

ASSEMBLY, No. 2743

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 214th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 13, 2010

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District 19 (Middlesex)

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District 27 (Essex)

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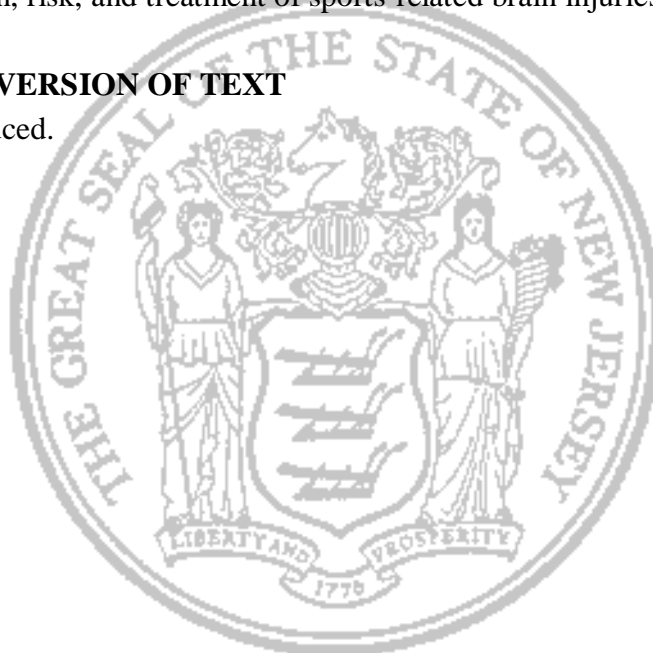
Assemblywoman Voss, Assemblyman Wolfe, Assemblywomen Evans and Angelini

SYNOPSIS

Requires development of a student-athlete awareness program concerning the prevention, risk, and treatment of sports-related brain injuries.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/15/2010)

1 AN ACT concerning the health of student-athletes and
2 supplementing chapter 40 of Title 18A of the New Jersey
3 Statutes.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*

7
8 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

9 a. A concussion is caused by a blow or motion to the head or
10 body that disrupts the normal functioning of the brain, and can
11 cause significant and sustained neuropsychological impairments
12 including, but not limited to, problem solving, planning, memory,
13 and behavioral problems;

14 b. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
15 estimates that 300,000 concussions are sustained during sport-
16 related activity in the United States, and more than 62,000
17 concussions are sustained each year in high-school contact sports;

18 c. Although concussions are one of the most commonly
19 reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in
20 sports and recreational activities, little effort and resources have
21 been committed to inform athletes, coaches, and parents and
22 guardians about the causes and symptoms of concussions;

23 d. If a person sustains a second concussion while still having
24 symptoms of a previous concussion, it can lead to the severe
25 impairment and even the death of the victim, and is referred to as
26 second-impact syndrome; and

27 e. In order to ensure the safety of student-athletes, it is
28 imperative that athletes, coaches, and parents and guardians are
29 educated about the nature and treatment of concussions and other
30 sports-related brain injuries, and that all measures are taken to
31 prevent a student-athlete from experiencing second-impact
32 syndrome.

33
34 2. a. The Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the
35 Commissioner of Health and Senior Services, shall develop an
36 awareness program concerning the prevention, risk, and treatment
37 of sports-related concussions and other brain injuries among
38 student-athletes. As a component of this awareness program, the
39 commissioner shall develop a brain injury fact sheet that provides
40 information about sports-related concussions and other brain
41 injuries. The brain injury fact sheet shall include, but need not be
42 limited to:

43 (1) information concerning the most effective means of
44 preventing concussions and other brain injuries to ensure the safety
45 of student-athletes;

46 (2) information identifying the signs and symptoms indicative of
47 concussions and other brain injuries;

1 (3) information concerning the short and long-term dangers of
2 concussions and other brain injuries; and

3 (4) information concerning the appropriate amount of time to
4 delay the return to sports competition or practice of a student-
5 athlete who has sustained a concussion or other brain injury.

6 The commissioner shall update the fact sheet as necessary and
7 shall make copies available to nonpublic schools upon request.

8 b. Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, the
9 Commissioner of Education shall annually distribute the brain
10 injury fact sheet to all school districts in the State.

11 c. A school district shall distribute the fact sheet annually to all
12 student-athletes, parents or guardians of student-athletes, coaches,
13 and athletic trainers. The district shall require that the student-
14 athlete and his parent or guardian both sign a copy of the fact sheet
15 to acknowledge that they have read and understood the information
16 provided in the fact sheet.

17
18 3. a. Each school district shall develop and implement, by the
19 2011-2012 school year, a written policy concerning the prevention
20 and treatment of sports-related concussions and other brain injuries
21 among student-athletes. The policy shall include, but need not be
22 limited to, the procedure to be followed when it is suspected that a
23 student-athlete has sustained a concussion or other brain injury. A
24 school district shall review the policies established by the New
25 Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association and the National
26 Collegiate Athletic Association when developing the district policy.

27 The policy shall be reviewed annually by a physician trained in
28 the evaluation and management of concussions, athletic trainer, and
29 coach, and shall be updated as necessary to ensure that it reflects
30 the most current information available on the prevention, risk, and
31 treatment of sports-related concussions and other brain injuries.

32 b. A student-athlete who sustains or is suspected of having
33 sustained a concussion or other brain injury while engaged in a
34 sports competition or practice shall be immediately removed from
35 the sports competition or practice in accordance with the school
36 district's written policy. A student-athlete who is removed from
37 competition or practice shall not participate in further sports activity
38 until he is evaluated by a physician trained in the evaluation and
39 management of concussions, and receives written clearance from
40 that physician to return to competition or practice.

41
42 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

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45 STATEMENT

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47 This bill requires the Commissioner of Education, in consultation
48 with the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services, to develop

1 an awareness program concerning the prevention, risk, and
2 treatment of sports-related concussions and other brain injuries
3 among student-athletes. The awareness program will include the
4 following components:

5 (1) the development by the commissioner of a brain injury fact
6 sheet that provides information concerning the prevention,
7 symptoms, and dangers of concussions and other brain injuries.
8 The fact sheet will also include information on the appropriate
9 amount of time to delay a student's return to competition;

10 (2) the annual distribution of the fact sheet to student-athletes,
11 parents, coaches, and athletic trainers; and

12 (3) the development by school districts of a written policy
13 concerning the prevention and treatment of sports-related
14 concussions and other brain injuries. The written policy will also
15 include the procedure to be followed when it is suspected that a
16 student-athlete has sustained a concussion or other brain injury.

17 Under the bill, a student-athlete who sustains or is suspected of
18 having sustained a concussion or other brain injury while engaged
19 in a sports competition or practice is required to be immediately
20 removed from the sports competition or practice, in accordance with
21 the school district's written policy. The student-athlete may not
22 participate in further sports activity until he is evaluated by a
23 physician trained in the evaluation and management of concussions,
24 and receives written clearance from that physician to return to
25 competition or practice.