

# SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### SENATE, No. 349

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 14, 2022

The Senate Higher Education Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 349.

This bill amends section 1 of P.L.2019, c293 (C.18A:11-3.10) to require that the following criteria be included in the “Heat Participation Policy” for student-athletes adopted by the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA):

(1) at least a five-step progression of heat-acclimatization modifications, with specific modification of equipment, if applicable to the sport, specific modification of work to rest ratios, specific modification of total practice time, specific modification of water breaks, and the use of shaded area for rest breaks;

(2) WetBulb Globe Temperature guidelines; and

(3) a requirement that student-athletes have uninhibited access to hydration and a cooling space which can be a shaded area or an indoor air-conditioned area. At a WetBulb Globe Temperature level of 80, ice will be available to coaches and student-athletes.

The bill requires public institutions of higher education to adopt a policy for the prevention and treatment of exertional heat illnesses in athletes. The criteria for the policy at these institutions would be the same as those adopted by the NJSIAA for school districts.

This bill requires the Commissioner of Education and the Secretary of Higher Education to develop a pamphlet that provides information about exertional heat stroke to student-athletes and, in the case of school districts and nonpublic schools, to the parents or guardians of student-athletes. The pamphlet must include: an explanation of exertional heat stroke; how to reduce the risk of exertional heat stroke; factors which may increase a student’s risk for exertional heat stroke; a description of early warning signs of exertional heat stroke; how to recognize symptoms of exertional heat stroke; appropriate ways to treat exertional heat stroke; and a form to be signed by the student-athlete and coaches, assistant coaches, and athletic trainers acknowledging receipt and review of the pamphlet. In the case of school districts and nonpublic schools, the parent or guardian of the student-athlete must also acknowledge receipt and review of the pamphlet.

The bill also requires that an investigation conducted by an independent third party be commissioned in the case of the death of a student-athlete which is related to his athletic performance. In the case

of school districts, the investigation will be commissioned by the Commissioner of Education and in the case of public institutions of higher education, it will be the institution that commissions the investigation. The results of the investigation will be provided to the parent or guardian of the student-athlete and also will be made public, to the extent permissible under federal and State law.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2022-2023 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.