

CHAPTER 168

AN ACT concerning the health and safety of certain students and amending P.L.2010, c.94.

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

1. Section 2 of P.L.2010, c.94 (C.18A:40-41.2) is amended to read as follows:

C.18A:40-41.2 Interscholastic athletic head injury safety training program.

2. a. The Department of Education shall work to develop and implement, by the 2011-2012 school year, an interscholastic athletic head injury safety training program. The program shall be completed by a school physician, a person who coaches a public school district or nonpublic school interscholastic sport or cheerleading program, and an athletic trainer involved in a public or nonpublic school interscholastic sports program or cheerleading program. The safety training program shall include, but need not be limited to, the following:

(1) the recognition of the symptoms of head and neck injuries, concussions, and injuries related to second-impact syndrome; and

(2) the appropriate amount of time to delay the return to competition or practice of a student-athlete or cheerleader who has sustained a concussion or other head injury.

b. The department shall update the safety training program as necessary to ensure that it reflects the most current information available on the nature, risk, and treatment of sports-related concussions and other head injuries.

c. The department shall develop an educational fact sheet that provides information about sports-related concussions and other head injuries. A school district or a nonpublic school that participates in an interscholastic sports program or cheerleading program shall distribute the educational fact sheet annually to the parents or guardians of student-athletes and cheerleaders and shall obtain a signed acknowledgment of the receipt of the fact sheet by the student-athlete or cheerleader and his parent or guardian.

2. Section 3 of P.L.2010, c.94 (C.18A:40-41.3) is amended to read as follows:

C.18A:40-41.3 Written policy for school district concerning prevention, treatment of sports-related head injuries.

3. a. Each school district shall develop a written policy concerning the prevention and treatment of sports-related concussions and other head injuries among student-athletes and cheerleaders. The policy shall include, but need not be limited to, the procedure to be followed when it is suspected that a student-athlete or cheerleader has sustained a concussion or other head injury. When developing the district policy, a school district shall review the model policy established by the Commissioner of Education pursuant to subsection b. of this section, the policies established by the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association, the National Collegiate Athletic Association, and the recommendations made by the Brain Injury Association of New Jersey Concussion in Sports Steering Committee, the Athletic Trainers' Society of New Jersey, and other organizations with expertise in the area of preventing or treating sports-related concussions and other head injuries among student-athletes and cheerleaders. Each school district shall implement the policy by the 2011-2012 school year.

The policy shall be reviewed annually, and updated as necessary, by the district to ensure that it reflects the most current information available on the prevention, risk, and treatment of sports-related concussions and other head injuries.

b. To assist school districts in developing policies concerning the prevention and treatment of sports-related concussions and other head injuries among student-athletes and cheerleaders, the Commissioner of Education shall develop a model policy applicable to grades kindergarten through 12. This model policy shall be issued no later than March 31, 2011.

3. Section 4 of P.L.2010, c.94 (C.18A:40-41.4) is amended to read as follows:

C.18A:40-41.4 Removal of student athlete from competition, practice; return.

4. A student who participates in an interscholastic sports program or cheerleading program and who sustains or is suspected of having sustained a concussion or other head injury while engaged in a competition or practice shall be immediately removed from the competition or practice. A student-athlete or cheerleader who is removed from competition or practice shall not participate in further sports or cheerleading activity until he is evaluated by a physician or other licensed healthcare provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussions, and receives written clearance from a physician trained in the evaluation and management of concussions to return to competition or practice.

4. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved January 5, 2012.