**Sample Letter to Parents**

Dear Parent,

The safety of your children while they are in our care is paramount to us.

***We are pleased to announce that School Name is among the first in the nation to implement a brand-new lifesaving Cardiac Emergency Response Plan.***

The statistics are startling. In 2013, the American Heart Association reported 9,500 cases of out-of-hospital cardiac arrest in youths. What’s more, across the United States, even the best emergency medical services (EMS) systems can’t reach cardiac arrest victims for 3 to 5 minutes. Therefore, *the actions taken by bystanders during the first few minutes of a cardiac emergency are critical*. Prompt action can double or triple a victim’s chance of survival.

It has been proven that a carefully orchestrated response to cardiac emergencies will reduce death and disability in school settings and help ensure that chaos does not lead to an improper or no response.

**What is a Cardiac Emergency Response Plan?**

Simply put, it is a written document that establishes specific steps to take in a cardiac emergency at school. The American Heart Association, in collaboration with more than 10 national health and safety organizations, just released a brand-new Cardiac Emergency Response Plan for schools.

We’re pleased to inform you that School Name staff will learn about the components and will be involved in these essential elements: establishing an effective communication system; training anticipated responders in CPR and automated external defibrillator (AED) use; obtaining access to an AED for early defibrillation; acquiring necessary emergency equipment; coordinating and integrating on-site responder and AED programs with the local EMS system; and practicing and reviewing the response plan.

**How can parents help?**

As our school staff learn CPR, **we encourage all parents to learn CPR** through one of these options:

1. Take 60 seconds to watch the free Hands-Only CPR video at [www.heart.org/handsonlycpr](http://www.heart.org/handsonlycpr).
2. Locate and attend a classroom-based CPR and AED course. Visit [www.heart.org/cpr](http://www.heart.org/cpr/findacourse) and click the red “Find a Course” button.

As our school implements the plan, we may call on parents to participate in fundraising, training and other related tasks. Please let us know if you are interested in helping. If you have any questions about the new Cardiac Emergency Response Plan being implemented at School Name, please contact Principal Name at Phone Number. You may also visit www.heart.org/CERP.

Thank you for your support,