



**Testimony of the American Heart Association
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Montgomery County Council
FY24 Budget Hearing
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CPR Training in Schools

The American Heart Association recommends \$100,000 in the FY24 budget to purchase and maintain CPR in Schools kits, which can be shared across Montgomery County Public Schools, so all students can be trained to save a life.

As the world has learned over the last few months, when a sudden cardiac arrest occurs, providing immediate CPR can truly be the difference between life and death. Providing hands-only CPR can double or triple the likelihood of survivalⁱ. Sadly, 90% of those who suffer an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest do not survive.

An SCA occurs when the heart's electrical system abruptly malfunctions, and the heart suddenly stops beating normally. It can happen to anyone, at any time. Almost all of these events result in a call for help to 911. Without quick intervention in the form of CPR and defibrillation, death from SCA is certain.ⁱⁱ

More than 350,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur each year in the US, yet only 40% receive bystander CPRⁱⁱⁱ. Unfortunately, there are stark inequities:^{iv}

- Black and Hispanic adults are 26% less likely to receive bystander CPR than white people at home.
- If the cardiac arrest occurred in public, they were 41% less likely.

Maryland was among the earliest adopters of lifesaving policy, by requiring all high school students to learn CPR prior to graduation, through Breanna's Law in 2014.^v However, it is essential that this law is adequately funded so that the appropriate training can occur in schools.

For this training to continue, it is crucial that MCPS has the funding to purchase, replace, and maintain CPR in Schools training kits, so a health teacher or other instructor can provide this essential training in health classes. These kits would include all the necessary components for students to practice hands-only CPR in a classroom, including manikins, videos, teaching manuals, and more.

What could be more important to fund in the budget than school-based training that literally could save a life, particularly in schools and communities where we see the most inequities in provision of bystander CPR?

Recommendation:

The American Heart Association recommends investment in the FY24 MCPS budget to support kids' healthy development and to train them to save a life.

- \$100,000 to continue implementation of required CPR in Schools training, as directed in 2014's historic Breanna's Law.

We look forward to working with all 11 Councilmembers to ensure this essential school-based, life-saving training is funded and implemented in FY24, building on the Council's equity-first approach to investing in MoCo kids.

ⁱ <https://cpr.heart.org/en/resources/cpr-facts-and-stats>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/cardiac-arrest>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/10.1161/CIR.0000000000001052>

^{iv} <https://www.heart.org/en/news/2022/05/13/black-hispanic-adults-less-likely-to-receive-cpr-especially-in-public>

^v <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/SB0503?ys=2014rs>