
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 749
Author: McKinnor (D) and Quirk-Silva (D), et al.
Amended: 7/14/25 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE HEALTH COMMITTEE: 9-2, 7/9/25

AYES: Menjivar, Durazo, Gonzalez, Limón, Padilla, Richardson, Rubio, Weber
Pierson, Wiener

NOES: Valladares, Grove

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 5-2, 8/29/25

AYES: Caballero, Cabaldon, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

NOES: Seyarto, Dahle

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 62-3, 6/2/25 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Youth Sports for All Act

SOURCE: Play Equity Fund

DIGEST: This bill requires the Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency to convene a Blue Ribbon Commission on the development of a California Department of Youth Sports, with specified members, to conduct a study on the need for a centralized entity charge with supporting and regulating.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS), which consists of the following departments and offices: Aging, Child Support Services, Community Services and Development, Developmental Services, Health Care Access and Information, Health Care Services, Managed Health Care (DMHC), Public Health (CDPH), Rehabilitation, Social Services (CDSS), State Hospitals, the Center for Data Insights and Innovation, the

Emergency Medical Services Authority, the Office of Technology and Solutions Integration, the Office of Law Enforcement Support, the Office of the Surgeon General, the Office of Youth and Community Restoration, and the State Council on Developmental Disabilities. [Government Code [GOV] §12803 and §12806]

- 2) Establishes the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), directed by a state Public Health Officer, to be vested with all the duties, powers, purposes, functions, responsibilities, and jurisdiction as they relate to public health and licensing of health facilities, as specified. Authorizes the department to perform specified activities relating to the protection, preservation, and advancement of public health. [Health and Safety Code [HSC] §131050 and §131085]
- 3) Defines a “youth sports organization” as an organization, business, nonprofit entity, or a local governmental agency that sponsors or conducts amateur sports competitions, training, camps, or clubs in which persons 17 years of age or younger participate. [HSC §124235]
- 4) Requires a youth sports organization to comply with certain requirements related to athletes suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury, or who has passed out or fainted, including removal from the athletic activity and a prohibition on returning until he or she is evaluated by a licensed health care provider. Requires youth sports organizations to give both a concussion and head injury information sheet, and a sudden cardiac arrest information sheet, to each athlete on an annual basis. [HSC §124235]
- 5) Requires each coach, administrator, and referee, umpire, or other game official of the youth sports organization to successfully complete concussion and head injury and sudden cardiac arrest prevention education at least once, either online or in person, before supervising an athlete in an activity of the youth sports organization. [HSC §124235]
- 6) Establishes the California Youth Football Act, which establishes additional requirements on youth sports organizations that conduct a tackle football program, including requiring a minimum of one certified emergency medical technician, state-licensed paramedic, or higher-level medical professional to be present during all games, and requiring coaches to annually receive first aid, CPR, and automated external defibrillator (AED) certification. [HSC §124240 and §124241]

- 7) Prohibits local governmental entities from discriminating on the basis of sex or gender in the operation, conduct, or administration of community youth athletics programs or in the allocation of parks and recreational facilities that enable or support these programs and includes specified factors to determine whether discrimination exists. [GOV § 53080.]

This bill:

- 1) Requires the CHHS Secretary and other relevant agencies or departments as determined by the Secretary to establish and convene a Blue Ribbon Commission (commission) on the development of a California Department of Youth Sports or an equivalent centralized entity to conduct a comprehensive study to review the need for and feasibility of creating a centralized entity charged with supporting and regulating youth sports.
- 2) Requires the commission to be composed of the following:
 - a) The CHHS Secretary or the Secretary's designee;
 - b) Ten members appointed by the Governor;
 - c) Three members appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; and,
 - d) Three members appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly.
- 3) Requires the appointing authorities to take into consideration the diversity of the state so that the commission's composition reflects the communities of California and requires each member appointed in 2) above to have expertise in one or more of the following areas:
 - a) Convening state, local, and national organizations focused on addressing barriers in youth sports;
 - b) Designing and implementing equitable strategies and programs to expand youth access to sports and play, including by providing technical assistance;
 - c) Community-based youth development, including youth sports, play, physical activity, mental health, training, and coaching;
 - d) Californians with disabilities, including adaptive youth sports programs;
 - e) Publicly operated youth sports programs;
 - f) Academic or research-informed knowledge of youth sports, youth development, physical education, or equivalent fields of study;
 - g) Playing or supporting youth sports, including athletes and parents; and,

- h) Being a member of or representing an equity-focused organization that works with an impacted community whose lived experience with youth sports will inform the work of the commission.
- 4) Requires the commission to be cochaired by the CHHS Secretary or designee and an appointed member selected by members of the commission.
 - 5) Requires the commission to meet quarterly in meetings open to the public. Requires commissioners to serve without compensation except for necessary traveling and other expenses incurred in performing their duties.
 - 6) Requires the commission to conduct a study of the following youth sports issues:
 - a) An assessment of the need for a centralized entity to improve access to and involvement in sports for all youth, regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, income, or geographic location that addresses specified issues such as disparities in programming quality and availability; safety protocols; inclusivity; increasing sports and activities in daily life of youth; statewide coaching certification requirements and training; a mechanism for state investment in youth sports; potential state and local funding initiatives to reduce or eliminate financial barriers to youth sports participation;
 - b) An evaluation of and recommendations for the duties, powers, and responsibilities of a centralized entity that includes specified information related to appropriate levels of oversight via law or regulation of safety and licensing requirements for coaches and staff; determine which youth sports benefit from support and regulation from a centralized entity; development and administration of licensing and safety requirements and access and quality standards; strategies to improve access and equity; coordination with relevant state, local, and federal entities; avoiding duplication of efforts among entities; and identifying gaps in data and developing data collection and reporting requirements; and,
 - c) A review and recommendations regarding the costs of creating and sustaining a centralized entity and potential funding sources including federal, state, private, and philanthropic sources.
 - 7) Requires the study to also include analyses of models of centralized youth sports entities in other states and countries.

- 8) Authorizes CHHS to contract with an external entity such as an institution of higher education or nonprofit organization to conduct the study.
- 9) Requires the commission to publically present the study and provide opportunity for public feedback and to submit the study to the Legislation and the Governor by January 1, 2027 or one year after the implementation pursuant to 10) below.
- 10) Conditions implementation of this bill upon an appropriation in the annual Budget Act or another statute or CHHS having obtained sufficient funds from federal, nonprofit, or private sources to augment an appropriation made to implement this bill.
- 11) Creates the Youth Sports Blue Ribbon Commission Fund in the State Treasury and the Youth Sports Blue Ribbon Commission Special Fund Subaccount for the receipt and deposit of the funds, continuously appropriates this funding without regard to fiscal year, and permits the funding to be expended by CHHS to implement this bill.
- 12) Sunsets this bill on January 1, 2030.
- 13) States legislative findings regarding unregulated coaching in youth sports, fragmentation and lack of coordination among youth sports organizations, disparities in access to youth sports, dangers of the pay-to-play model, and the need for a centralized entity at the state level to address inequities and promote inclusive, accessible, and affordable youth sports programs and coaching education.

Comments

According to the author of this bill:

The current youth sports landscape is highly fragmented and unfair. Existing practices, pay-to-play models, a lack of facilities, the absence of statewide coaching and safety standards, hyper-competitive leagues, and inaccessible community-based programs deny every child the opportunity to reap the lifelong benefits of youth sports participation which include positive socioemotional development, community cohesion, mental and physical health, academic success, and overall healthier and stronger communities. This bill is a crucial first step towards engaging with experts on the establishment of a centralized entity charged with improving access, involvement, and the

sustainability of youth sports across California leading to healthier and more resilient youth, young adults, and communities.

Background

State policy involving youth sports. While the Department of Education oversees physical education requirements and athletics in California schools, outside of the schools, no state entity currently regulates youth sports. State law in the area is spotty and largely related to specific safety issues such as safety protocols around head injuries, training regarding sudden cardiac arrest, and regulation of tackle football. In other contexts, sports facilities themselves are regulated, particularly swimming pools, again to ensure safety. CDPH does have a Nutrition and Physical Activity Branch within its Center for Healthy Families to address nutrition security and physical activity through statewide, regional, and local programs and partnerships with an emphasis on communities that experience the greatest health disparities. Through funding provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the branch's annual budget is approximately \$81 million, of which approximately \$55 million is dedicated to local projects across the state. In addition to funding local programs, the branch manages a statewide social marketing campaign, implements state level nutrition and physical activity policy strategies, and supports the Governor's Advisory Council on Physical Fitness and Mental Well-Being.

The Governor's Advisory Council on Physical Fitness and Mental Well-Being (Council) was created by the Governor in June 2021 in response to changes in health behaviors brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council was funded in the 2022-2023 budget with a one-time investment of \$10 million to be available until June 30, 2025, \$7.5 million of which was spent. The remaining \$2.5 million was reappropriated to continue the work of the Council. The Council's goals are as follows: a) promote evidence-based, daily mindfulness and breathwork practices for youth and families, especially at schools; b) promote all types of physical activity for youth and families with a focus on daily movement, skill development and play, especially at schools; and, c) reimagine a more positive and inclusive sports and fitness culture for California youth and families to bolster health, community and belonging for all Californians. The Council started an initiative "Move Your Body, Calm Your Mind" to provide guidance and resources on physical activity and mental well-being, increase awareness about the benefits of movement, sport, nutrition, and overall mental wellness, encourage intergenerational physical fitness activities, promote equitable access to outdoor and physical activities for underserved communities, and facilitate collaboration

among federal, state, and local agencies, education, business and industry, and others. Among the activities of the initiative is an effort to train 25,000 coaches across California in positive youth coaching by the end of 2025.

Gaps in access to youth sports. The LA84 Foundation published a 2024 report on play equity in California with several key findings related to youth physical activity and access to sports based on quantitative and qualitative surveys of households with school-aged children. The report found that a majority of California youth are less active than they should be according to the CDC's recommendation that youth engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day, with ten percent of youth who are "never" active and only 39% of youth having daily physical education at school. The rates of physical activity are lowest for Latinas and Black females, Latino youth in general, youth with disabilities, youth with annual household incomes below \$50,000 and youth in the Inland Empire. The only subgroups with the majority meeting the CDC's guidelines is youth in households with incomes of at least \$100,000 and White male youth. The study did find that access to organized sports and structured play has the potential to increase levels of regular physical activity but that parents identified cost as a key barrier to accessing youth sports. The study also found support for increased state funding for sports.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: Yes Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, this bill has unknown one-time General Fund costs, potentially hundreds of thousands to low millions, for the CHHS to convene the commission and conduct the study.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/29/2025)

Play Equity Fund (source)
Accelerated Results Coaching
Access Youth Academy
Angel City FC
Antelope Valley Partners for Health
ANTS Sports
Ball for Life Oakland
Beat the Streets Los Angeles
Boyle Heights Youth Football and Cheer
Boys & Girls Clubs of Carson
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Los Angeles Harbor

Boys & Girls Clubs of West San Gabriel Valley & Eastside
Business of Student Success
California Afterschool Network
California Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance
California State PTA
Center for Healing and Justice Through Sport
Change the Tune
City of San Diego
Disability Rights California
Empowering Leadership in Latina Athletes
Eric Paredes Save a Life Foundation
Football for Her
Girls Inc. of Alameda County
Harlem Lacrosse - Los Angeles
Hollenbeck Police Activities League
Home Field Advantage
Kids Enjoy Exercise Now LA
KinFlow, Inc.
Kuul Play
Los Angeles Dodgers
Los Angeles Rams
Los Angeles Sparks
My Yute Soccer
Natasha Watley Foundation
Nike
Oakland Genesis
Oakland Girls Softball League
Oakland Roots and Soul Sports Club
P1440 Foundation
Playworks
Pools of Hope
Positive Coaching Alliance
Rainbow Labs
Rose Bowl Aquatics Center
Russell Westbrook Why Not? Foundation
Southern California Tennis Association
Sports and Social Change
Street Soccer USA
USC Schwarzenegger Institute
Woodcraft Rangers

YMCA of Metropolitan Los Angeles
Two individuals

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/29/2025)

None received

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: Sponsor, the Play Equity Fund, and many supporters write that the current landscape remains highly fragmented and unfair. The pay-to-play models, lack of facilities, the absence of coaching standards, and inaccessible community sports programs deny children the opportunity to achieve wellness, academic success, and positive socioemotional development. While two out of three children in California are not meeting CDC standards for daily physical activity, 915,000 youth in California have a current diagnosis of anxiety, behavioral or conduct problems, depression or other mental health conditions. They state that addressing the current youth sports landscape is crucial, as research has consistently shown that sports participation and physical activity lead to improved physical health, mental health, and more resilient adolescents and young adults.

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 62-3, 6/2/25

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, Elhawary, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lee, Lowenthal, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Valencia, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NOES: DeMaio, Gallagher, Patterson

NO VOTE RECORDED: Alanis, Castillo, Dixon, Ellis, Flora, Jeff Gonzalez, Hadwick, Hoover, Lackey, Macedo, Sanchez, Ta, Tangipa, Wallis

Prepared by: Jen Flory / HEALTH / (916) 651-4111
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