

Milwaukee Public Schools: Celebrates 15 years of saving lives with AEDs

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MILWAUKEE (October 15, 2020) — Today, Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) commemorated 15 years of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) in the district through the [HeartSafe Schools](#) program. The program, in partnership with [Children's Wisconsin](#), the [Milwaukee Fire Department](#) and [Project ADAM](#), places AEDs in MPS schools. It also trains schools staff and includes drills to keep schools prepared for emergencies.

In 2005, the first AEDs for MPS were installed at Bradley Tech and Washington High Schools, the only locations with full-time nurses. Within two years, with assistance from the [Wisconsin Masonic Foundation](#) and other fundraising efforts, AEDs were placed in every MPS school. MPS currently has 225 AEDs throughout the district with at least one in all 156 school sites. Since AEDs have been placed in MPS schools, nine lives have been saved – two children and seven adults, [including one last year](#).

“AEDs are critical not just for our students but also our adults, whether they’re staff or community members,” MPS Superintendent Dr. Keith P. Posley said. “For years, MPS and our partners have worked together to lead the nation with trained staff and AEDs to help respond quickly to cardiac arrest. AEDs are a part of the MPS culture and they have proven to save lives within our district.”

There are 22 CPR/AED instructors who provide training to Code Blue teams, the first responders in the school setting. Every year, at least 70 CPR classes are provided to MPS staff – in which the school’s Code Blue team leader runs at least four drills per school year to monitor reaction time and increase chances of survival. In addition to district-wide course offerings and Code Blue team training, all MPS Safety Officers are certified via the Heart Saver CPR/AED Program.

The goal for MPS is to have all sites designated as HeartSafe Schools, which means

there is a cardiac plan in place and a knowledgeable team of community members and professional staff ready to respond with up-to-date equipment. AEDs for MPS cost just under \$700 for a new unit and around \$150 to maintain per school year. From the program's inception until now, the Wisconsin Masonic Foundation has provided the funds to replace 23 aging-out AEDs in MPS buildings. Currently, there are 195 more AEDs that are aged-out and in need of replacement. The MPS HeartSafe Schools program has been represented at multiple national conferences as a model of a high-quality AED program in an urban school district.