

Concussion Management

According to the Centers for Disease Control, the American Academy of Neurology and the American Brain Injury Association, a concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury: a disruption in normal brain function due to a blow or jolt to the head.

A concussion may cause altered mental status that may or may not involve loss of consciousness, along with other symptoms that may include

- headache; neck pain; balance problems or dizziness; nausea; vision/hearing problems; difficulty concentrating, and/or recalling information; confusion; drowsiness; and exaggerated emotional responses (e.g., anger, irritability, crying, silliness).
- Symptoms may be immediate or may develop over minutes and even weeks.

If not managed correctly, concussions can lead to serious, long-term, and sometimes life-threatening complications. It is with this in mind that the Board has developed a concussion management policy to support the proper evaluation and management of student head injuries and concussions. It does not matter whether the concussion is a result of participation in sports (interscholastic athletics and intramurals) and other school-related activities or attendance in school.

It is the further policy of this District to prohibit a student who is believed to have suffered or is determined to have suffered a concussion from;

- return to practice or play
- participation in physical education classes
- recess or other activities

until they have been evaluated and cleared by a licensed physician and has been symptom free for seven (7) full days (returning to practice or play, or other participation on **day eight**).

Any student who is believed to have sustained or who has sustained a concussion or other mild traumatic brain injury shall be immediately removed from the athletic or other activity and monitored. **If there is any doubt as to whether a student has sustained a concussion, it will be presumed that the student has suffered a concussion until proven otherwise.** In an appropriate case, 911 shall be called. The student's parents will be contacted as soon as is practicable with a recommendation for **evaluation by a licensed physician** and the student shall not be permitted to resume athletic activity until he or she has been symptom free for at least seven (7) days, has been evaluated and has received written and signed authorization from a licensed physician. This authorization must be received by the School District **prior** to return to practice, play or other participation, and **shall be kept on file in the student's permanent health record.** The District's Chief Medical Officer has the final authority to decide whether or not the student may return to practice or play, or other participation.

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Training

All District coaches (including volunteer coaches), physical education teachers, nurses, the athletic trainer and the Director of Athletics will be required to participate in a course of instruction regarding the recognition and management of concussions on a bi-annual basis. **New** coaches, new physical education teachers, nurses, athletic trainers or Director of Athletics will be required to take this training the FIRST year they are hired. The District's Athletic Department will offer, on an **annual basis**, instruction and training to enable these individuals to understand;

- how such injuries occur and how to prevent them
- to recognize the signs and symptoms of concussions
- to respond appropriately if a student has suffered or may have suffered from a concussion

This instruction may be provided by a qualified health professional or by taking an approved online Concussion Management course recommended on the NYSED website in "Concussion Management". Every employee, volunteer coach or other specified individual that completes an approved online course **must present a certificate of completion to the Director of Athletics, where it will be kept on file.**

The District will annually provide information for parents and students regarding concussions, including but not limited to:

- (1) the definition of the term "concussion"
- (2) signs and symptoms of simple and complex concussions
- (3) how these injuries occur and
- (4) guidelines for return to school and athletic, physical education or other activity participation after suffering a concussion

This information will be made available on the District website as well as communicated to parents and students at the start of each sports season, prior to a student's participation in interscholastic and other athletics.

Reporting

All incidences of concussion or suspected concussion **shall be immediately reported** by the coach, advisor or other supervising staff member, **in writing**, to the Director of Athletics and the building Nurse or other designee, **within 24 hours**. The Director of Athletics or School Nurse, as appropriate, shall report incidents of concussion or suspected concussion, in writing, to the Building Principal and Superintendent of Schools within 24 hours of receiving a report.

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If a student sustains a concussion at a time other than when in school or engaged in a school sponsored activity, the District expects the parent/guardian to report the condition to the School Nurse and/or the coach so that the District can support the appropriate management of the condition.

The Superintendent, in collaboration with the School Physician and Director of Athletics, and school nurses shall develop regulations to implement this policy.

Concussion Management Team

In accordance with the Concussion Management and Awareness Act, the School District is authorized, at its discretion to establish, its own Concussion Management Team (CMT). **This team will consist of an interscholastic coach, a school nurse, athletic director, academic staff member, or support staff member who have knowledge of the particular student.** In an effort to best serve student needs, this team may consist of different personnel depending on the student involved with the school nurse and athletic director being constant members. The Concussion Management Team will oversee and implement the district's concussion policy and regulations including the implementation of annual training for staff and students to raise awareness of the signs, symptoms and care of students who have incurred or are suspected to have incurred a head injury that could be a concussion.

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