

Committee Substitute for  
Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 526

An act relating to interscholastic and intrascholastic sports; amending s. 1006.15, F.S.; requiring the Florida High School Athletic Association, in cooperation with specified district school boards, to facilitate a pilot program in which a middle school student or a high school student in a private school may participate in athletics at a public school; providing conditions for such participation; requiring the association's board of directors and the district school boards to establish guidelines for conducting the pilot program; specifying requirements and restrictions; requiring the association and district school boards to submit to the Governor and Legislature a copy of established guidelines and a report on the progress of the pilot program; providing for repeal of the pilot program unless reviewed and reenacted by the Legislature; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Subsection (8) is added to section 1006.15, Florida Statutes, to read:

1006.15 Student standards for participation in interscholastic and intrascholastic extracurricular student activities; regulation.—

(8)(a) The Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA), in cooperation with the district school boards of Bradford County, Duval County, and Nassau County, shall facilitate a 2-year pilot program during the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 academic years in which a middle school or high school student who attends a private school shall be eligible to participate in an interscholastic or intrascholastic sport at a public high school, a public middle school, or a 6-12 public school that is zoned for the physical address at which the student resides if:

1. The private school in which the student is enrolled is not a member of the FHSAA and does not offer an interscholastic or intrascholastic athletic program.

2. The private school student meets the guidelines for the conduct of the pilot program established by the FHSAA's board of directors and the participating district school boards. At a minimum, such guidelines shall provide:

a. A deadline for each sport by which the private school student's parents must register with the public school in writing their intent for their child to participate at that school in the sport.

b. Requirements for a private school student to participate, including, but not limited to, meeting the same standards of eligibility, acceptance, behavior, educational progress, and performance that apply to other students participating in interscholastic or intrascholastic sports at a public school or FHSAA member private school.

(b) The parents of a private school student participating in a public school sport under this subsection are responsible for transporting their child to and from the public school at which the student participates. The private school the student attends, the public school at which the student participates in a sport, the district school board, and the FHSSA are exempt from civil liability arising from any injury that occurs to the student during such transportation.

(c) For each academic year, a private school student may only participate at the public school in which the student is first registered under sub-subparagraph (a)2.a. or makes himself or herself a candidate for an athletic team by engaging in a practice.

(d) The FHSAA and participating district school boards shall submit to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives:

1. A copy of the guidelines established under subparagraph (a)2. for the pilot program no later than August 1, 2008.

2. A report on the progress of the pilot program no later than January 1, 2010. The report shall include the number of students registered under sub-subparagraph (a)2.a., the number of students found eligible to participate in the pilot program, the number of students who transfer to the public schools at which the students participated under the pilot program, implementation issues experienced with the pilot program, and recommendations on how the pilot program may be improved and expanded to include other counties.

(e) This subsection shall stand repealed on June 30, 2010, unless reviewed and reenacted by the Legislature.

Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

Approved by the Governor June 30, 2008.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 30, 2008.