

BILL AB 2127

Bill AB 2127, authored by Assembly Member Cooley, mandates additional state law concerning concussions and full-contact practice in football.

This bill went into effect on January 1, 2015. The bill also has the support of the State CIF Office, which has been involved in adjusting the language of the bill.

Digest: (1) Existing law establishes a system of public elementary and secondary schools operated by local educational agencies throughout this state. Under existing law, public and private secondary schools participate in interscholastic sports, and are authorized to enter into associations or consortia to enact and enforce rules relating to eligibility for, and participation in, these activities. Existing law acknowledges the role of the California Interscholastic Federation in the regulation of interscholastic sports in this state. This bill would express legislative findings and declarations relating to head injuries sustained by high school pupil-athletes, particularly those who play football.

The bill prohibits high school and middle school football teams of school districts, charter schools, or private schools that elect to offer an athletic program from conducting more than 2 full-contact practices, as defined, per week during the preseason and regular season, as defined. The bill also prohibits the full-contact portion of a practice from exceeding 90 minutes in any single day, and completely prohibits full-contact practice during the off-season, as defined. The bill urges the California Interscholastic Federation to develop and adopt rules to implement this provision. The bill provides that these provisions do not prohibit the California Interscholastic Federation, an interscholastic athletic league, a school, a school district, or any other appropriate entity from adopting and enforcing rules intended to provide a higher standard of safety for athletes than the standard established under the bill.

(2) Existing law requires a school district, charter school, or private school, if it offers an athletic program, to immediately remove an athlete from an athletic activity for the remainder of the day if the athlete is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury, and prohibits the athlete from returning to the athletic activity until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider, trained in the management of concussions and acting within the scope of his or her practice, and the athlete receives written clearance from the licensed health care provider to return to the athletic activity. Existing law also requires, on a yearly basis, a concussion and head injury information sheet to be signed and returned by the athlete and athlete' parent or guardian before the athlete initiates practice or competition.

This bill provides that an athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury is prohibited from returning to the athletic activity until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider, as defined to mean a licensed health care provider trained in the management of concussions and acting within the scope of his or her practice, and the athlete receives written clearance from a licensed health care provider. The bill further provides that, if a licensed health care provider determines that the athlete sustained a concussion or a head injury, the athlete is required to complete a graduated return-to-play protocol of no less than 7 days in duration under the supervision of a licensed health care provider. The bill urges the California Interscholastic Federation to develop and adopt rules and protocols to implement this provision.