

SB3885



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

SB3885

Introduced 2/6/2026, by Sen. Adriane Johnson

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act

Creates the Student-Athlete Fairness and Education (SAFE) Act. Requires each public high school to ensure student-athletes receive substance education annually for at least 30 minutes per school year. Sets forth how substance education sessions may be given and what substance education sessions may cover. Provides protection for students with regard to questions or disclosures during substance education sessions and any request for assistance. Requires schools to inform parents of substance education sessions. Allows parents to opt their student-athletes out of substance education sessions for religious or philosophical reasons. Provides that no State reimbursement is required for the implementation of the Act. Sets forth certification requirements in offering substance education. Establishes optional best practices for offering substance education. Includes provisions regarding review of substance education by the State Board of Education and review of the Act by the General Assembly. Makes other changes. Effective January 1, 2027.

LRB104 19613 LNS 33062 b

A BILL FOR

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
5 Student-Athlete Fairness and Education (SAFE) Act.

6 Section 5. Legislative findings. The General Assembly
7 finds:

8 (1) Student-athletes face unique risks related to
9 substances due to injury exposure, performance pressure,
10 and eligibility requirements for collegiate athletics.

11 (2) Brief, focused education can effectively reduce
12 substance-related harm when delivered by existing school
13 personnel using readily available resources.

14 (3) Local school districts are best positioned to
15 determine the most effective delivery methods for their
16 communities.

17 (4) Student safety is enhanced when education is
18 non-punitive and integrated into existing athletic
19 programming.

20 (5) No new State bureaucracy or funding is necessary
21 to achieve meaningful student protection.

22 Section 10. Definitions. As used in this Act:

1 "Existing resources" means current school health
2 curricula, free online materials from the National Collegiate
3 Athletic Association, the National Federation of State High
4 School Associations, the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the
5 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and
6 other reputable sources.

7 "Qualified presenter" means any school employee or
8 approved volunteer with relevant expertise, including coaches,
9 athletic trainers, health teachers, school counselors, or
10 community health professionals.

11 "Substances" means alcohol, cannabis, controlled
12 substances, performance-enhancing drugs, and prescription
13 opioids.

14 Section 15. Core requirement.

15 (a) Each public high school shall ensure student-athletes
16 receive substance education annually for at least 30 minutes
17 per school year. Substance education sessions may be delivered
18 in one session or multiple shorter sessions.

19 (b) Schools may satisfy the substance education
20 requirement through any of the following:

21 (1) a pre-season team meeting led by a coach or
22 athletic director;

23 (2) integration into an existing health or physical
24 education class;

25 (3) a guest presentation during an athletics assembly;

- 1 (4) an online module completion with discussion;
- 2 (5) a parent-athlete meeting facilitated by athletic
- 3 staff; or
- 4 (6) any combination of paragraphs (1) through (5).

5 Section 20. Content framework. Substance education

6 sessions must address at least 2 of the following areas based

7 on local priority in the school district:

8 (1) Athletic safety, including:

9 (A) how substances affect reaction time and injury

10 risk; and

11 (B) sport-specific safety considerations.

12 (2) Career protection, including:

13 (A) National Collegiate Athletic Association

14 banned substance list basics;

15 (B) how eligibility violations occur; and

16 (C) name, image, and likeness contract

17 considerations.

18 (3) Health and recovery, including:

19 (A) injury-to-dependency awareness;

20 (B) alternative pain management options; and

21 (C) where to get help if needed.

22 No specific curriculum is required. Schools may use

23 existing materials or create its own.

24 Section 25. Student protections.

1 (a) Student questions or disclosures during substance
2 education sessions are confidential and shall not trigger
3 disciplinary action or mandatory testing.

4 (b) Standard mandatory reporting requirements for abuse,
5 neglect, or imminent danger shall remain in effect.

6 (c) Students requesting assistance must be connected to a
7 school counselor or appropriate resource.

8 Section 30. Parental rights.

9 (a) Schools must inform parents that substance education
10 is part of athletic participation, with general topics
11 described.

12 (b) Parents may request their student-athlete be excused
13 from substance education sessions for religious or
14 philosophical reasons. A student who is excused from substance
15 education must complete a brief alternative assignment, such
16 as reading 2 articles on information listed under Section 20.
17 There shall be no penalty for opting out.

18 (c) Schools are encouraged to invite parents to substance
19 education sessions or provide take-home materials.

20 Section 35. Funding.

21 (a) Pursuant to Section 6 of the State Mandates Act, no
22 State reimbursement is required for implementation of this
23 Act.

24 (b) Schools must use current staff during existing time,

1 such as team meetings or health classes. Schools may use free
2 curriculum resources available from national organizations. A
3 school may not hire new persons, award new certifications, or
4 purchase new material to administer a substance education
5 session.

6 (c) The State Board of Education may compile a list of free
7 resources on its website or share best practices from other
8 school districts voluntarily.

9 (d) No mandate shall be created for new materials or
10 programs to implement this Act.

11 Section 40. Accountability.

12 (a) Athletic directors shall certify to the Illinois High
13 School Association by October 15 each year that "We provided
14 required substance education", in a one-page form that
15 includes check boxes only. Detailed reports, student data, or
16 other documentation are not required.

17 (b) The Illinois High School Association shall post a list
18 of compliant schools on its website. The Illinois High School
19 Association shall post a separate list of noncompliant schools
20 on its website.

21 (c) There are no penalties for noncompliance, including
22 fines, funding losses, or sanctions.

23 Section 45. Optional best practices. School districts are
24 encouraged but not required to consider:

1 (1) Extended substance education sessions by
2 increasing substance education sessions to 2 or 3 hours
3 annually for deeper coverage.

4 (2) Certified instructors by using Use National
5 Athletic Trainers' Association-certified athletic
6 trainers or licensed counselors when available.

7 (3) Universal access by offering substance education
8 to non-athlete students.

9 (4) Parent sessions by hosting optional parent
10 education nights.

11 (5) Peer mentorship by training senior athletes as
12 peer educators.

13 (6) Mental health integration by connecting substance
14 education to broader wellness programming.

15 The State Board of Education may recognize schools that
16 voluntarily adopt multiple best practices under this Section
17 as "Champion Schools".

18 Section 50. Nonpublic schools.

19 (a) Nonpublic schools may choose to follow the standards
20 set forth in this Act.

21 (b) Nonpublic schools that participate in the Illinois
22 High School Association must certify compliance if they
23 participate in State athletic tournaments.

24 (c) Nonpublic schools may not receive any grants for
25 following the standards set forth in this Act but may access

1 the free resource list published by the State Board of
2 Education under subsection (c) of Section 35.

3 Section 55. Limitations on requirements. Nothing in this
4 Act shall be construed to require:

5 (1) the creation of any new State agency or office;

6 (2) any State funding, appropriation, or increase in
7 local taxation;

8 (3) the purchase of specific curriculum, instructional
9 materials, or educational resources;

10 (4) certification, licensure, or specialized training
11 of teachers or other personnel beyond those designated as
12 qualified presenters;

13 (5) the submission of detailed reports, collection of
14 student data, or other administrative documentation beyond
15 the annual certification required under this Act;

16 (6) testing, assessment, or formal evaluation of
17 student-athletes;

18 (7) minimum instructor qualifications beyond those
19 defined as qualified presenters;

20 (8) a prescribed delivery method, including whether
21 education occurs online, in-person, or through hybrid
22 methods;

23 (9) integration of substance education programs with
24 other schools or school district programs;

25 (10) attendance of parents or guardians at substance

1 education sessions; or

2 (11) disciplinary action, sanctions, or other
3 punishment for schools or students for noncompliance with
4 the provisions of this Act.

5 Section 60. Waiver.

6 (a) If a school district believes compliance would create
7 undue burden, the school district may request waiver from the
8 State Board of Education.

9 (b) The State Board of Education shall grant a waiver if a
10 school district demonstrates:

11 (1) extreme rural isolation, such as the nearest
12 qualified presenter being located over 50 miles from the
13 school district;

14 (2) extraordinary emergency, such as a natural
15 disaster or school closure; or

16 (3) other documented hardship.

17 (c) A waiver granted under this Section is valid for one
18 year. A school district must reapply for a waiver annually.

19 Section 65. Periodic review.

20 (a) The State Board of Education may survey school
21 districts every 3 years on implementation experiences.

22 (b) The General Assembly shall review this Act by January
23 1, 2032.

24 (c) Suggested focus questions for the State Board of

1 Education and the General Assembly include:

2 (1) Are schools complying?

3 (2) Are student-athletes safer?

4 (3) Is this working without creating burden?

5 Section 70. Relationship to existing substance education
6 programs or other requirements.

7 (a) Schools with existing substance education programs on
8 the effective date of this Act that meet or exceed 90 minutes
9 annually are automatically in compliance with this Act.

10 (b) This Act complements but does not replace concussion
11 awareness requirements.

12 (c) This Act neither requires nor prohibits school drug
13 testing programs.

14 Section 75. Construction. This Act shall be liberally
15 construed to minimize burden on schools while protecting
16 student-athletes.

17 Section 97. Severability. The provisions of this Act are
18 severable under Section 1.31 of the Statute on Statutes.

19 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1,
20 2027.