

2025 SENATE EDUCATION

SB 2099

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee
Room JW216, State Capitol

SB 2099
1/15/2025

Relating to cardiac arrest prevention and education for student athletes and coaches.

9:01 a.m. Chairman Beard called the meeting to order.

Members Present: Chairman Beard; Vice-Chairman Lemm; Senators: Axtman, Boschee, Gerhardt, and Wobbema.

Discussion Topics:

- Cardiac arrest prevention
- Requirements for athletes and coaches
- Cost of training

9:02 a.m. Senator Tim Mathern testified in favor and submitted testimony #29310.

9:08 a.m. Chairman Beard recessed the hearing.

9:18 a.m. Chairman Beard reconvened the hearing.

9:18 a.m. Jacob Willes, Simon's Heart, testified in favor and submitted testimony #28960.

9:26 a.m. Robin Lang, Assistant Director ND Department of Public Instruction, testified in opposition and submitted testimony #29097 and #29098.

9:32 a.m. KrisAnn Norby-Jahner, in-house legal counsel for ND School Board Association, testified neutral.

9:36 a.m. Chairman Beard closed the hearing.

Susan Helbling, Committee Clerk

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Jacob Willes. I am a college student in Utah as well as a volunteer with Simon's Heart. I am grateful to speak on SB 2099, which addresses the number one threat to the lives of student-athletes: sudden cardiac arrest. This legislation is crucial for increasing awareness and saving lives from preventable tragedies.

Sudden cardiac arrest occurs when the heart unexpectedly stops beating, cutting off blood flow to the brain and vital organs. Every three days, a student-athlete in the United States loses their life to sudden cardiac arrest, making it the leading cause of death for this group. In a two-year study documenting 132 cases of SCA during physical activity, 68 of those students tragically died—leaving a survival rate of less than 50%. However, survival rates of out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest incidents increase by more than 400% when both CPR and an AED are used promptly at the scene. These and other statistics show the severity of the situation and therefore the urgent need to implement this bill.

The objectives of SB 2099 aligns with similar legislation, commonly known as the SCA Prevention Act, which is already adopted in 23 other states and currently under consideration in Idaho, Missouri, and Montana. Over the past six months, I have worked with stakeholders in North Dakota to advocate for SB 2099. I've met with the bill's cosponsors to discuss its importance and have had productive conversations with the president of the North Dakota High School Activities Association, who recognizes the urgent need for action to protect student-athletes. Additionally, I've consulted with the Legislative Director of the American Heart Association in North Dakota, whose support has been invaluable. These leaders understand the need for this measure, and their backing demonstrates the importance of implementing these protections.

In conclusion, this bill represents a critical opportunity to save lives through increased education, awareness, and preparedness. We're not asking for entirely new resources, but rather to enhance existing measures to ensure that we are better prepared to respond to these emergencies. Please consider: if it were your child at risk of a cardiac event, wouldn't you want to make sure that those around them were fully equipped to respond and save their life?

I urge you to vote in favor of SB 2099. This is not just a piece of legislation; it's a life-saving measure that will make a tangible difference in protecting student-athletes. Thank you for your time and consideration. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

SB 2099 ATTACHMENT A

The following are examples of health-related information and resources currently developed and or provided by the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services in collaboration with the Department of Public Instruction.

School Health and Nursing Resources

- [School Health Guidelines](#)
- [Emergency School Health Guidelines](#)
- [Medication Administration: A Guide for Training School Staff](#)
- [Asthma Legislation: ND Century Code Chapter 15. 1-19](#)
- [Parent Consent Form for Asthma or Anaphylaxis Medications](#)
- [Asthma, Food Allergy, Anaphylaxis Emergency Resources](#)
- [Head Lice](#)
- [Mandatory Reportable Conditions](#)

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2099
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

January 15, 2025

**By: Robin Lang, Assistant Director of Educational Improvement and Support
701-328-2265
North Dakota Department of Public Instruction**

Chairman Beard and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robin Lang, and I am an Assistant Director in the Office of Educational Improvement and Support with the Department of Public Instruction. I am here to speak in opposition of Senate Bill 2099, as it is currently written.

While the Department of Public Instruction supports the concept of raising awareness and providing education regarding cardiac symptoms and warning signs for student athletes and coaches, we do not believe that the Department of Public Instruction is the appropriate agency to lead this health initiative.

The Department of Public Instruction is not equipped with the expertise in cardiac arrest prevention or health related matters. Currently, for any school health information, the Department of Health and Human Services has health content experts who lead school health initiatives and collaborate with the Department of Public Instruction, as necessary, to ensure the most effective and accurate information is developed and disseminated to our schools.

This collaborative approach ensures the information provided reflects the most current medical standards and practices while allowing the Department of Public Instruction to continue its focus on the primary responsibilities in education.

We would respectfully recommend that this responsibility be assigned to the Department of Health and Human Services, the agency best positioned to consult with health professionals and experts in cardiac care and prevention. The Department of Public Instruction would remain a collaborative partner in this process and would support the dissemination of any developed information and materials to our schools through our various communication channels as directed or requested by the Department of Health and Human Services. I have included an attachment that provides examples of health-related information and resources that are currently provided by the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services in collaboration with the Department of Public Instruction.

Chairman Beard and Members of the Committee, that concludes my prepared testimony, and I will stand for any questions that you may have.

January 15, 2025

ND Senate Education Committee

Chairman Beard and Committee Members,

My name is Tim Mathern, Senator from District 11. I served on your committee for about a decade starting in 1987. Your agenda appears to be tougher these days! I bring SB 2099 before you at the request of student athletes and more specifically Jacob Willes also a student. He is the primary author of this legislation.

Overview of SB 2099

This bill proposes a new section in chapter 15.1-18.2 of the North Dakota Century Code to establish cardiac arrest prevention and education requirements for student-athletes and their coaches. It requires the development of educational materials about cardiac arrest symptoms and risks that student-athletes and their parents must review before participation in any athletic activity. The bill requires coaches to complete cardiac arrest training, including CPR and AED education, and to hold informational meetings on cardiac arrest symptoms and warning signs before each athletic season. The bill authorizes coaches to remove students from athletic activities if cardiac arrest symptoms are observed.

Why is this bill needed

Every three days, a student athlete dies due to Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA), making it the number one cause of death for student-athletes. Despite SCA being the leading threat to young athletes for decades, many people remain unaware of its signs, symptoms, and the immediate actions needed to save a life during a cardiac emergency. Symptom recognition and rapid response are critical for preventing deaths. We need to protect students by increasing awareness among athletes, parents, and coaches and implement protocols for recognizing and responding to SCA symptoms.

Please give time to Jacob to learn more about cardiac arrest, about organizations involved to save lives, and to address questions you might have.

I ask you for a Do Pass recommendation on SB2099.

Thank you.

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee Room JW216, State Capitol

SB 2099
1/21/2025

Relating to cardiac arrest prevention and education for student athletes and coaches.

11:32 a.m. Chairman Beard called the meeting to order.

Members Present: Chairman Beard; Vice-Chairman Lemm; Senators: Axtman, Boschee, Gerhardt, and Wobbema.

Discussion Topics:

- Liability
- Match concussion protocol

11:32 a.m. Committee discussion on SB 2099.

11:46 a.m. Senator Gerhardt moved a Do Not Pass.

11:46 a.m. Vice Chairman Lemm seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Todd Beard	Y
Senator Randy D. Lemm	Y
Senator Michelle Axtman	N
Senator Josh Boschee	N
Senator Justin Gerhardt	Y
Senator Mike Wobbema	Y

Motion Passed 4-2-0

Senator Gerhardt will carry.

11:48 a.m. Chairman Beard adjourned the meeting.

Susan Helbling, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
SB 2099 ([25.0315.02000](#))

Education Committee (Sen. Beard, Chairman) recommends **DO NOT PASS** (4 YEAS, 2 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2099 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.