

LESC bill analyses are available on the New Mexico Legislature website (www.nmlegis.gov). Bill analyses are prepared by LESC staff for standing education committees of the New Mexico Legislature. LESC does not assume any responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS
57th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2026

Bill Number	<u>SB123</u>	Sponsor	<u>Campos</u>
Tracking Number	<u>.232261.2</u>	Committee Referrals	<u>SCC/SEC/SFC</u>
Short Title	<u>Defibrillators in Schools</u>		
Analyst	<u>Hicks</u>	Original Date	<u>1/29/2026</u>
		Last Updated	<u></u>

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 123 (SB123) would appropriate \$1.2 million from the general fund to the Public Education Department (PED) for use in FY27 through FY29 to help schools with required cardiac emergency response plans to purchase, install, test, or maintain automated external defibrillators (AEDs). No more than \$400 thousand of the appropriation could be expended in a single fiscal year and only schools not located in urban areas (as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau) would be eligible for grant funding in FY27.

The bill does not contain an effective date and, as a result, would go into effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns if enacted, or May 20, 2026.

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill appropriates \$1.2 million from the general fund to PED for expenditure in FY27, FY28, and FY29; provided that no more than \$400 thousand may be expended in a single fiscal year, and in FY27 grants shall only be made to public schools that are not located in an area designated as an urban area by the U.S. Census Bureau. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY29 shall revert to the general fund.

SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

2025 Legislation on AEDs. During the 2025 legislative session, lawmakers passed, and the governor signed, [Laws 2025, Chapter 129 \(House Bill 54\)](#). This law phases in a requirement for all schools in New Mexico, both public and private, to adopt cardiac emergency response plans and install AEDs on school premises. By the 2027-2028 school year, all schools in New Mexico must have a cardiac emergency response plan in place and an AED onsite. This law did not have an accompanying appropriation to provide funding for schools to purchase AEDs.

SB123 would offer financial support to schools that have adopted a cardiac emergency response plan. In December 2025, PED amended New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC) 6.60.11 to

align with Laws 2025, Chapter 129. This amendment added new training requirements for school personnel identified in a school’s cardiac emergency response plan and provided guidance to schools based on the recommendations of the [American Heart Association](#), an organization focused on promoting cardiovascular health.

U.S. Census Bureau Definition of Urban Area. Beginning with the 2020 United States decennial census, an urban area is defined by the [U.S. Census Bureau](#) as an area with a population of at least 5,000 people or a minimum of 2,000 housing units. LESC analysis of 2020 New Mexico census data indicates there were 33 identified urban areas in the state.

AED Costs. The cost of a single AED unit can range from \$1,200 to \$4,000. Additionally, AEDs require maintenance, including replacing batteries and electrical shock pads. Battery prices can range anywhere from \$69 to \$300, while pads cost \$40 to \$100 and should be replaced after each use or upon expiration.

Emergency Service Response Times in Rural Areas. SB123 limits eligibility for grant funding to non-urban schools in FY27. According to the [American Red Cross](#), a nonprofit humanitarian organization focused on disaster relief and emergency assistance, a person’s chance of survival declines by about 10 percent for every minute cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and defibrillation are 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. SB123’s prioritization of non-urban schools in FY27 could help reduce the time between the start of an out-of-hospital cardiac event and defibrillation, which takes on particular importance when response times may be longer.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

SB123, if enacted, would place PED in charge of distributing the proposed funding to purchase and maintain AEDs. This will likely require PED staff time and resources to process awards to schools across the state.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Youth Cardiac Events. According to the [American Heart Association](#), 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.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- LESC Files
- Department of Health (DOH)
- Department of Public Safety (DPS)

CLH/aa/mca/jkh