



Glastonbury Public Schools

Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033

www.glastonburyus.org

**Statement to the Education Committee
of the Connecticut General Assembly
in support of HB 5349**

***An Act Concerning the Inclusion of CPR and AED Training in the Public School Curriculum
March 5, 2012***

**Ann Marie Colebrook
Director of Health and Physical Education
Glastonbury, CT**

To the Chairs and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ann Marie Colebrook, an administrator for the Glastonbury Public School System. I am the Director of Health and Physical Education and responsible for the development, implementation and evaluation of curriculum, instruction and assessment, grades K-12. I am writing to support of HB 5349, an act concerning the inclusion of CPR and AED training in the public school curriculum. I strongly urge you to consider adding the language "...including training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of automatic external defibrillators..." to Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 10-16b. Many students at Glastonbury High School are taught First Aid/CPR/AED skills and are American Red Cross Certified. The following stories submitted by high school teachers are witness to how valuable this training is and its importance to the development of CPR/AED life skills. (Names of students have been changed)

My first year teaching health I had a student that is part of our ABC (A Better Chance) Program in my freshman health class. The ABC Program is a nationwide organization that gives students living in an inner city school setting an opportunity to come to our district and receive a better opportunity to go to college. John was from Philadelphia. Students that year were taught and certified in CPR and First Aid skills during the last unit of our freshman health class.

John returned home to Philadelphia for the summer and attended a family picnic. At the picnic one of his younger cousins began choking on a grape from a fruit salad. John jumped to action and provided abdominal thrusts and back blows until the object was dislodged from his throat. John emailed me that summer, thanked me, and shared his story with me about how the skills he learned in class had saved his cousin's life. Nothing has made me more proud as a teacher that one of my students was able to put the skills he had learned in my class to use to save an individual.

Please consider changing your policies to assist us with including these lifesaving skills into our curriculum.

Thank you,

Jay Kitchens
High School Health/Physical Education Teacher
Glastonbury High School

This year, I taught freshmen classes how to respond to an emergency and some basic first aid skills. A few weeks afterwards, one of my students told me that over the weekend he was ice skating on a neighborhood pond with other kids from the neighborhood. No adult was present. One 5th grader fell and hit their head on the ice. My student told me that based on the fall (what he saw and how the child was acting); he and his brother “went into action”. While his brother stayed with the child, my student called 911 immediately and waited in an open visible space for the ambulance. It was later learned that the 5th grader had a concussion. It was evident when my student told me the story that he was prepared to respond and proud of himself that he knew what to do.

It is so critical that students learn these emergency response skills. Having policies in place to support the need for CPR/AED and First Aid will make a tremendous difference to the students and people in their lives.

Sincerely,
Kate
High School Health/Physical Education Teacher

In my second year as a Health & Physical Education teacher and I experienced a very rewarding moment. We were in the middle of the CPR/First Aid/AED unit with sophomore health classes. One Monday, one of my student’s Susan came into class and told me a story before the bell rang. Susan was shopping over the weekend. A young boy was shopping with his mother when Susan noticed that the young boy was choking. Susan jumped into action. She first obtained consent from the mother and then performed back blows and abdominal thrusts to the boy. In the second round of care, a back blow dislodged a quarter from the boy’s throat. Susan told me that it was just a few days before during class demonstrations that she learned this and she felt confident that she could help.

The mother was in tears thanking Susan for her help. Susan explained to me it was one of the best and most rewarding things she had ever learned in school. After speaking more with Susan, she volunteered to come to other classes and tell her story. Susan’s story was so rewarding and a valuable reason why these life-saving skills are part of our curriculum.

Chris Vozzolo
High School Health/Physical Education Teacher
