

Public Act 99-245: Concussion Protocol for IHSA & IESA Schools
Effective August 3, 2015

Public Act 99-245 expands the Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act as follows:

- Each school board must establish a “concussion oversight team” that must develop a “return-to-play protocol” and a “return-to-learn protocol” for students who are believed to have experienced a concussion.
- Each concussion oversight team must include to the extent practicable at least one physician. If the school employs an athletic trainer, the trainer shall be a member of the concussion oversight team, to the extent practicable. If the school employs a school nurse, the nurse shall be a member of the concussion oversight team, to the extent practicable.
- The concussion oversight team must include one person who is responsible for implementing and complying with the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols.
- A student may not participate in an interscholastic athletic activity until the student and the student’s parent have signed a form acknowledging receiving and reading information that explains “concussion prevention, symptoms, treatment, and oversight and that includes guidelines for safely returning to participation in an athletic activity following a concussion.” This form must be approved by the Illinois High School Association.
- A student must be removed from interscholastic athletic practices or competition immediately if a coach, physician, game official, athletic trainer, parent, student or other person deemed appropriate under the school’s return-to-play protocol believes that the student may have suffered a concussion.
- A student removed from competition or practice due to a possible concussion may not play or practice again until all of the following have been met:
 - The student has been evaluated by the student’s physician or an athletic trainer working under the supervision of a physician and it have been determined that the student can safely return to play and return to learn.
 - The student has completed all requirements of the school’s return-to-play protocol and return-to-learn protocol.
 - The student’s parent acknowledge that the student has completed the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols. The student’s parent must provide the physician’s report to the individual at the school responsible for implementing the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols.

- The student's parent signs a consent form indicating that the parent has been informed of physician's report and consents to the student's return to play. The consent form must also indicate the parent understands the risks associated with a return to play and return to learn and will comply with ongoing return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols and consents to sharing the physician's statement and any recommendations to appropriate persons.
- The superintendent or designee shall supervise the person responsible for implementation of the school's return-to-play protocol and return-to-learn protocol. (Note that the superintendent's designee may not be a coach and a coach may not clear a student for return to play.)
- The Illinois High School Association must approve training courses and activities, at least two hours in length, and maintain a list of approved training entities and providers. Training must be completed at least once every two years by coaches, any nurse on the concussion oversight team and game officials. Physicians are also encouraged to obtain appropriate training.
- Coaches, nurses and game officials must provide the school or school district proof of training or must be excluded from the concussion oversight team.
- Initial training for coaches, nurses and game officials must be completed by September 1, 2016.
- Each school board must develop a school specific emergency action plan for interscholastic athletic activities "to address the serious injuries and acute medical conditions in which the condition of the student may deteriorate rapidly. The plan shall include a delineation of roles, methods of communication, available emergency equipment, and access to and a plan for emergency transportation." The plan must be in writing, reviewed by the concussion oversight team, approved by the superintendent or designee, distributed to appropriate personnel and posted conspicuously at all venues used by the school. The plan must be reviewed annually by all athletic trainers, first responders, coaches, school nurses, athletic directors and volunteers associated with the school's athletic program.

Notes:

1. This legislation applies to all public, charter and private schools that participate in the Illinois High School Association or Illinois Elementary School Association and is in effect for the 2015-16 school year.
2. As noted above, coaches, nurses and game officials must complete required training by September 1, 2016.