



Substitute House Bill No. 5113

Public Act No. 14-66

AN ACT CONCERNING YOUTH ATHLETICS AND CONCUSSIONS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Section 10-149b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2014*):

(a) (1) For the school year commencing July 1, 2010, and each school year thereafter, any person who holds or is issued a coaching permit by the State Board of Education and is a coach of intramural or interscholastic athletics shall complete an initial training course regarding concussions, which are a type of brain injury, developed or approved pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of this section, prior to commencing the coaching assignment for the season of such school athletics.

(2) For the school year commencing July 1, 2014, and each school year thereafter, any coach who has completed the initial training course described in subdivision (1) of this subsection shall annually review current and relevant information regarding concussions, prepared or approved pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of this section, prior to commencing the coaching assignment for the season of such school athletics. Such annual review shall not be required in any year when such coach is required to complete the refresher course, pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection, for reissuance of his or her coaching permit.

(3) For the school year commencing July 1, 2015, and each school year thereafter, a coach shall complete a refresher course, developed or approved pursuant to subdivision (3) of subsection (b) of this section, not later than five years after completion of the initial training course, as a condition of the reissuance of a coaching permit to such coach. Such coach shall thereafter retake such refresher course at least once every five years as a condition of the reissuance of a coaching permit to such coach.

(b) (1) The State Board of Education, in consultation with (A) the Commissioner of Public Health, (B) the governing authority for intramural and interscholastic athletics, (C) an appropriate organization representing licensed athletic trainers, and (D) an organization representing county medical associations, shall develop or approve a training course regarding concussions. Such training course shall include, but not be limited to, (i) the recognition of the symptoms of a concussion, (ii) the means of obtaining proper medical treatment for a person suspected of having a

concussion, and (iii) the nature and risk of concussions, including the danger of continuing to engage in athletic activity after sustaining a concussion and the proper method of allowing a student athlete who has sustained a concussion to return to athletic activity.

(2) On or before October 1, 2014, and annually thereafter, the State Board of Education, in consultation with the Commissioner of Public Health and the organizations described in subparagraphs (B) to (D), inclusive, of subdivision (1) of this subsection, shall develop or approve annual review materials regarding current and relevant information about concussions.

(3) The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Commissioner of Public Health and the organizations described in subparagraphs (B) to (D), inclusive, of subdivision (1) of this subsection, shall develop or approve a refresher course regarding concussions. Such refresher course shall include, but not be limited to, (A) an overview of key recognition and safety practices, (B) an update on medical developments and current best practices in the field of concussion research, prevention and treatment, (C) an update on new relevant federal, state and local laws and regulations, and (D) for football coaches, current best practices regarding coaching the sport of football, including, but not limited to, frequency of games and full contact practices and scrimmages as identified by the governing authority for intramural and interscholastic athletics.

(c) On or before January 1, 2015, the State Board of Education, in consultation with the Commissioner of Public Health and the organizations described in subparagraphs (B) to (D), inclusive, of subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of this section, shall develop or approve a concussion education plan for use by local and regional boards of education. Each local and regional board of education shall implement such plan by utilizing written materials, online training or videos or in person training that shall address, at a minimum: (1) The recognition of signs or symptoms of concussion, (2) the means of obtaining proper medical treatment for a person suspected of sustaining a concussion, (3) the nature and risks of concussions, including the danger of continuing to engage in athletic activity after sustaining a concussion, (4) the proper procedures for allowing a student athlete who has sustained a concussion to return to athletic activity, and (5) current best practices in the prevention and treatment of a concussion.

(d) For the school year commencing July 1, 2015, and each school year thereafter, each local and regional board of education shall prohibit a student athlete from participating in any intramural or interscholastic athletic activity unless the student athlete, and a parent or guardian of such student athlete, (1) reads written materials, (2) views online training or videos, or (3) attends in-person training regarding the concussion education plan developed or approved pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.

(e) (1) On or before July 1, 2015, the State Board of Education, in consultation with the Commissioner of Public Health and the organizations described in subparagraphs (B) to (D), inclusive, of subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of this section, shall develop or approve an informed consent form to distribute to the parents and legal guardians of student athletes involved in intramural or interscholastic athletic activities regarding concussions. Such informed consent form shall include, at a minimum, (A) a summary of the concussion education plan developed or approved pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, and (B) a summary of the applicable local or regional board of education's policies regarding concussions.

(2) For the school year commencing July 1, 2015, and each school year thereafter, each school shall provide each participating student athlete's parent or legal guardian with a copy of the informed consent form developed or approved pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection and obtain such parent's or legal guardian's signature, attesting to the fact that such parent or legal guardian has received a copy of such form and authorizes the student athlete to participate in the athletic activity.

(f) The State Board of Education may revoke the coaching permit, in accordance with the provisions of subsection (i) of section 10-145b, of any coach found to be in violation of this section.

Sec. 2. Section 10-149c of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2014*):

(a) (1) The coach of any intramural or interscholastic athletics shall immediately remove a student athlete from participating in any intramural or interscholastic athletic activity who (A) is observed to exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion following an observed or suspected blow to the head or body, or (B) is diagnosed with a concussion, regardless of when such concussion may have occurred. Upon such removal, a qualified school employee, as defined in subsection (e) of section 10-212a, shall notify the student athlete's parent or legal guardian that the student athlete has exhibited such signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion or has been diagnosed with a concussion. Such qualified school employee shall provide such notification not later than twenty-four hours after such removal and shall make a reasonable effort to provide such notification immediately after such removal.

(2) The coach shall not permit such student athlete to participate in any supervised team activities involving physical exertion, including, but not limited to, practices, games or competitions, until such student athlete receives written clearance to participate in such supervised team activities involving physical exertion from a licensed health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

(3) Following clearance pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection, the coach shall not permit such student athlete to participate in any full, unrestricted supervised team activities without limitations on contact or physical exertion, including, but not limited to, practices, games or competitions, until such student athlete (A) no longer exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion at rest or with exertion, and (B) receives written clearance to participate in such full, unrestricted supervised team activities from a licensed health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

(b) The State Board of Education may revoke the coaching permit, in accordance with the provisions of subsection (i) of section 10-145b, of any coach found to be in violation of this section.

(c) For purposes of this section, "licensed health care professional" means a physician licensed pursuant to chapter 370, a physician assistant licensed pursuant to chapter 370, an advanced practice registered nurse licensed pursuant to chapter 378 or an athletic trainer licensed pursuant to chapter 375a.

Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2014*) (a) For the school year commencing July 1, 2014, and annually

thereafter, the State Board of Education shall require all local and regional school districts to collect and report all occurrences of concussions to the board. Each report shall contain, if known: (1) The nature and extent of the concussion, and (2) the circumstances in which the student sustained the concussion.

(b) For the school year commencing July 1, 2015, and each school year thereafter, the State Board of Education shall send a concussion report to the Department of Public Health containing all of the information received pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

(c) Not later than October 1, 2015, and annually thereafter, the Commissioner of Public Health shall report, in accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children and public health on the findings of the concussion report provided to the department pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

Sec. 4. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a task force to study occurrences of concussions in youth athletics and to make recommendations for possible legislative initiatives to address such concussions. Such study shall include, but not be limited to, an examination of (1) current best practices in the recognition and prevention of concussions in youth athletics, (2) current policies and procedures for addressing concussions utilized by operators of youth athletic leagues in the state, (3) training of employees and volunteers participating in such youth athletic leagues, and (4) relevant federal, state and local laws and regulations involving concussions.

(b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

(1) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall represent the governing authority for intramural and interscholastic athletics, and one of whom shall represent the Connecticut State Medical Society;

(2) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of whom shall represent county medical associations, and one of whom shall represent the American Association of Neurology;

(3) Two appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall represent licensed athletic trainers, and one of whom shall be a coach of youth athletics;

(4) Two appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, one of whom shall be a physician trained in sports medicine, and one of whom shall represent the Association of School Nurses of Connecticut;

(5) Two appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be an academic who has studied the effects of concussions on children, and one of whom shall represent the Connecticut Association of School Psychologists;

(6) Two appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, one of whom shall represent the Connecticut Concussion Task Force, and one of whom shall represent the Connecticut Children's Medical Center;

(7) Two appointed by the house chairperson of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children, one of whom shall represent a parent

advocacy group that advocates for concussion awareness, and one of whom shall be a chiropractor licensed pursuant to chapter 372 of the general statutes;

(8) Two appointed by the senate chairperson of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children, one of whom shall represent the Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association, and one of whom shall be an attorney with experience representing brain injury survivors;

(9) The Commissioner of Public Health, or the commissioner's designee;

(10) The Commissioner of Children and Families, or the commissioner's designee;

(11) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee; and

(12) A representative of the Hezekiah Beardsley Connecticut Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, who shall be appointed by the Governor.

(c) All appointments to the task force shall be made not later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

(d) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force from among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

(e) The administrative staff of the Commission on Children shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

(f) Not later than January 1, 2015, the task force shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children and public health, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or January 1, 2015, whichever is later.

Approved May 28, 2014