

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 28, 2025

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 17, 2025

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2025–26 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 749

**Introduced by Assembly Member Members McKinnor and
Quirk-Silva
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Elhawary)**

February 18, 2025

An act to add and repeal Article 2.8 (commencing with Section 124250) of Chapter 4 of Part 2 of Division 106 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to ~~state government~~ *youth sports*.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 749, as amended, McKinnor. ~~State government: California Department of Youth Sports: study.~~ *Youth Sports for All Act.*

~~Existing law authorizes public and private secondary schools to participate in interscholastic sports, and authorizes schools to enter into associations or consortia to enact and enforce rules relating to eligibility for, and participation in, these activities. Existing law recognizes the California Interscholastic Federation to be a voluntary organization that consists of school and school-related personnel with responsibility for administering interscholastic athletic activities in secondary schools.~~

Existing law provides various programs for youth and adolescent health, including requiring a youth sports organization that elects to offer an athletic program to ensure athletes have access to an automated external defibrillator during official practice and regulating youth football. Existing law also authorizes a community youth athletic

program to request state and federal level criminal history information for volunteer or hired coach candidates.

~~This bill, the Youth Sports for All Act, would require the Secretary of California Health and Human Services, in consultation with the State Department of Education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Services and other relevant agencies or departments as determined by the Secretary, to, on or before March 1, 2026, establish and convene the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Development of a California Department of Youth Sports or an Equivalent Centralized Entity to conduct a comprehensive study on the need for and feasibility of creating a centralized entity charged with supporting and regulating youth sports, as provided. The bill would require the commission to, on or before January 1, 2027, submit the study to the Legislature and the Governor. The bill would make its provisions contingent upon an appropriation by the Legislature or upon the California Health and Human Services Agency obtaining sufficient funds from federal, non-profit, or private sources. The bill would repeal its provisions on January 1, 2029.~~

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
- 2 following:
- 3 (a) The lack of standards and certification for coaching in youth
- 4 sports have resulted in an unregulated youth sports coaching
- 5 landscape. There is currently no state-level standardization or
- 6 required certification for coaches, leading to inconsistency in
- 7 training, safety, and quality in youth sports.
- 8 (b) The unregulated coaching landscape poses health and safety
- 9 risks. Untrained or poorly trained coaches may not be equipped
- 10 to handle the needs of diverse youth, promote positive sports
- 11 experiences, and ensure safety.
- 12 (c) The fragmented community youth sports system is currently
- 13 made up of disjointed networks with no single unified system to
- 14 coordinate or oversee community-based youth sports across regions
- 15 or organizations, creating inefficiencies and inconsistencies in
- 16 quality.

1 (d) This fragmented system has resulted in the duplication of
2 efforts. Multiple organizations work in overlapping areas, causing
3 confusion and misallocation of resources.

4 ~~(e) The Physical Education Model Content Standards for~~
5 ~~California Public Schools last updated in 2006, do not reflect~~
6 ~~current physical education practices or adequately address the~~
7 ~~broad needs of today's youth. Updated standards will support~~
8 ~~schools and sports programs to improve their structure for~~
9 ~~children's physical development, mental health, and overall~~
10 ~~well-being.~~

11 (f) Updating the physical education model content standards is
12 especially critical when considering the diversity of student needs
13 due to disabilities, adverse childhood experiences, and cultural
14 considerations.

15 ~~(g)~~
16 (e) The inadequate funding of ~~school-based~~ and
17 community-based sports fails to meet the growing demand for
18 quality sports and fitness opportunities, particularly when
19 considering the physical and mental health benefits of organized
20 activity.

21 ~~(h) School-based physical education and after school programs~~
22 ~~are underfunded and recess is often cut short or underfunded.~~

23 ~~(i)~~
24 (f) The pay-to-play model for youth sports has become
25 increasingly exclusionary, driven by a win-at-all-cost mentality
26 that is creating undue stress and anxiety for participants and
27 encouraging overspecialization at an early age, increasing injury
28 risk. In addition, excessive travel, fees, and equipment costs create
29 financial barriers for many families, leaving millions of children
30 unable to participate in organized youth sports.

31 ~~(j)~~
32 (g) Youth sports provide numerous benefits, including improved
33 physical and mental health, academic success, and social
34 development. They provide the opportunity to develop resilience
35 and teamwork as well as other social skills that help make youth
36 athletes life ready. Despite these benefits, participation rates vary
37 significantly across racial and socioeconomic lines.

38 ~~(k)~~
39 (h) The 2024 Play Equity Report, commissioned by the LA84
40 Foundation, highlights stark disparities, with Black and Latino

1 youth participation in structured sports as low as 47 percent and
2 45 percent, respectively, compared to 59 percent for White youth.
3 Barriers include cost, lack of facilities, and limited programming
4 in underserved communities.

5 ~~(t)~~

6 (i) A centralized entity, such as a California department or
7 commission of youth sports, can be an essential entity for creating
8 an integrated, equitable, and sustainable framework for youth
9 sports. Through coordinated efforts, updated standards, investment,
10 and a focus on reducing financial barriers, California can ensure
11 all children have the opportunity to access and engage in sports
12 and experience its lifelong physical, mental, and academic benefits.

13 ~~(m)~~

14 (j) Models from other countries, where sports ministries
15 successfully coordinate national sports policies, provide valuable
16 examples.

17 ~~(n)~~

18 (k) A centralized entity could address inequities by promoting
19 inclusive, accessible, and affordable youth sports programs and
20 coaching education.

21 SEC. 2. Article 2.8 (commencing with Section 124250) is
22 added to Chapter 4 of Part 2 of Division 106 of the Health and
23 Safety Code, to read:

24
25 Article 2.8. YOUTH SPORTS FOR ALL ACT

26
27 124250. This article shall be known, and may be cited, as the
28 Youth Sports for All Act.

29 124251. For purposes of this article, the following definitions
30 apply:

31 (a) “Centralized entity” means a department, commission, board,
32 council, or their equivalent.

33 (b) “Commission” means the Blue Ribbon Commission on the
34 Development of a California Department of Youth Sports or an
35 Equivalent Centralized Entity established and convened pursuant
36 to subdivision (a) of Section 124252.

37 (c) “Youth sports” has the same meaning as “youth sports
38 organization” as defined in Section 124235.

39 124252. (a) (1) The Secretary of California Health and Human
40 Services, ~~in consultation with the State Department of Education,~~

1 ~~the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Services~~ and other
2 relevant agencies or departments as determined by the ~~Secretary,~~
3 ~~secretary~~, shall, on or before March 1, 2026, establish and convene
4 the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Development of a California
5 Department of Youth Sports or an Equivalent Centralized Entity
6 to conduct a comprehensive study to review the need for and
7 feasibility of creating a centralized entity charged with supporting
8 and regulating youth sports.

9 (2) The commission shall be composed of all of the following:
10 (A) ~~10-Seven~~ members appointed by the California Health and
11 Human Services Agency, as follows:

12 ~~(i) One member who represents a statewide teachers association.~~

13 ~~(ii) One member who represents a statewide administrators~~
14 ~~association.~~

15 ~~(iii)~~

16 (i) One member who represents a statewide parents association.

17 ~~(iv)~~

18 (ii) One member who represents youth athletes.

19 ~~(v)~~

20 (iii) One member from an institution of higher education with
21 relevant academic knowledge of youth sports, youth development,
22 physical education, or equivalent fields of study.

23 ~~(vi)~~

24 (iv) One member from an organization with relevant expertise
25 in youth mental health.

26 ~~(vii)~~

27 (v) One member from an organization that represents publicly
28 funded youth sports programs.

29 ~~(viii)~~

30 (vi) One member from a community-based, sports-based youth
31 development program.

32 ~~(ix) One member with relevant experience providing instruction~~
33 ~~in physical education.~~

34 ~~(x) One additional member.~~

35 ~~(B) One member appointed by the State Department of~~
36 ~~Education.~~

37 ~~(C)~~

38 (vii) *One member who represents a statewide organization that*
39 *advocates for Californians with disabilities.*

- 1 (B) One member appointed by the Governor's Advisory Council
2 on Physical Fitness and Mental Well-Being.
3 ~~(D)~~
4 (C) One member appointed by the Governor.
5 ~~(E)~~
6 (D) One member appointed by the Play Equity Fund.
7 ~~(F)~~
8 (E) One member appointed by the Positive Coaching Alliance.
9 ~~(G)~~
10 (F) One member appointed by Playworks.
11 ~~(H)~~
12 (G) One member appointed by Center for Healing and Justice
13 Through Sport.
14 ~~(I)~~
15 (H) One member appointed by the California Interscholastic
16 Federation.
17 ~~(J)~~
18 (I) One member appointed by a statewide organization that
19 represents municipalities and local governments that operate youth
20 sports.
21 ~~(K)~~
22 (J) One or more additional members appointed by the California
23 Health and Human Services Agency as needed to support the work
24 of the commission.
25 (b) The commission shall be cochaired by one of the members
26 appointed by the agency pursuant to subparagraph (A) of paragraph
27 (2) subdivision (a) and the member appointed by the Play Equity
28 Fund pursuant to subparagraph (E) of paragraph (2) subdivision
29 (a).
30 124254. (a) The commission shall conduct a study of issues
31 in youth sports that includes all of the following:
32 (1) An assessment of the need and potential for a centralized
33 entity to improve access to and involvement in sports for all youth,
34 regardless of race, income, or geographic location, that addresses
35 issues in youth sports, including, but not limited to, all of the
36 following:
37 (A) Disparities in youth sports programming quality and
38 availability.
39 (B) How to foster a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment
40 for youth sports.

1 (C) How to *increase and integrate regular* physical activity and
2 sports into ~~elementary and secondary education through schoolday~~
3 ~~programming~~, *the daily lives of youth, including, but not limited*
4 *to, through* after school ~~programs, programs~~ and community-based
5 organizations.

6 (D) How to implement statewide coaching certification
7 requirements to ensure quality training for all coaches in youth
8 sports.

9 (E) How to ~~update curriculum frameworks to include~~ *improve*
10 *training and strategies for* youth development, safety protocols,
11 equity and inclusion, and sport-specific ~~knowledge~~. *knowledge*
12 *across the youth sports landscape.*

13 (F) How to ~~update the current physical education model content~~
14 ~~standards and frameworks to ensure that they reflect best~~
15 ~~educational and promote~~ practices and safety ~~guidelines, and~~
16 ~~include protocols, including support for~~ diverse forms of physical
17 activity to increase equity and access to youth sports and play.

18 (G) How to better integrate structured sports and team-building
19 activities into ~~physical education curricula~~. *the daily lives of youth.*

20 (H) How to create a mechanism for sustainable and adequate
21 state investment in ~~school-based physical education programs and~~
22 ~~recess and after school~~ youth sports to improve accessibility,
23 infrastructure, and overall quality.

24 (I) How to increase state investment in the expansion of
25 accessible, free, or low-cost after school and community-based
26 youth sports programs that complement academic and recreational
27 goals.

28 (J) How to create a mechanism for state and local funding
29 initiatives that reduce or eliminate financial barriers to youth sports
30 participation.

31 (2) An evaluation of and recommendations for the duties,
32 powers, and responsibilities of a centralized entity, including, but
33 not limited to, all of the following:

34 (A) A determination of the appropriate levels of oversight of
35 relevant laws and regulations, including safety and licensing
36 requirements for coaches and staff of youth sports.

37 (B) A determination of which youth sports would benefit from
38 support and regulation from a centralized entity.

39 (C) Development and administration of statewide licensing and
40 safety requirements.

1 (D) Development and administration of statewide youth sports
2 access and quality standards.

3 (E) Development of strategies and best practices to improve
4 access and equity to competitive and noncompetitive youth sports
5 and play.

6 (F) Coordination of relevant ~~state~~ *state, local*, and federal entities
7 to improve access and equity in youth sports programs, including
8 ~~updating physical education model content standards, frameworks,~~
9 ~~and curricula.~~ *sharing best practices and resources.*

10 (G) Identifying duplication of efforts and inefficiencies among
11 state and local entities and youth sports programs.

12 (H) Identifying data gaps and development of data collection
13 and reporting requirements.

14 (3) A review of and recommendations for both of the following:

15 (A) The costs of creating and sustaining a centralized entity.

16 (B) Potential funding sources, including state, federal, private,
17 and philanthropic sources.

18 (b) In conducting the study, the commission shall analyze
19 models of centralized entities in other states and countries that are
20 charged with supporting and regulating youth sports.

21 (c) The California Health and Human Services Agency may
22 enter into a contract with an external entity, including an institution
23 of higher education or a nonprofit organization with relevant
24 expertise, to conduct the study required by this section.

25 (d) Before finalizing the study and before submission pursuant
26 to subdivision (e), the commission shall publically present the
27 study and provide an opportunity for public feedback.

28 (e) (1) The commission shall, on or before January 1, 2027,
29 submit the study conducted pursuant to this section to the
30 Legislature and the Governor.

31 (2) A report to be submitted to the Legislature pursuant to
32 paragraph (1) shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795
33 of the Government Code.

34 124256. (a) The implementation of this article is contingent
35 upon ~~an~~ *either of the following*:

36 (1) *An appropriation for its purposes in the annual Budget Act*
37 *or another statute.*

38 (2) *Sufficient funds being obtained by the California Health and*
39 *Human Services Agency from federal, non-profit, or private sources*
40 *for the purposes of implementing this article.*

(b)

Heading—Lines 1 and 2.
