

Monday, February 3, 2020 7:38 AM

To whom it may  
concern;

I am writing in support of HB 4140. I am a school nurse in the Hillsboro school district and have been there for the past 13 years. I have also been an active member of the TBI team for our district and try to keep current on all brain injury research and trends. I recently have taken a certification on MTBI offered through the BIAOR. While working with several students with mild TBI or concussions the biggest failing I have found in supporting these students has been a formal return to learn plan and process. I have been able individually to assist staff, fellow nurses, counselors, families, and administrators with resources and expertise, but have found that is not the case district wide and definitely not the case across the state. Our district has resources and an active TBI team which many do not as well as a committed school nurse staff with an interest in this area. Our counselors have also been active in this process.

The return to play legislation has had a profound effect in structuring how head injuries are handled in sports and also in providing education to coaches and staff. All of which has been a vast improvement from the past for health outcomes for students experiencing mTBI from sports. The failing has been that many mTBI occur outside of the sports arena-MVA, falls, etc. and are not addressed in that legislation. I have also found that the return to play legislation did nothing to address common school issues post mTBI and that schools, parents, students, and staff had to scramble to meet the needs of students academically that were having symptoms or continuing issues. The other main problem was that often the symptoms had to linger or become severe before any action was taken since there was no formal process in place to handle return to learn accommodations.

I am very supportive of this legislation and think it is necessary for all school districts to have a formal plan for accommodations for brain injury available to all students, staff, and families upon a diagnosis of brain injury that can be individualized to the specific needs of the students.

Thank you for your time,  
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“Slow down and everything you are chasing will catch you”-John DePaola

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