

2016 -- H 7756

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION - SCHOOL AND YOUTH PROGRAMS CONCUSSION ACT

Introduced By: Representatives Naughton, Gallison, McNamara, Maldonado, and Amore

Date Introduced: February 26, 2016

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

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.** -- (a) The
4 department of education and the department of health shall work in concert with the Rhode Island
5 Interscholastic League to develop and promulgate guidelines to inform and educate coaches,
6 teachers, school nurses, youth athletes, and their parents and/or guardians of the nature and risk of
7 concussion and head injury, including continuing to play after concussion or head injury. A
8 concussion and head injury information sheet shall be signed and returned by the youth athlete
9 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
16 Rhode Island Interscholastic League on its website. All coaches and volunteers involved in a
17 youth sport or activity covered by this chapter must complete a training course and a refresher
18 course annually thereafter in concussions and traumatic brain injuries. All school nurses must
19 complete a training course and an annual refresher course in concussions and traumatic brain

1 injuries. Teachers and teachers' aides are strongly encouraged to complete the training course in
2 concussions and traumatic brain injuries. Training may consist of videos, classes, and any other
3 generally accepted 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
6 provided with information as to the risk of concussion and/or traumatic brain injuries prior to the
7 start of every sport season and they shall sign an acknowledgement as to their receipt of such
8 information.

9 (d) A youth athlete, who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a
10 practice or game, shall be removed from competition at that time.

11 (e) A youth athlete, who has been removed from play, may not return to play until the
12 athlete is evaluated by a licensed physician who may consult with an athletic trainer, all of whom
13 shall be trained in the evaluation and management of concussions. The athlete must receive
14 written clearance to return to play from that licensed physician.

15 (f) All school districts are encouraged to have an athletic trainer, or similarly trained
16 person, at all recreational and athletic events addressed by this statute.

17 (g) School districts are required to mandate that any female softball player who is
18 nineteen (19) years of age or younger, and who plays softball at either first base, third base or
19 pitcher position shall be required to wear a protective face mask. The protective face mask shall
20 be worn in both practice and games, and any mask worn must meet National Operating
21 Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) or ASTM test standards at the time
22 of manufacture; provided, the Rhode Island Interscholastic League shall promulgate rules and
23 regulations necessary to implement the requirements of this section.

24 SECTION 2. Chapter 23-1 of the General Laws entitled "Department of Health" is
25 hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

26 **23-1-59. Youth sports safety - Protective face masks required. -- Any youth sports**
27 **program offering girls softball shall require that any female softball player who is nineteen (19)**
28 **years of age or younger and who plays softball at either first base, third base or pitcher position**
29 **shall be required to wear a protective face mask. The protective face mask shall be worn in both**
30 **practice and games and any mask worn must meet National Operating Committee on Standards**
31 **for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) or ASTM test standards at the time of manufacture.**

32 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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1 This act would require that Interscholastic League Athletes and youth sports athletes who
2 are female and 19 years of age or younger and who play certain softball positions wear protective
3 face masks during practice and at games.

4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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