

Date of Hearing: May 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 1626 (Gabriel) – As Amended April 8, 2026

Policy Committee:	Arts, Entertainment, Sports, and Tourism	Vote:	8 - 0
	Education		9 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill requires the California Department of Education (CDE), on or before September 1, 2027, to identify existing training or develop a model youth athletics behavioral and mental health training for coaches in youth sports organizations, post it on the department’s internet website, and work with local partners to disseminate the training. The bill also describes the mental and behavioral health education topics that may be covered in training required by AB 1665 (Pacheco) of the current legislative session.

FISCAL EFFECT:

Minor and absorbable costs to CDE.

COMMENTS:

1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

Coaches are uniquely positioned to make a real difference in the lives of young people. They see our kids every day — under pressure, in moments of failure, and in moments of triumph. AB 1626 gives coaches the practical tools they need to recognize when a young athlete is struggling and to connect them with the help they deserve. This bill is about creating safer, more supportive environments for every student or child who steps onto a field or a court.

2) **Background.** The California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) governs competitive athletics in California for grades nine through twelve. The CIF is organized under CDE and is governed by a council consisting of high school superintendents, principals, athletic directors, educators, and other organizations. Amongst other duties, the CIF adopts rules and regulations for school athletics and enforces them. 1,600 schools are members of CIF, meaning the schools adhere to CIF rules and regulations. Over 760,000 student-athletes participate in athletics at CIF member schools annually. CIF views the development of guidelines such as those required in this bill as part of its core mission.

Currently, CIF offers training programs to high school coaches who earn a certificate upon course completion that is transferable between school districts. CIF's mandated coaches training program under the High School Coaches Training Program (HSCTP) currently includes instruction on CPR, First Aid, concussions, sudden cardiac arrest, and heat illness,

among other topics. Coaches must complete a CPR/First Aid/Concussion course and renew that training every two years. This applies to all CIF member schools, public and private.

With the exception of some one-time funding during the COVID-19 pandemic, the CIF receives no state funding. The CIF is funded primarily from (a) membership fees from member schools (\$0.88 per student), which likely comes from member schools' Proposition 98 General Fund general purpose funding, (b) corporate sponsorships, and (c) CIF event ticket sales.

- 3) **Related Legislation.** AB 1665 (Pacheco), of the current legislative session, requires a CIF high school coach to complete an initial mental health education training, and every two years thereafter. AB 1665 is pending hearing in this committee.

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