



# SB 722 – Alex’s Law: Ensuring the Safety of our Students

## *Senator Melissa Melendez*

### **Background**

In June of 2016, 13 year-old Alex Pierce tragically drowned at Vista Murrieta High School during an end of the year party sponsored by McElhinney Middle School.

When Alex was found unconscious beneath the water, novice lifeguards miscalculated the treatment and placed him on a backboard for several minutes in the water instead of administering CPR.

Only one teacher at the pool party was CPR certified; he claims he was not working at the time and therefore should not be held liable for the child’s death.

For a person to be CPR and First Aid Certified by American Red Cross Association, they must complete CPR training every two years.

Unlike teachers, who are required to take CPR training only once to complete their teacher credentials, returning coaches are required to be certified by the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF).

The CIF [Coaching Education Program](#) exists to ensure coaches “meet a minimum level of professional training” and provide standards to protect our interscholastic athletes.

To be continue to be CIF certified, an individual is required to constantly renew the following courses: Concussion, SCA and Heat Acclimatization, First Aid and CPR.

### **Problem Being Addressed**

According to the California Department of Public Health, 13.7% of children had lifetime asthma and 9.4% have asthma currently. This translates to 1.2 million children in California who have been diagnosed with asthma.

Furthermore, fatal drowning is second-leading cause of unintentional injury-related death behind motor vehicle crashes for children ages 1 to 14.

Adults supervising on school trips must be well prepared and adequately trained to protect the lives of our children in dire cases of drowning, having an asthma attack, or heart failure.

### **Summary**

SB 722 will require school districts who sponsor an interscholastic athletic activity or event, to have at least one adult supervisor of the activity or event with a California Interscholastic Federation coaching certification or with a valid certification of cardiopulmonary resuscitation training.

### **Code Section**

This bill amends 35179.6 of the Education Code.

### **Support**

Riverside County Office of Education  
CA State PTA  
CA Chapter of the American College of Cardiology  
Consumer Attorneys of CA  
The American Red Cross