

The Smart Heart Act: What Your School Must Do

Every NC public school must have a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) for the 2026–27 school year.

WHAT THE LAW NOW REQUIRES

- ✓ A written Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP), reviewed yearly
- ✓ Annual CPR/AED training for key staff
- ✓ Coordination with local EMS and annual drills
- ✓ A trained cardiac response team with an activation protocol
- ✓ AEDs reachable within 3 minutes — unlocked, signed, maintained
- ✓ At least one AED installed in every school

WHY IT MATTERS

Sudden cardiac arrest can strike a student, staff member, or visitor without warning. Survival falls roughly 10% for every minute without defibrillation — the first 3 minutes decide the outcome. Compliance protects lives and demonstrates due diligence for the district.

FUNDING IS AVAILABLE — BUT LIMITED

The state budget provides a one-time **\$4 million** to the NC Department of Public Instruction for 2026–27. Schools that **don't already have an AED are funded first — \$2,000 per school** (prorated if the money runs short). Any remaining funds may go toward replacing existing AEDs or cardiac emergency response training. Funds may only be used for AED purchase & installation or CERP training.

\$2,000 covers roughly one AED — not the multiple units, annual training, written CERP, and drills full compliance requires. Pair the funding with a complete program to make every dollar count.

THE PATH: SCHOOL RESCUE READY™

Rescue Beats' 8-step roadmap takes a campus from unaware to fully compliant — and keeps it there:

Understand • Assess • Build • Place • Train • Drill • Maintain • Renew

One partner for every requirement: plan, training, AEDs, drills, and documentation.