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**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE**  
**BILL ANALYSIS**  
**57th Legislature, 1st Session, 2025**

<b>Bill Number</b>	<u>SB494/aSEC</u>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<u>Campos</u>
<b>Tracking Number</b>	<u>.229447.1</u>	<b>Committee Referrals</b>	<u>SEC/SFC</u>
<b>Short Title</b>	<u>Rural School Defibrillator Training</u>		
<b>Analyst</b>	<u>Hicks</u>	<b>Original Date</b>	<u>2/25/2025</u>
		<b>Last Updated</b>	<u>3/6/2025</u>

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**BILL SUMMARY**

Synopsis of SEC Amendment

The Senate Education Committee Amendment to Senate Bill 494 (SB494/aSEC) adds language which increases the proposed appropriation and includes additional fiscal years in which the appropriated funds could be spent.

Synopsis of Original Bill

Senate Bill 494 (SB494) would provide funding to the Public Education Department (PED) to allow the department to contract with a national organization that publishes official cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and emergency cardiovascular care guidance to provide defibrillator training to school employees in rural school districts.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

SB494/aSEC appropriates \$450 thousand from the government results and opportunity (GRO) program fund to PED for expenditure in FY26 through FY28. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY28 shall revert to the GRO program fund.

The House Appropriations and Finance Committee Substitute for House Bills 2 and 3 (HB2/HAFCS) does not include specific funding to support PED's contracting with a national organization for rural school defibrillator training.

**SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

**Existing Defibrillator Requirements.** New Mexico law does not require schools to have automated external defibrillators (AEDs) onsite. Neither state law nor administrative rule mandates AED training for all school personnel. However, Section 22-13-31.2 NMSA 1978 and administrative code (NMAC 6.63.8.8) require all school personnel who serve as athletic coaches in grades seven through 12 to maintain valid certification in both AED use and CPR. Additionally, as specified in [Section 22-13-1 NMSA 1978](#) and [Section 22-13-1.1 NMSA 1978](#), health education

courses in grades nine through 12 must include lifesaving skills training, which includes recognizing the signs of a heart attack, using an AED, and performing the Heimlich maneuver.

**Federal Law.** In December 2024, President Biden signed the [HEARTS Act of 2024](#) into law. This law directs the United States Department of Health and Human Services to disseminate information on cardiomyopathy and AED use to state education agencies for further dissemination to local school employees and families. State education agencies are encouraged to create public websites to house this information. The HEARTS Act also authorizes the creation of a federal grant program to support local educational agencies, including public charter schools, in purchasing AEDs and developing training programs for staff and students.

According to the [American Heart Association](#), an organization focused on promoting cardiovascular health, anywhere from 7,000 to 23 thousand cardiac arrests each year occur in children. About 39 percent of these youth cardiac arrests are sports related.

**Emergency Service Response Times in Rural Areas.** According to the [American Red Cross](#), a person’s chance of survival declines by about 10 percent for every minute CPR and defibrillation is delayed. As noted in a [2017 research article](#) featured in the JAMA Network peer-reviewed medical journal, while the average response time for emergency medical service units is about seven minutes, that time increases to an average of 14 minutes in rural areas. SB494/aSEC’s directive to PED to support the training of rural school employees in defibrillator use could help reduce the time between the start of an out-of-hospital cardiac event and defibrillation.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

Under SB494/aSEC, PED would need to establish a process to identify a suitable contractor to provide defibrillator training to rural school personnel.

## **OTHER SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

**State and National Context.** In March 2024, Albuquerque Public Schools [announced](#) the removal of AEDs in district schools. APS indicated the existing AEDs were too old to function properly. The district also noted a lack of funding to replace the removed AED units.

Under New Mexico’s Cardiac Arrest Response Act (Section 24-10C NMSA 1978), any person who acquires an AED must ensure a “trained targeted responder” is designated to oversee all aspects of the AED program, such as training, emergency services coordination, protocol approval, and AED deployment strategies. Should SB494/aSEC become law, high schools in New Mexico would also be required to comply with the terms of the Cardiac Arrest Response Act.

In 2024, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine signed [House Bill 47](#) into law, requiring the placement of AEDs in every public and chartered nonpublic school in the state. The legislation also directs schools to develop AED emergency action plans and practice implementation of these plans quarterly. Ohio is one of the latest states to adopt laws governing AEDs and related response plans on school grounds. [News reports](#) note more than 20 states currently have laws providing guidance for or mandating AEDs and response plans in schools.

**RELATED BILLS**

Related to House Bill 54, Defibrillators in Every High School, which would require an AED in every high school in the state and providing associated training to all school employees.

**SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

- LESC Files
- New Mexico Regional Education Cooperatives Association (NMRECA)
- Department of Health (DOH)
- Public Education Department (PED)

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