

ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 2353

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 8, 2016

The Assembly Education Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 2353.

This bill establishes measures to deter the use of steroids and performance enhancing supplements among the State's middle school and high school students. The bill implements the recommendations of the December 2005 report of the Governor's Task Force on Steroid Use and Prevention.

The bill requires the Department of Education and the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) to work jointly to develop and implement, by the 2017-2018 school year, a program of testing of student-athletes for steroids and other performance enhancing substances. The NJSIAA currently has a program of testing student-athletes who qualify to compete in championship tournaments sanctioned by the association, for steroids and other performance enhancing substances. Under this bill, the NJSIAA will expand its program of random testing to other student-athletes.

Under the bill's provisions, any person who coaches a public school district or nonpublic school interscholastic sport, dance, or cheerleading team must incorporate into the team's training activities a gender-specific program designed to reduce the use of steroids and performance enhancing supplements, alcohol, and drugs, and to promote healthy nutrition and exercise. The program must have a team-centered design that provides a non-stigmatizing atmosphere and includes gender-specific content to address the risk of substance abuse unique to male and female adolescents. The program developed by the coach must be submitted to the athletic director of the school district or nonpublic school for approval.

The bill also requires the NJSIAA to develop and implement, by the 2017-2018 school year, a steroid and performance enhancing supplement prevention information program for all public and nonpublic high school coaches and athletic directors. The program would establish procedures and protocols designed to: provide coaches and athletic directors with information on the dangers of steroids and performance enhancing supplements; identify the use of steroids and performance enhancing supplements in student

athletes; and effectively incorporate healthy alternatives for strength building into coaches' training programs.

The bill also requires the NJSIAA to provide anti-steroid and anti-performance enhancing supplement advertisements in any brochure, pamphlet, handout, program, book, or other type of material produced for sale or distribution at a tournament sanctioned by the association. The association may use any existing materials produced by the Partnership for a Drug Free New Jersey. Under the bill, the Commissioner of Education is charged with ensuring that information and materials about preventing steroid use are available on the Department of Education's website.

The bill establishes the third week in September as "Steroid Awareness Week" in New Jersey and requires school districts to observe this week by organizing activities to raise awareness of the hazards of using steroids and performance enhancing supplements.