



HOUSE BILL 768: Heat Stroke Prevention/Student Athletes

2015-2016 General Assembly

Committee:	House Health, if favorable, Education - K-12	Date:	April 25, 2015
Introduced by:	Rep. Richardson	Prepared by:	Theresa Matula
Analysis of:	First Edition		Committee Staff

SUMMARY: *House Bill 768 amends Chapter 115C Elementary and Secondary Education, to add a new Article on Student Safety in Athletics which contains: new requirements pertaining to heat related illnesses including heat exhaustion and heat stroke, relocates the current law on concussion safety to this Article, relocates the current law providing for venue-specific emergency action plans to this Article, and requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules in accordance with the new Article to ensure student safety during athletic activities.*

BILL ANALYSIS:

Section 1 of House Bill 768 adds a new Article 29E. Student Safety in Athletics to Chapter 115C of the General Statutes. Sections of the new Article are outlined below.

Definitions are outlined in G.S. 115C-407.40 for the following terms: athletic activity, concussion, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke.

Heat exhaustion and heat stroke education; removal from athletic participation is a new section created by G.S. 115C 407.41. Elements of this section are outlined below.

- Requires the State Board of Education to adopt guidelines and educational materials to be used by local boards of education informing students who participate in athletic activities and those students' parents and coaches on (i) heat related illnesses, including heat stroke and heat exhaustion and (ii) the health risks associated with continuing athletic play or practice after experiencing signs and symptoms of a heat related illness.
- Requires the student's parent or guardian to sign and return to the student's school an acknowledgment of receipt and review of the information sheet developed.
- Requires each local board of education to adopt a mandatory heat stroke prevention protocol for students participating in athletic activities consistent with the guidelines and educational materials adopted. Further provides that a student who exhibits symptoms of heat exhaustion or heat stroke, as determined by a game official, coach from the student's team, verified athletic trainer, licensed healthcare professional, or other designated official, at any time prior to, during, or following an athletic activity must be removed by the coach from participation in an athletic activity. The venue specific emergency action plan shall provide for circumstances in which specific cooling methods must be made available during an athletic activity, including weather conditions requiring access to an immersion pool. A student removed or prevented from participating in an athletic activity in accordance with this subsection shall not return to participation until the student is evaluated and cleared for return to participation in writing by a licensed healthcare professional or other official designated by the school under the venue specific emergency action plan.

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Concussion safety is provided in the new Article in G.S. 115C-407.42, which requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules pertaining to concussion safety for student athletes in middle and high schools that are involved in interscholastic athletic activities. The requirements in this section have been relocated to this new Article from G.S. 115C-12(23) a. and b.

Venue specific emergency action plans are relocated from G.S. 115C-12(23)c. to G.S. 115C-407.43 of the new Article. This section specifies that a local board of education must require each middle school and high school to develop a venue specific emergency action plan to deal with serious injuries and acute medical conditions in which the condition of the patient may deteriorate rapidly.

Section 2 removes current law in G.S. 115C-12(23) to conform to the relocation of concussion safety and venue specific emergency action plan requirements in the new Article created by Section 1 of the bill. G.S. 115C-12(23) is amended to require the State Board of Education to adopt rules governing student safety in interscholastic athletic activities conducted by local boards of education in accordance with the new Article 29E.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The bill would become effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with the 2015-2016 school year.