

2026 -- H 7903

LC005764

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- SCHOOL AND YOUTH PROGRAMS CONCUSSION ACT

Introduced By: Representatives Casey, J. Brien, Hopkins, Messier, Costantino,
McNamara, Biah, Azzinaro, and Slater

Date Introduced: February 27, 2026

Referred To: House Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Sections 16-91-2 and 16-91-3 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-91 entitled
2 "School and Youth Programs Concussion Act" are hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **16-91-2. Definitions.**

4 (1) "Healthcare professional" means a person who is licensed or registered under the laws
5 of this state as a physician, a chiropractic physician, a naturopathic physician, a psychologist, a
6 physical therapist, an occupational therapist, a physician assistant or a nurse practitioner.

7 (2) "Public education provider" means a school district, a public charter school or an
8 education service district.

9 (3) ~~For the purpose of this section, the term "youth~~ "Youth sports programs" means any
10 program organized for recreational and/or athletic competition purposes by any school district or
11 by any school participating in Rhode Island Interscholastic League Competition, and whose
12 participants are nineteen (19) years of age or younger.

13 ~~**16-91-3. School district's guidelines to be developed and implemented**~~ **School**
14 **district's guidelines for student athletes.**

15 (a) The department of education and the department of health shall work in concert with
16 the Rhode Island Interscholastic League to develop and promulgate guidelines to inform and
17 educate coaches, teachers, school nurses, youth athletes, and their parents and/or guardians of the
18 nature and risk of concussion and head injury, including continuing to play after concussion or head
19 injury. A concussion and head injury information sheet shall be signed and returned by the youth

1 athlete and the athlete's parent and/or guardian prior to the youth athlete's return to practice or
2 competition.

3 (b) School districts are required to use training materials made available by the United
4 States Center for Disease Control and Prevention entitled "Heads Up: Concussion in the High
5 School Sports/Concussion in Youth Sports" and any updates or amendments thereto, or training
6 materials substantively and substantially similar thereto. The department of education shall post
7 training materials made available by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the Rhode
8 Island Interscholastic League on its website. All coaches and volunteers involved in a youth sport
9 or activity covered by this chapter must complete a training course and a refresher course annually
10 thereafter in concussions and traumatic brain injuries. All school nurses must complete a training
11 course and an annual refresher course in concussions and traumatic brain injuries. Teachers and
12 teachers' aides are strongly encouraged to complete the training course in concussions and
13 traumatic brain injuries. Training may consist of videos, classes, and any other generally accepted
14 mode and medium of providing information.

15 (c) School districts are encouraged to have all student athletes perform baseline
16 neuropsychological testing, computerized or otherwise. Parents and/or guardians shall be provided
17 with information as to the risk of concussion and/or traumatic brain injuries prior to the start of
18 every sport season and they shall sign an acknowledgement as to their receipt of such information.

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

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

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

27 SECTION 2. Chapter 16-91 of the General Laws entitled "School and Youth Programs
28 Concussion Act" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

29 **16-91-3.1. Form required.**

30 (a) The department of education shall develop a form for public education programs to use
31 when a student has been diagnosed with a concussion or other brain injury.

32 (b) The form required under this section must describe academic accommodations that a
33 public education program may make for a student who has been diagnosed with a concussion or
34 other brain injury. The accommodations must be optional for a public education program to provide

1 and must be nonmedical.

2 (c) The department must distribute the form developed under this section as soon as
3 practicable to public education programs when:

4 (1) The public education program receives notice that a student has been diagnosed with a
5 concussion or other brain injury; or

6 (2) Requested by an educator, a program employee, a student, a parent or a guardian.

7 (d) Nothing in this subsection requires a public education program to provide any or all of
8 the academic accommodation described on the form.

9 (e) The state board of elementary and secondary education may adopt any rules and
10 regulations necessary for the implementation of this section.

11 **16-91-3.2. Temporary accommodation plan for concussed students.**

12 (a) The department of education shall establish a procedure for public education providers
13 to use to develop and implement an immediate and temporary accommodations plan for a student
14 who has been diagnosed with a concussion or other brain injury by a health care professional to
15 ensure the safety and recovery of the student and to reduce the risk of reinjury or additional injury
16 to the student.

17 (b) Upon receiving written notification from a parent or guardian that a student has been
18 diagnosed with a concussion or other brain injury by a healthcare professional and that
19 accommodations are being requested, a public education provider shall initiate the procedure to
20 develop and implement an immediate and temporary accommodations plan.

21 (c) The procedure to develop and implement an immediate and temporary accommodations
22 plan shall be used by a public education provider to:

23 (1) Determine if immediate physical activity limitations are necessary to ensure the safety
24 and recovery of the student and to minimize the risk of reinjury or additional injury to the student,
25 including activities such as physical education, recess, unstructured play and similar activities
26 provided by or sponsored through the public education provider that involve running, jumping,
27 climbing, throwing, catching or other movements that pose a risk of falls, collisions or physical
28 injury. The public education provider shall implement any immediate physical activity limitations
29 determined to be necessary.

30 (2) Describe present challenges and symptoms associated with the student's concussion or
31 other brain injury.

32 (3) Identify and implement immediate and temporary academic, social-emotional,
33 behavioral or other necessary accommodations determined to be appropriate for the student to
34 support meaningful participation in educational activities at a level that is appropriate for the

1 student's recovery.

2 (4) Communicate accommodations identified under this section with:

3 (i) All teachers who provide instruction to the student; and

4 (ii) Other employees of the public education provider who have regular responsibilities for
5 the student's supervision or health, including school nurses, counselors, physical education
6 teachers, coaches, athletic trainers and staff supervising recess or other physical activities.

7 (5) Ensure that the accommodations identified under this section are:

8 (i) In effect no later than ten (10) school days after written notification has been received
9 by the public education provider regarding the concussion or other brain injury; and

10 (ii) Reviewed as needed, but no later than every two months, based on the students'
11 recovery.

12 (d) The department shall make available to all public education providers the procedure
13 and sample form developed under this section.

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

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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RELATING TO EDUCATION -- SCHOOL AND YOUTH PROGRAMS CONCUSSION ACT

- 1 This act would require schools to implement a plan to provide academic accommodation
- 2 for a student who has been diagnosed with a concussion or other brain injury.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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