



Testimony in Support of HB7027

February 2, 2026

TO: House Education Committee

At Collective Action for Education, we strongly support HB7027, relating to Education and the Health and Safety of Pupils, which would expand the requirement that all middle and high schools, whether publicly or privately operated, maintain functional automated external defibrillators (AEDs) on site, and have a comprehensive cardiac emergency response plan beginning in the 2027–2028 academic year.

In a cardiac emergency, seconds save lives. Immediate access to an AED, combined with clear protocols and properly trained staff, can mean the difference between life and death for a student or an adult in the community. Ensuring that every school is prepared to respond effectively is a basic and commonsense step to protect the health and safety of school communities.

At Collective Action for Education, we fight for all Rhode Island students, especially those in historically marginalized communities, to have access to high-quality schools. Safety and access are inseparable from quality. A truly high-quality school is one where students and staff are protected and where emergency preparedness is taken seriously.

It is also critical that this requirement apply to both public and private schools. Sudden cardiac events do not discriminate by zip code, school type, or family income. HB7027 recognizes this reality and ensures that all students and school staff are afforded the same standard of care and protection.

HB7027 represents a meaningful opportunity to create safer schools and stronger communities across Rhode Island, and most importantly, to save lives.