

Mr. Roberto J. Alonso, Board Member

**SUBJECT: ELECTROCARDIOGRAM (ECG/EKG) SCREENINGS FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES**

**COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN: INFORMED, ENGAGED, & EMPOWERED STAKEHOLDERS**

Electrocardiogram (ECG/EKG) assessments and screenings may detect certain heart abnormalities by recording the heart's electrical signals and providing information on strength, speed, rhythm, and number of heart beats.

- ECG/EKG screenings help identify student-athletes who are at risk for sudden cardiac arrest.
- Sudden cardiac arrest is a condition where death can result from abrupt loss of heart function.
- ECG/EKG screenings assist in diagnosing several heart conditions that contribute to sudden cardiac arrest.
- Sudden cardiac arrest is the leading cause of death in athletes.

The School Board has consistently supported programs that promote medical screenings and testing of student athletes. Most recently, Board Member Christi Fraga, proffered Board Item H-10 during the School Board meeting of May 18, 2022, seeking the board's approval to explore the feasibility of identifying, establishing, and/or encouraging partnerships with local medical providers and/or organizations to deliver heart screening services, specifically, but not limited to ECG/EKG to students at no cost; consider establishing and implementing a pilot program to administer ECG/EKG heart screenings to a select group of students for the 2022-2023 school year, and to establish an aspirational goal, of expanding ECG/EKG screenings at no cost to students, in elementary, K-8 Centers, middle, and senior high schools for the 2023-2024 school year.

MDCPS also partnered with Nicklaus Children Hospital to initiate a "Heart Safe School"/Project ADAM Program. The goal of the program is to train school staff to respond to a cardiac emergency in the school setting.

There are about 350,000 sudden cardiac deaths (SCD) in the US each year, almost 1,000/day. These victims could be students in our schools.

As of today, we have certified 173 school sites as Heart Safe. These schools received a Project ADAM certificate and a banner in recognition of their 2-year certification. The goal is to certify all MDCPS schools.

As part of this partnership with Nicklaus Children Hospital, since October 2022, Nicklaus Children Hospital has screened approximately 7,000 students with the goal of continuing to screen students in hopes to reduce any future cardiac events.

This Board Item seeks to request that the Superintendent of Schools in consultation with the Greater Miami Athletic Conference to explore partnerships with local medical providers in order for the district to create a process, procedure, and/or policy that would require all high school student-athletes to undergo an ECG/EKG screening as part of each student-athlete's sports physical.

This item has been reviewed and approved by the Office of the General Counsel as to form and legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY  
MR. ROBERTO J. ALONSO:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent of Schools in consultation with the Greater Miami Athletic Conference to:

1. Explore the feasibility of identifying, establishing, and/or affirming partnerships with local medical providers and/or organizations to deliver heart screening services, specifically, but not limited to electrocardiogram (ECG/EKG) screenings at low-cost and or no-cost for all Miami-Dade County Public Schools high school students desiring to participate in athletic programs in order to help identify those athletes who are at risk for sudden cardiac arrest;
2. If such low-cost and/or no cost screenings can be made available to all student-athletes, create a process, procedure and/or policy that would require all high school student-athletes to undergo an ECG/EKG screening as part of each student-athlete sports physical;
3. Report findings concerning options for a process, procedure and/or policy for ECG/EKG screenings for student-athletes to the Board at the August 9, 2023, Personnel, Student, School & Community Support Committee Meeting; and;
4. Initiate rulemaking, if appropriate, by the August 16, 2023, regular School Board meeting.