



POLICY: Management of Concussion and Other Head Injuries

Thornton Academy recognizes that concussions and other head injuries are serious and could result in significant brain damage and/or death if not recognized and managed properly. The Academy adopts this policy to promote the safety of students participating in school activities, including but not limited to extracurricular athletic activities and interscholastic sports, and to provide academic support for students identified with concussive or other head injuries.

TRAINING

Prior to the beginning of each sports season and each academic school year, school personnel (including volunteers) identified by the Concussion Policy Management Team, must be made aware of this school policy and standards of care related to the management of concussive injuries and participate in concussion awareness training that includes recognizing signs and symptoms that may suggest a concussive or other head injury.

Coaches (including volunteers) are required to successfully complete the NFHS concussion management course (per the Maine Principals Association guidelines).

STUDENT AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Prior to the beginning of each individual student's sports season (at least annually), students intending to participate in school-sponsored athletic activities and parents/guardians of these students will be provided information including:

- A. The risk of concussion and other head injuries and the dangers associated with continuing to participate when a concussion or other head injury is suspected;
- B. The signs and symptoms associated with concussion and other head injuries;
- C. The school's protocols for:
 1. Removal of the student from the activity when the student is suspected of having sustained a concussion or other head injury,
 2. Evaluation,

3. Return to participation in school activities and academics.

The student participating in sports and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) must sign a statement acknowledging that they received and read this information before the student is allowed to participate in any school-sponsored athletic activity.

MANAGEMENT OF CONCUSSIVE AND OTHER HEAD INJURIES

It is the responsibility of staff members involved in school activities and trained in the signs and symptoms related to concussion and/or other head injury, to act in accordance with this policy when the Staff member recognizes that a student may be exhibiting such signs and symptoms of a concussion. Any student suspected of having sustained a concussion or other head injury during a School activity including but not limited to participation in interscholastic sports, must be removed from the activity and academics immediately. A student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of the need for an evaluation for brain injury before the student is allowed to return to participation in school activities and academics.

**No student is permitted to return to the activity or to participate in other school activities or academics on the day of the suspected concussion.*

Any student having sustained a head injury is prohibited from further participation in any school activities or academics until he/she is evaluated for concussion. If a concussion is suspected, the student must be removed from school activities and academics and evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in concussion management.

If a concussion is confirmed, the student is not permitted to return to participation in any school activities or academics until medically cleared to do so by a licensed health care provider trained in concussion management. The use of the Acute Concussion Evaluation (ACE) Care Plan is the expected form of communication regarding medical clearance (a copy of the ACE form is available in the school nurse's Office and on the Thornton Academy website.) It is the responsibility of the parent to provide the necessary and appropriate documentation. The ACE form must be returned to the school nurse prior to attending any class. More than one evaluation by the student's health care provider may be necessary before the student is cleared for full participation.

Coaches and other school personnel shall comply with the student's treating health care provider trained in Concussion management recommendations regarding gradual return to participation. If at any time during the return to full participation in school activities and academics the student exhibits signs and symptoms of concussion, the student must be removed from the activity and academics and be re-evaluated by the treating licensed health care provider trained in concussion management.

"Please refer to the Athletic Training Department's Concussion Protocol.

COGNITIVE CONSIDERATIONS

School personnel should be alert to cognitive and academic issues that may be experienced by a student who has suffered a concussion or other head injury. The athletic trainer will notify the school nurse and coach (as applicable) when a concussion injury has occurred during a Thornton Academy athletic event to which the trainer provided care and/or when he/she has knowledge of a suspected head injury. Notification will occur within the same school day or at the start of the next calendar day. Parents are encouraged to report suspect or known concussion or other head injuries that occur outside of school related activities to the school nurse. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school of signs and symptoms related to concussion or head injuries that are recognized while the student is not in school.

The school nurse will then institute the following steps:

Contact the parent to acquire medical recommendations from the child's treating licensed health care provider

Inform the parent of Thornton Academy's concussion policy

Share medical recommendations with the student's guidance counselor

Notify all school personnel responsible for supporting the academic needs of the student including but not limited to: homeroom advisor, dean, and classroom teachers (including study hall)

School personnel shall accommodate a gradual return to full participation in academic activities as appropriate, based on the recommendation of the student's concussion trained health care provider and appropriate designated school personnel.

CONCUSSION POLICY MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Headmaster will appoint a Concussion Policy Management Team which may include: the school nurse, the Director of Athletics, the Director of Student Services, the Director of Guidance, the Middle School Principal, and members of the Athletic Training Department. The team shall oversee and implement this policy and related standards of care for concussive head injuries. This team will identify the school personnel who shall be trained in concussion signs and symptoms and the school activities covered by this policy.

The policy and/or related standards of care should be reviewed when generally accepted protocols change.