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H.260

Introduced by Representative Till of Jericho

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Education; school athletic activities; sudden cardiac arrest prevention

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require the Secretary of Education and public and approved independent schools to take steps to prevent sudden cardiac arrest by students participating in school athletic activities.

An act relating to sudden cardiac arrest prevention during school athletic activities

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. chapter 1 is amended to read:

CHAPTER 1. ADMINISTRATION GENERALLY

* * *

Subchapter 10. Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention

§ 141. SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST PREVENTION

(a) Definitions. As used in this subchapter:

(1) "Athletic activity" means:

(A) interscholastic athletics;

1 (B) an athletic contest or competition, other than interscholastic
2 athletics, that is sponsored or facilitated by a school, including cheerleading,
3 club-sponsored sports activities, and sports activities sponsored by
4 school-affiliated organizations;

5 (C) noncompetitive cheerleading that is sponsored or facilitated by a
6 school; and

7 (D) practices and scrimmages for the activities listed under
8 subdivisions (A), (B), and (C) of this subdivision (1).

9 (2) “Athletic staff member” means an athletic director, coach, athletic
10 trainer, or other school official overseeing or supporting an athletic activity.

11 (3) “School” means a public school and an approved independent
12 school.

13 (b) Educational materials.

14 (1) The Secretary of Education shall develop and post on its publicly
15 accessible Internet website an information sheet and other relevant materials to
16 inform and educate students participating in or desiring to participate in an
17 athletic activity, their parents or guardians, and the school’s athletic staff
18 members about the nature and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest,
19 including the risks associated with continuing to play or practice after
20 experiencing the following symptoms: fainting or seizures during exercise,
21 unexplained shortness of breath, chest pains, dizziness, racing heart rate, or

1 extreme fatigue. Within one month of the start of each school year, each
2 school shall provide this information sheet to the parent or guardian of a
3 student who participates or desires to participate in an athletic activity.

4 (2) In developing the guidelines and materials, the Secretary of
5 Education may utilize, with permission from the owner and at no cost to the
6 State, an educational video created by Simon's Fund for the purpose of
7 educating athletic staff members about sudden cardiac arrest.

8 (3) A student participating in or desiring to participate in an athletic
9 activity and the student's parent or guardian shall, each school year and prior to
10 participation by the student in an athletic activity, sign and return to the
11 student's school an acknowledgment of receipt and review of the sudden
12 cardiac arrest information sheet developed under this subsection.

13 (c) Informational meeting. Each school shall hold an informational
14 meeting prior to the start of each athletic season for all participants in athletic
15 activities regarding the symptoms and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest.

16 (d) Removal from play.

17 (1) If an athletic staff member is present at an athletic activity and a
18 student faints or has a seizure while participating in the athletic activity, the
19 staff member shall remove the student from participation in the athletic activity
20 at that time.

1 (2) If an athletic staff member is present at an athletic activity and a
2 student experiences unexplained shortness of breath, chest pains, dizziness,
3 racing heart rate, or extreme fatigue while participating in the athletic activity,
4 the staff member may remove the student from participation in the athletic
5 activity if the staff member believes that the symptoms are cardiac related.

6 (3) The school shall promptly inform the parent or guardian of a student
7 who has been removed from play under this subsection and the school shall not
8 permit the student to return to participate in any athletic activity until the
9 student is evaluated and cleared in writing by a qualified medical professional
10 to participate.

11 (e) Training course.

12 (1) Within one month of the start of each school year, each athletic staff
13 member shall complete the sudden cardiac arrest training course provided by
14 Simon's Fund or another provider approved by the Secretary of Education.

15 (2) An athletic staff member shall not be eligible to oversee or support
16 any athletic activity until completing the training course required under this
17 subsection.

18 (f) Penalties. On or before July 1, 2020, the governing body of each school
19 shall establish the following minimum penalties for an athletic staff member
20 who violates the requirements under this section:

1 (1) for a first violation, suspension from overseeing or supporting any
2 athletic activity for the remainder of the season;

3 (2) for a second violation, suspension from overseeing or supporting any
4 athletic activity for the remainder of the season and for the next season; and

5 (3) for a third violation, permanent suspension from overseeing or
6 supporting any athletic activity.

7 (g) Civil liability. No athletic staff member shall be exposed to civil
8 liability for his or her actions or inactions under this section unless he or she is
9 found to have acted in a grossly negligent or reckless manner.

10 (h) Other youth athletic activities. The sponsors of youth athletic activities
11 are encouraged to follow the guidance stated in this section.

12 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

13 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.