2024 -- S 2146

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

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A N   A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- SCHOOL AND YOUTH PROGRAMS CONCUSSION ACT

Introduced By: Senators F. Lombardi, LaMountain, Britto, Ciccone, and Felag

Date Introduced: January 24, 2024

Referred To: Senate Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1   SECTION 1. Section 16-91-3 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-91 entitled "School and

2   Youth Programs Concussion Act" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3   **16-91-3. School district's guidelines to be developed and implemented.**

4   (a) The department of education and the department of health shall work in concert with

5   the Rhode Island Interscholastic League to develop and promulgate guidelines to inform and

6   educate coaches, teachers, school nurses, youth athletes, and their parents and/or guardians of the

7   nature and risk of concussion and head injury, including continuing to play after concussion or head

8   injury. A concussion and head injury information sheet shall be signed and returned by the youth

9   athlete and the athlete's parent and/or guardian prior to the youth athlete's return to practice or

10   competition.

11   (b) School districts are required to use training materials made available by the United

12   States Center for Disease Control and Prevention entitled "Heads Up: Concussion in the High

13   School Sports/Concussion in Youth Sports" and any updates or amendments thereto, or training

14   materials substantively and substantially similar thereto. The department of education shall post

15   training materials made available by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the Rhode

16   Island Interscholastic League on its website. All coaches and volunteers involved in a youth sport

17   or activity covered by this chapter must complete a training course and a refresher course annually

18   thereafter in concussions and traumatic brain injuries. All school nurses must complete a training

19   course and an annual refresher course in concussions and traumatic brain injuries. Teachers and

1   teachers' aides are strongly encouraged to complete the training course in concussions and

2   traumatic brain injuries. Training may consist of videos, classes, and any other generally accepted

3   mode and medium of providing information.

4   (c) School districts are encouraged to have all student athletes perform baseline

5   neuropsychological testing, computerized or otherwise. Parents and/or guardians shall be provided

6   with information as to the risk of concussion and/or traumatic brain injuries prior to the start of

7   every sport season and they shall sign an acknowledgement as to their receipt of such information.

8   (d) A youth athlete, who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice

9   or game, shall be removed from competition at that time.

10   (e) A youth athlete, who has been removed from play, may not return to play until the

11   athlete is evaluated by a licensed physician who may consult with an athletic trainer, all of whom

12   shall be trained in the evaluation and management of concussions. The athlete must receive written

13   clearance to return to play from that licensed physician.

14   (f) All school districts are encouraged to have an athletic trainer, or similarly trained

15   person, at all recreational and athletic events addressed by this ~~statute~~ section; provided, however,

16   that notwithstanding the foregoing, all school districts shall be required to designate an athletic

17   trainer licensed pursuant to chapter 60 of title 5 for each high school within its district, to be

18   available for all of the high school's athletic practices and games.

19   SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION

BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

OF

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RELATING TO EDUCATION -- SCHOOL AND YOUTH PROGRAMS CONCUSSION ACT

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1   This act would require all school districts to designate an athletic trainer to be available for

2   high school athletic practices and games.

3   This act would take effect upon passage.

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