

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 1653 (Sanchez)

As Amended March 30, 2023

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Requires, no later than July 1, 2024, the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF), in consultation with the California Department of Education (CDE), to develop guidelines, procedures, and safety standards for the prevention and management of exertional heat illness; and requires CIF to develop guidelines to identify the environmental conditions at which a school must limit and prohibit practice and play.

Major Provisions

- 1) Requires any school electing to offer an interscholastic athletic program to ensure that procedures related to heat illness are included in its existing written emergency action plan.
- 2) Requires the guidelines to include information regarding the accurate measurement of environmental heat stress at the site of the athletic activity, including the use of Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT).
- 3) Requires the guidelines to identify the environmental conditions at which a school shall have a method to institute whole-body cooling to treat a student athlete with exertional heat illness.

COMMENTS

Emergency action plans. Existing law requires, if a school district or charter school elects to offer any interscholastic athletic program, the governing board of the school district or the governing body of the charter school to ensure that there is a written emergency action plan in place that describes the location and procedures to be followed in the event of sudden cardiac arrest and other medical emergencies related to the athletic program's activities or events. Currently law requires the written emergency action plan to be posted in compliance with the most recent pertinent guidelines of the National Federation of State High School Associations. This bill adds heat stroke to the list of items included in the written emergency action plan.

Practice/play policy using wet bulb globe thermometer readings. According to the National Weather Service, a WBGT is a measure of the heat stress in direct sunlight, which takes into account: temperature, humidity, wind speed, sun angle, and cloud cover (solar radiation). This differs from the heat index, which takes into consideration temperature and humidity and is calculated for shady areas.

Using a WBGT monitor on-site provides more accurate data than that from the National Weather Service and can help athletic programs to dictate modifications in activity (work/rest ratios, hydration breaks, equipment work, length of practice) that make sports safer for all participants.

Research indicates that when establishing WBGT guidelines for physical activity, the guidelines must be geographic specific. For example, an athlete playing football in Louisiana may be accustomed to warm environmental conditions, unlike a football player from Maine. A football player practicing in 90°F temperatures in Louisiana could be comfortable whereas a football

player practicing in the same conditions in Maine could be experiencing the worst conditions they have felt all year, which would increase the risk of heat illness. (University of Connecticut Korey Stringer Institute)

According to the Author

"Heat illness has become a leading cause of death for our student athletes. Parents and schools need all the tools they can to help ensure student athletes are able to practice and play their sports under reasonably safe conditions. That's why I've introduced AB 1653, to help provide schools with more tools to be better prepared for emergencies related to heat illness."

Arguments in Support

None on file.

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee,

- 1) Minor and absorbable costs to CIF to develop guidelines, procedures, and safety standards for the prevention and management of exertional heat illness. CIF is not funded using state funds, though a portion of its revenue is generated by fees from participating schools.
- 2) Minor and absorbable General Fund costs to CDE to consult with CIF on the guidelines.
- 3) One-time Proposition 98 General Fund costs to CIF member schools to adhere to the regulations this bill requires CIF to develop. Member schools likely will need to purchase a WBGT and some may need to purchase a whole-body cooling mechanism to comply with regulations to maintain their CIF membership. A WBGT costs between \$500 and \$600. A whole-body cooling mechanism can range in cost, depending on how sophisticated the mechanism (for example, an ice bath versus an existing cold shower) but would likely average in the low hundreds of dollars per school. According to CIF, it provided 400 WBGTs to member schools last year. If the remaining 1,200 member schools need to purchase WBGTs as a result of this bill, costs would be about \$660,000 statewide. If half of member schools need to purchase a whole-body cooling mechanism as a result of this bill, costs would be about \$160,000.
- 4) Minor one-time Proposition 98 General Fund costs to a school offering interscholastic athletic programs to ensure that procedures related to heat illness is included in its existing written emergency action plan.

VOTES

ASM EDUCATION: 6-0-1

YES: Muratsuchi, Megan Dahle, Juan Carrillo, Hoover, Lee, Quirk-Silva

ABS, ABST OR NV: McCarty

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-1

YES: Holden, Megan Dahle, Bryan, Calderon, Wendy Carrillo, Dixon, Mike Fong, Hart, Lowenthal, Mathis, Papan, Pellerin, Sanchez, Weber, Ortega

ABS, ABST OR NV: Robert Rivas

UPDATED

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