

McMahon Steel Company, Inc.
National Association of EMS Physicians
Orange County Fire Authority
Riverside Police Officers Association
Riverside Sheriffs' Association
Safeplay CPR & AED Training
Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndromes Foundation
Via Heart Project
One Individual

OPPOSITION

None received

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