

SENATE, No. 3221

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 216th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 22, 2015

Sponsored by:

Senator RICHARD J. CODEY

District 27 (Essex and Morris)

Senator PETER J. BARNES, III

District 18 (Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Prohibits school districts from joining associations which oversee Statewide interscholastic sports unless association limits certain student-athletes who repeat middle school grade to only six consecutive semesters of interscholastic eligibility after entering ninth grade.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning school district participation in certain voluntary
2 associations and supplementing chapter 11 of Title 18A of the
3 New Jersey Statutes.

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5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*

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8 1. a. As used in this section;
9 “Hold-back repeat student” means a student who has
10 successfully completed the academic requirements that have been
11 established for the sixth, seventh, or eighth grades and who repeats
12 one or more of these grades prior to entering the ninth grade for
13 purposes of gaining athletic advantage.

14 b. A school district shall not join pursuant to section 1 of
15 P.L.1979, c.172 (C.18A:11-3), any voluntary association which
16 oversees activities associated with Statewide interscholastic sports
17 programs unless the association requires that when a hold-back
18 repeat student enters the ninth grade for the first time, the student
19 shall be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics for only
20 the next ensuing six consecutive semesters.

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22 2. This act shall take effect in the first full school year
23 following the date of enactment.

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26 STATEMENT

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28 This bill prohibits school districts from joining voluntary
29 associations which oversee Statewide interscholastic sports
30 programs under certain circumstances. Under the bill, school
31 districts are prohibited from joining any such association unless the
32 association requires that when a “hold-back repeat student” enters
33 the ninth grade for the first time, the student will be eligible to
34 participate in interscholastic athletics for only the next ensuing six
35 consecutive semesters. The bill defines a “hold-back repeat
36 student” as a student who has successfully completed the academic
37 requirements that have been established for the sixth, seventh, or
38 eighth grades and who repeats one or more of these grades prior to
39 entering the ninth grade for purposes of gaining athletic advantage.

40 Under the current rules of the association which oversees
41 interscholastic sports programs in the State, the New Jersey State
42 Interscholastic Athletic Association, a student-athlete is eligible to
43 compete as a high school senior provided that he does not turn 19
44 prior to September 1 of that school year. These rules also provide
45 that an athlete may only play interscholastic high school sports for
46 eight consecutive semesters. This bill is designed to help curtail the
47 practice whereby student-athletes seek to gain athletic advantage at
48 the high school level by repeating sixth, seventh, or eighth grade
49 despite having met the academic requirements for those grades.