

House Bill 673

By: Representative Mitchell of the 88th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To enact "Georgia's Return to Play Act of 2012"; to amend Part 15 of Article 6 of Chapter 2
2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to miscellaneous provisions
3 under the "Quality Basic Education Act," so as to establish a return to play policy for student
4 athletes suffering from concussions; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws;
5 and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 This Act shall be known and may be cited as "Georgia's Return to Play Act of 2012."

9 **SECTION 2.**

10 Part 15 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
11 relating to miscellaneous provisions under the "Quality Basic Education Act," is amended
12 by inserting a new Code section as follows:

13 "20-2-324.1.

14 (a) Not later than January 1, 2013, the State Board of Education shall develop and
15 distribute to each local school board mandatory guidelines for informing and educating
16 coaches, student-athletes, and their parents or guardians of the nature and risk of
17 concussions, including criteria for removal from and return to play and risks of not
18 reporting the injury and continuing to play.

19 (b) Not later than July 1, 2013, each local school district shall adopt and implement
20 policies and procedures regarding the identification and handling of suspected concussions
21 in student-athletes consistent with the State Board of Education's guidelines. Such policies
22 shall require:

23 (1) Review, on an annual basis, by each student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent
24 or guardian information provided by the local school division relative to concussions in
25 order for such student-athlete to participate in any extracurricular physical activity. After

having reviewed materials describing the short- and long-term health effects of concussions, each student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent or guardian shall sign a statement acknowledging receipt of such information, in a manner approved by the State Board of Education; and

(2) Immediate removal from activity of any student-athlete suspected by that student-athlete's coach, athletic trainer, or team physician of sustaining a concussion or brain injury in a practice or game. A student-athlete who has been removed from play and suspected to have a concussion or brain injury shall not return to play that same day and not until:

(A) Evaluated by an appropriate licensed health care provider as determined by the State Board of Education; and

(B) In receipt of written clearance to return to play from such licensed health care provider.

(c) The guidelines of the State Board of Education developed pursuant to this Code section shall become effective on January 1, 2013."

SECTION 3.

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.