



# Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 408**

February Session, 2010

Substitute Senate Bill No. 456

*Senate, April 8, 2010*

The Committee on Education reported through SEN. GAFFEY of the 13th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

## ***AN ACT CONCERNING STUDENT ATHLETES AND CONCUSSIONS.***

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) (1) For the school year  
2 commencing July 1, 2010, and each school year thereafter, any person  
3 who holds or is issued a coaching permit by the State Board of  
4 Education and is a coach of intramural or interscholastic athletics shall  
5 complete an initial training course regarding concussions and head  
6 injuries, developed or approved pursuant to subdivision (1) of  
7 subsection (b) of this section, prior to commencing the coaching  
8 assignment for the season of such school athletics.

9 (2) For the school year commencing July 1, 2011, and each school  
10 year thereafter, and after completion of the initial training course  
11 described in subdivision (1) of this subsection, such coach shall  
12 annually review current and relevant information regarding  
13 concussions and head injuries, prepared or approved pursuant to  
14 subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of this section, prior to commencing  
15 the coaching assignment for the season of such school athletics. Such

16 annual review shall not be required in any year when such coach is  
17 required to complete the refresher course, pursuant to subdivision (3)  
18 of this subsection, for reissuance of his or her coaching permit.

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

27 (b) (1) On or before July 1, 2010, the State Board of Education, in  
28 consultation with (A) the governing authority for intramural and  
29 interscholastic athletics, (B) an appropriate organization representing  
30 licensed athletic trainers, and (C) an organization representing county  
31 medical associations, shall develop or approve a training course  
32 regarding concussions and head injuries. Such training course shall  
33 include, but not be limited to, (i) the recognition of the symptoms of a  
34 concussion or head injury, (ii) the means of obtaining proper medical  
35 treatment for a person suspected of having a concussion or head  
36 injury, and (iii) the nature and risk of concussions and head injuries,  
37 including the danger of continuing to play after sustaining a  
38 concussion or head injury and the proper method of allowing a  
39 student athlete who has sustained a concussion or head injury to  
40 return to athletic activity.

41 (2) On or before January 1, 2011, the State Board of Education, in  
42 consultation with the organizations described in subdivision (1) of this  
43 subsection, shall prepare or approve annual review materials  
44 regarding current and relevant information about concussions and  
45 head injuries.

46 (3) On or before January 1, 2014, the State Board of Education, in  
47 consultation with the organizations described in subdivision (1) of this  
48 subsection, shall develop or approve a refresher course regarding

49 concussions and head injuries. Such refresher course shall include, but  
50 not be limited to, (A) an overview of key recognition and safety  
51 practices, (B) an update on medical developments in the field of  
52 concussion research and prevention, and (C) an update on new  
53 relevant federal, state and local laws and regulations.

54 (c) The State Board of Education may revoke the coaching permit, in  
55 accordance with the provisions of subsection (j) of section 10-145b of  
56 the general statutes, of any coach found to be in violation of this  
57 section.

58 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2010*) (a) (1) The coach of any  
59 intramural or interscholastic athletics shall immediately remove any  
60 student athlete participating in intramural or interscholastic athletics  
61 who (A) is observed to exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent  
62 with a concussion following an observed or suspected blow to the  
63 head or body during a practice, game or competition, (B) is diagnosed  
64 with a concussion, or (C) is otherwise suspected of having sustained a  
65 concussion or head injury because such student athlete is observed to  
66 exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion  
67 regardless of when such concussion or head injury may have occurred.

68 (2) The coach shall not permit such student athlete to participate in  
69 any supervised team activities involving physical exertion, including,  
70 but not limited to, practices, games or competitions, sooner than  
71 twenty-four hours after such student athlete was so removed. The  
72 coach shall not permit such student athlete to participate in any  
73 supervised team activities involving physical exertion until such  
74 student athlete receives written clearance to participate in such  
75 supervised team activities involving physical exertion from a licensed  
76 health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of  
77 concussions.

78 (3) Following clearance pursuant to subdivision (2) of this  
79 subsection, the coach shall not permit such student athlete to  
80 participate in any full, unrestricted supervised team activities without  
81 limitations on contact or physical exertion, including, but not limited

82 to, practices, games or competitions, until such student athlete (A) no  
 83 longer exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a  
 84 concussion at rest or with exertion, and (B) receives written clearance  
 85 to participate in such full, unrestricted supervised team activities from  
 86 a licensed health care professional trained in the evaluation and  
 87 management of concussions.

88 (b) The State Board of Education may revoke the coaching permit, in  
 89 accordance with the provisions of subsection (j) of section 10-145b of  
 90 the general statutes, of any coach found to be in violation of this  
 91 section.

92 (c) For purposes of this section, "licensed health care professional"  
 93 means a physician licensed pursuant to chapter 370 of the general  
 94 statutes, a physician assistant licensed pursuant to chapter 370 of the  
 95 general statutes, an advanced practice registered nurse licensed  
 96 pursuant to chapter 378 of the general statutes or an athletic trainer  
 97 licensed pursuant to chapter 375a of the general statutes.

|   |                     |             |
|---|---------------------|-------------|
| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: |                     |             |
| Section 1   | <i>from passage</i> | New section |
| Sec. 2  | <i>July 1, 2010</i> | New section |

**Statement of Legislative Commissioners:**

Changes were made to subsections (a) and (b) of section 1 to distinguish between the requirement that coaches need to complete specific training and the development of such training courses by the Department of Education.

**ED**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:** None

**Municipal Impact:**

| Municipalities                      | Effect         | FY 11 \$ | FY 12 \$ |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|----------|----------|
| Local and Regional School Districts | Potential Cost | Minimal  | Minimal  |

**Explanation**

**Section 1** of the bill establishes a training program about head injuries and concussions, and requires those individuals holding coaching permits to take an initial training course and a refresher course every five years. It is not clear who would be responsible for paying for the training course. If individual coaches assumed the cost of the additional training, there would be no additional cost to local and regional school districts. However, if individual coaches did not assume the additional cost, there would be an increased cost to local and regional school districts associated with the additional training, which could be incorporated into the annual professional development schedule for coaches. It is anticipated that incorporating head injury and concussion training into the annual professional development schedule would result in a minimal cost to local and regional school districts, associated with the need to hire additional trainers at a cost of approximately \$75-\$100 per hour.

**Section 1** also requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to develop or approve the training course mentioned above. It is anticipated that this will not result in an additional cost to SBE.

**Section 2** of the bill, which requires a coach to immediately take an

athlete out of a game, competition, or practice if the athlete shows signs of a concussion, after a perceived or suspected head injury, or if the athlete has been diagnosed with a concussion, is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact.

***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

*Sources: Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference*

**OLR Bill Analysis****sSB 456*****AN ACT CONCERNING STUDENT ATHLETES AND CONCUSSIONS.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires anyone who is issued or who holds a coaching permit issued by the State Board of Education (SBE) allowing him or her to coach intramural or interscholastic athletics to be periodically trained in how to recognize and respond to head injuries and concussions. It also requires a coach to take a student athlete out of a game or practice if the coach knows or suspects the athlete has suffered a concussion or head injury. The coach must keep the athlete out of any game or practice for at least 24 hours and until the athlete has received clearance from a licensed medical professional to return to participation.

The bill allows the SBE to revoke the coaching permit of any coach who violates its requirements.

SBE regulations require every intramural and interscholastic athletic coach working in a public elementary, middle, or high school to have either an SBE-issued coaching permit, renewable every five years, or a temporary emergency coaching permit, valid for one year and renewable once (see BACKGROUND). A coach working in a private school that participates in interscholastic or intramural athletics may also hold such a permit and, if so, the bill's requirements apply to the private school coach as well. However, the bill's training requirements and certificate revocation penalty do not apply to coaches holding temporary emergency coaching permits.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Upon passage for the training requirements; July 1, 2010 for the requirement to remove students from games or

practices for at least 24 hours and until they receive medical clearance.

## **TRAINING FOR COACHES**

### ***Training Requirements***

The bill establishes a program to train those with coaching permits about head injuries and concussions. It requires coaches to complete an initial training course before starting to coach for the season in the 2010-11 school year. Starting with the 2015-16 school year, coaches must complete a refresher course every five years. Starting July 1, 2011, in any year they are not taking a refresher course, coaches must, before they begin their coaching assignment for the year, review current and relevant information on concussions and head injuries. Both the annual reviews and the periodic refresher courses are a condition for reissuing a coaching permit.

### ***Course Content***

The initial course must include training in (1) how to recognize the symptoms of a concussion or head injury, (2) how to obtain proper medical treatment for an athlete suspected of having a concussion or head injury, and (3) the nature and risk of such injuries. As part of the latter, the course must cover the danger of continuing to play and the proper method of allowing an athlete to return to play after he or she sustains a concussion or head injury. The refresher course must include (1) an overview of key recognition and safety practices, (2) updates of research on and prevention of concussions, and (3) updates on relevant new laws and regulations.

### ***Development and Approval of Training Courses and Materials***

The bill requires SBE to develop or approve the initial and refresher courses and the annual review materials. SBE must act in consultation with (1) the governing authority for intramural and interscholastic athletics, which is the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Association (CIAC), and (2) organizations representing licensed athletic trainers and county medical societies.

SBE must develop or approve the initial course by July 1, 2010, the

annual review materials by January 1, 2011, and the refresher course by January 1, 2014.

## **REMOVAL FROM GAMES AND PRACTICES**

The bill requires a coach to immediately take an athlete out of a game, competition, or practice if the athlete (1) shows signs of a concussion whether (a) after a perceived or suspected head or body blow or (b) when no injury may have occurred or (2) is diagnosed with a concussion. The coach must keep the athlete out for at least 24 hours and not allow a return to supervised team activities involving physical exertion until the athlete has received written clearance from a licensed physician, physician assistant, advanced practice registered nurse, or athletic trainer trained to evaluate and manage concussions.

Following medical clearance, a coach must restrict an athlete's participation until he or she (1) no longer shows signs of concussion at rest or with exertion and (2) receives medical clearance to participate fully in supervised team activities involving physical contact or exertion.

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Coaching Permit***

SBE regulations require all coaches working in public schools, regardless of coaching assignment, to hold a coaching permit. A permit holder must meet the following requirements:

1. be at least age 18;
2. have a high school diploma or its equivalent;
3. successfully complete a standard first aid course within three years before applying for a permit and every three years after receiving the permit;
4. continuously maintain CPR certification; and
5. either (a) hold a regular teaching certificate or (b) complete at least three semester hours or 45 clock hours of instruction

approved by the State Department of Education (SDE) and offered by a board of education or CIAC on the medical, legal, and safety aspects, and the principles and practices, of coaching children and adolescents and child and adolescent sports psychology.

A coaching permit is renewable every five years, provided the holder completes at least 15 clock hours of SDE-approved professional development that provides information on safe and healthy coaching practices and understanding child and adolescent development (*CT State Agency Regs. § 10-145d-423 (b)*).

### **Temporary Emergency Coaching Permit**

A temporary emergency coaching permit allows the holder to coach intramural or interscholastic athletics in a public school for one year. A school board must apply for such a permit and provide evidence that the holder:

1. is at least age 18;
2. has a high school diploma or equivalent; and
3. no earlier than one year before the application, completed a standard first aid course and CPR certification.

At a school board's request, SBE may renew a temporary emergency coaching permit for a second year, if the local board provides evidence that the applicant has enrolled in or completed at least two credits or 30 clock hours of instruction toward the requirements for a coaching permit (see above) (*CT State Agency Regs. § 10-145d-424 and 425*).

### **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 32 Nay 0 (03/19/2010)