

WELCOME TO DURFEE HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS

We believe the following information will help answer many questions regarding interscholastic athletics at Durfee High School. This booklet contains information regarding policies, practices and regulations that govern the athletic department at Durfee High School.

Keep this booklet and refer to it whenever you have a question or a concern regarding your child's athletic experience. If you feel that your questions or concerns are not answered in this booklet, contact your child's coach or call the school's Athletic Office. Please do not let your questions go unanswered.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY

The Interscholastic Athletic Program at Durfee High School is committed to the Mission Statement of Durfee High School. The mission of Durfee High School is to promote opportunities for students to develop skills enabling them to think, communicate and solve problems effectively. Durfee provides students with a cooperative and rigorous learning environment, utilizing diversified instructional strategies to meet their individual needs.

Athletics are an extension of the academic day where our coaching staff is charged with the responsibility to teach the values of Accepting Success Graciously, Accountability, Citizenship, Sportsmanship, Confidence, Tolerance, Handling Disappointment, Leadership, Organizational Skills, Participation Within the Rules, Performing Under Pressure, Persistence, Work Ethic, Physical Well Being, Responsibility, Sacrifice, Self-Discipline,, Social Skills, Striving Toward Excellence, Taking Instruction and Teamwork.

The program strives to have all athletes play with "poise and Class." This should be a very important part of the instruction that takes place at each practice session.

Tryouts are open to all students, providing that they are in good standing academically, are good school citizens, and are physically fit to participate. Participation in the program is a privilege which students earn by meeting and maintaining standards. The coach has the prerogative to select his/her team following observation of all those trying out during the preseason.

A coach may remove a player at any time for violation of team, school or MIAA policies.

GOVERNING BODIES

Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA)

Durfee High School is a member in good standing of the MIAA. With membership, the Principal agrees to abide by all rules and regulations and decisions of the MIAA.

One of the primary functions of the MIAA is to sponsor and conduct post-season tournaments leading to the determination of geographical district and state champions. When varsity teams qualify for and enter such tournaments, we are subject to specific rules and regulations and decisions that govern each tournament as set by the MIAA.

The MIAA does not sponsor or sanction any sub-varsity tournament competition.

The Southeast Conference

Durfee High School is very proud to be a member of the South East Conference. The Southeast Conference is governed by the MIAA and its own Constitution. The Principal of each member school agrees that his/her school will abide by all Conference rules and regulations.

Fall River School Committee

Additional policies, rules and regulations are set by the Fall River Public Schools and the Principal. Under MIAA guidelines, local communities are allowed to set additional policies, rules and/or regulations as long as they are more restrictive than those stipulated by the MIAA.

COMMITMENT

When trying out for a team and after being selected to be a team member of a team, Durfee High School students are expected to attend all practices and games of that team. Practices will average two hours in duration. Weekend and school vacation practice sessions vary by sport and should be expected.

Interscholastic athletics demands much more commitment than a club or recreational activity. Students should be aware of the time commitment prior to trying out for the team.

Once coaches turn in their rosters and teams have been selected, a student may not withdraw from the team and join another during the same season.

SCHOOL/FAMILY VACATIONS, EXTENDED ABSENCES

Every team member is expected to be present for all team practices and games. Because of scheduling parameters, many of our teams practice and/or play during scheduled school vacations.

Commitment to the team is a major component of educational athletics and should be taken into consideration before trying out for any team. Students who plan to be absent for an extended period of time; due to vacation or a planned extended absence, should speak to the coach prior to trying out for a team.

If excused from practices or games for a good reason, an athlete should expect to have to earn his/her position on the team upon return. Unexcused lateness or absence will affect a student's place on the team and may result in suspension or exclusion from the team.

MIAA BONA FIDE TEAM MEMBER

A bona fide team member is a student who is regularly present for, and actively participates in, all team practices and competitions. Bonafide team members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to practice or compete with a non-school team.

A coach does not have the right to excuse a team member from practice or a game so that he/she may play or practice for another team. The principal of the school may request a waiver of this rule in special circumstances. For Saturday/Sunday practices a waiver is not required. The building principal or designee may sign off on the absence.

TRYOUTS

Participation in athletics is a privilege; students try out voluntarily and, on some of our teams, risk being cut. No student is guaranteed a place on the team simply because of his/her grade or past participation. During the tryout period, the coach will provide an explanation of his/her expectations. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate to the coach that he/she can meet those expectations. Students cut from a team are encouraged to try out for another team if there is space on that team and the final cuts have not been made. Students who are cut from a team will be informed as to the reasons for the cut.

After tryouts begin, no athlete may voluntarily leave one team and try out for another without the consent of both coaches involved and the Athletic Director.

DAILY TEAM ATTENDANCE

It is extremely important that a coach be notified if a student is not going to be present at a practice or a game. Practice is where plans for upcoming contests are devised and perfected. The coaches in our program expect their athletes to be present at all team activities. Suspension or dismissal from the team may take place as a result of such absences.

Students are excused from team activities for illness, injury, academic, college visits, family emergencies, or religious reasons. Prior notification is strongly recommended and expected.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS

Students who are absent from school may not participate in practice or a game. A student who is absent on Friday may not participate in a game on Saturday/Sunday without the grade administrator's permission. A student who is suspended in-house or out of school will not practice or participate in a game the day of or throughout the suspension. If a student is suspended on a Friday and/or assigned to Saturday School participation in activities during the weekend shall be at the discretion of the grade administrator. In case of extenuating circumstances, the coach/advisor must confer with the Athletic Director.

Excessive Tardiness to school may result in school and team suspension.

Durfee High School students are instructed at the beginning of each year of the four requirements for good school and team citizenship. They are as follows:

1. Come to school every day.
2. Be on time for school and classes – Lateness precludes an athlete from practicing or playing on that day.
3. Attend all classes – Cutting class precludes an athlete from practicing or playing on that day.
4. An athlete must be in attendance for three (3) school hours to be eligible to practice or play in the games.
5. Respect all members of the Durfee High School community

The abuse of any of these citizenship requirements could result in suspension or dismissal from an athletic team. A student may not practice or play on a day which he/she is absent from school.

PARENTAL PERMISSION FORMS /MEDICAL QUESTIONNAIRES:

All students who plan to participate in athletics must have written proof of a current physical exam signed by a physician. In order for an exam to be considered current, it must be dated within one year of any athletic involvement. It is strongly recommended that an annual examination be scheduled between June and August of each school year. Such an exam would cover a student for the entire school year. Medical questionnaire forms are available in the Athletic Office.

The Medical Questionnaire is a two part form. The first part is to be completed by the athlete and his/her parents. The parent is to sign both the permission statement and the correct information statement. The top of the form must also be completed.

The second part is the physician's report of the physical examination, which will be good for 13 months from the date of the physical.

The MIAA requires athletes to pass a physical exam within 13 months of the start of each season. Therefore, a "Physician's Statement" of an upcoming physical exam after an athlete's current exam has expired will **not** be accepted for eligibility to play beginning with the fall season.

INSURANCE

All members on interscholastic teams are covered by an excess policy which covers expenses which your family plan may not cover.

All injuries must be reported to the Athletic Trainer immediately. Insurance forms may be obtained from the Athletic Trainer

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to participate in athletics, a student must pass a minimum of 2 "Core" classes which includes English, Math, Social Science, Science, and Foreign Language. If a student is taking 5 or more "Core" Classes in a semester, they must pass at least 3 of them. If a Senior Student is only taking 1 "Core" class for the semester, that class must be passed. Students must also pass at least 50% of the electives that they are taking. Eligibility for fall sports will be determined by the final grade for the previous school year. Students entering Durfee as freshmen will be eligible to participate in all sports during the fall season. In order to maintain eligibility, students will be evaluated at the end of each term.

- The athletic department/coaches will conduct an eligibility check of its in-season athletes every five (5) weeks in conjunction with the Progress Reports and the Report Cards. This will ensure that all athletes will be treated fairly and that all athletes will be monitored more efficiently.
- A five (5) week monitoring period will provide the coach with a good indicator of any athletes who are experiencing academic difficulties.

- Students in danger of falling below the academic eligibility standards will be put on a weekly tracking sheet to be signed by their teachers and collected by the coach.

ACADEMIC WAIVER PROCESS

To be eligible for an academic waiver, a student must pass a minimum of 2 core classes. However, students not meeting the minimum standards set forth by the MIAA will not be considered for a waiver.

ACADEMIC APPEAL PROCESS

An appeal board made up of the class vice-principal, the athletic director or a coach, a student, the student's guidance counselor and a faculty member may address extenuating circumstances regarding eligibility.

SUMMER SCHOOL CREDITS

Summer school grades and credits may count toward fall participation if all required assignments and courses are completed.

TIME ALLOWED FOR PARTICIPATION

A student has four consecutive years to participate from the day he/she enters the ninth grade. This means twelve consecutive athletic seasons of eligibility. A fifth year student is ineligible to play in his/her fifth year even if he/she has not played in one of the previous years.

AGE REQUIREMENT

A student must be less than 19 years of age on September 1st of the current school year.

TEAM RULES AND REGULATIONS

At the start of each season a coach, with the approval of the Athletic Director, may issue a set of team rules and regulations to his/her team. It is suggested that these be in written form and passed out to the athletes. A coach will have the right to enforce all rules related to tardiness or absence from practice, profanity, theft, vandalism, or any other inappropriate behavior which he/she deems to be detrimental to the team.

UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

Students have an obligation and responsibility for all equipment issued to them. Each student is responsible for the proper care and retention of their equipment from the date of issue to the date of return.

Equipment should be stored in a locked locker at all times when not in use. Experience has shown that most losses are due to lockers left open or unlocked.

Any student who loses school equipment or fails to return the same, is responsible to meet the current replacement cost of the equipment.

Payment is required at the time of the loss, prior to the next season of athletic involvement, or at graduation, whichever comes first.

No student will be allowed to try out for another sport until all outstanding equipment has been returned or paid for.

PLAYERS LEAVING SQUAD DURING SEASON

If an athlete leaves the team during the season due to injury, academics, discipline, or quitting, it is his/her responsibility to return all school equipment immediately.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All students are required to participate in their regularly scheduled physical education classes. Students being medically excused from physical education may not be allowed to participate in their team practice or game on that day.

All class attendance rules apply to physical education classes. A note to the Athletic Director and/or coach from the Class Administrator is required whenever a student athlete is absent or late for class.

TRAVELING TO AND FROM AWAY CONTESTS

The school provides bus transportation, or a suitable alternative, to most “away” contests. All team members are expected to travel to these contests using the school provided transportation, unless granted prior permission by the coach. Students must obtain permission from the coaching staff in order to be released to travel with their own parent or guardian.

DIRECTIONS TO AWAY CONTEST

The Athletic Office has directions to away games which students may get prior to the contest. Directions are also available on www.highschoolsports.net, by selecting the team schedule and clicking on the game location link.

BUILDING AND FACILITY ACCESS

No student will be allowed access to any of the athletic facilities without proper supervision by a school staff member.

ATHLETIC SHOES

At no time should shoes with cleated soles be worn inside the building. Serious injury can occur from slipping on cement or tiled surfaces.

At no time should shoes with metal cleated soles be worn on any synthetic outdoor surfaces. ***Plastic cleated shoes or turf shoes will be permitted.***

WEIGHT ROOM

The Durfee High School weight room is available to all students whenever it is supervised by a staff member. All students must have appropriate attire (Sneakers and Shirts are Mandatory). **All weights must be returned to their appropriate place when done. Let's take PRIDE in our weight room.**

TRAINER AND TRAINER ROOM

Durfee High School has a full time, licensed Athletic Trainer on site to evaluate and treat athletic injuries as they occur. The trainer provides medical coverage for athletic contests and practices.

The training room is a fully equipped facility with state of the art physical therapy equipment used in assisting the athlete to a quick and healthy return to participation. On school days, the trainer is available from 2:00 P.M. until the conclusion of the last practice session or home contest. On weekends or non-school days, the trainer will be on site for home contests or scrimmages. Occasionally, the trainer will be on site for non-school day practice sessions. In the event of an injury, the trainer will evaluate and recommend to the parent or guardian the direction of care. If a visit to the hospital or physician is necessary, a written medical note releasing them for treatment or return to participation is mandatory.

Athletes may come any time after school for evaluation and treatment by the Athletic Trainer.

PLAYING TIME

Perhaps the most emotional part of a student athlete being involved in high school athletics centers around playing time. The student athlete becomes involved in interscholastic athletics for the first time and finds that practices and expectations are much more intense and demanding. Factors such as practice attendance, attitude, commitment, and of course, athletic skill enter into the decision.

There are many decisions made on a regular basis by the Durfee High School coaching staff. It is their responsibility to decide which athletes should start a contest, which should play what position, and how long each athlete should play. These coaching decisions, often difficult to make, are made only by the coaching staff and are approached very seriously after having observed the student athletes in practice sessions, game like situations, scrimmages, and at times, games.

SUB-VARSITY TEAMS

At the sub-varsity levels (junior varsity, freshman), members of the coaching staff will make a strong effort to play all team members for as much time as is practical. At this level the coaching staff is teaching the offensive and defensive philosophy of the program along with the skills necessary to move along to the next level.

VARSITY TEAMS

At the varsity level we look for our teams to compete against opponents at the highest possible level of execution. This is the highest level of interscholastic competition and players, coaches, parents, and staff members want the Durfee High School varsity teams to be successful on the field of play. As long as the score is being kept, Durfee High School should attempt to win as many games as possible. In order to accomplish this, there are many instances when the major burden of the contest will be carried by the most competitive, skilled team members. However, teams cannot and will not be successful without committed substitutes or “second team” players. These players have to be ready at all times to step forward and shoulder the burden when called upon. It is these people whose hard work in practice each day prepares the team for the upcoming contest.

Success should never be measured in wins and losses but in performance of the athletes. If our athletes perform to the best of their abilities they will always be successful no matter what the final score might be.

TEAM CAPTAINS

It is a coaching decision as to how team captains are selected. They may be selected by the team or appointed by the coach prior to the first regularly scheduled contest. Captains may also be elected or appointed on a game by game basis.

It is expected that team captains be leaders of their teams and should be ready to assume duties as outlined by their coach. They are expected to be more aware of team rules and student athlete responsibilities. Captains are expected to communicate with the coach and team in the event of any problems that may affect the team or its members. Captains may be asked to meet with the Athletic Director during the school year to discuss the athletic program.

Captains of teams may be relieved of their position for violation of team, department, or school rules. Any such decision will be a joint of the Coach and Athletic Director with the approval of the Principal.

SECURITY OF PERSONAL BELONGINGS

All personal belongings should be locked in a locker while the student athlete is trying out, practicing, or playing. All students should have a lock for their athletic lockers and never leave their locker unlocked or open while in the shower. In the event that a student does not have a lock, they should bring their clothing and books to practice with them and leave these items where they can be easily observed. Durfee High School cannot be responsible for personal belongings of student athletes.

LOCKER ROOMS AND FACILITIES

Student athletes are expected to respect the locker facilities, showers, and general areas of the athletic wing. We expect the student athletes to take pride in their facilities by using barrels and keeping their athletic facilities in good condition.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE OBLIGATIONS

A student athlete with a school disciplinary issue is expected to fulfill the disciplinary obligation before reporting to an athletic practice and/or game. Students cannot expect, and should not request, disciplinary action to be postponed or cancelled for any athletic reason. The athletic department reserves the right to remove a student from a team for excessive disciplinary problems and may reinstate the student upon sufficient evidence of improvement.

MIAA CHEMICAL HEALTH POLICY REGARDING ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND DRUGS

“From the earliest fall practice date, to the conclusion of the academic year or final athletic event (whichever is latest), a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as “NA or near beer”. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student’s own use by his/her doctor. This rule represents only a minimum standard upon which schools may develop more stringent requirements.”

“This MIAA statewide minimum standard is not intended to render “guilty by association,” e.g. many student athletes might be present at a party where only a few violate the standard.”

“If a student in violation of this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury or academics, the penalty will not take effect until that student is able to participate again.”

FAILURE TO COMPLY/MINIMUM PENALTIES

First Violation: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, these penalties will be determined by the season the violation occurs. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. All decimals of an event will be truncated, i.e., all fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season.

Second and subsequent violation: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, these penalties will be determined by the season in which the violation occurs. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season.

If after the second or subsequent violations the student of his/her own violation becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of events. The director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center must issue such certification. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated i.e., all fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season.

SPORTS OFFERED AT DURFEE HIGH SCHOOL

FALL

Boys' & Girls Cross Country
Field Hockey
Football
Golf
Boys' & Girls Soccer
Girls' Volleyball
Unified Basketball
Fall Cheerleading

WINTER

Boys' & Girls' Basketball
Ice Hockey
Boys' Swimming & Diving
Boys' & Girls' Indoor Track
Wrestling
Girls' Swimming & Diving
Winter Cheerleading

SPRING

Boys' Baseball
Girls' Softball
Boys' & Girls' Tennis
Boys' & Girls' Outdoor Track
Boys' Volleyball
Unified Track and Field

COLLEGE/CAREER GUIDANCE

One of the most important decisions facing high school students is what to do with their lives after high school. The members of the Durfee High School athletic staff are willing and eager to assist all of their students with this extremely important decision. Staff members fully understand the importance of this assistance. They may be able to answer questions, contact schools and/or coaches, send video tapes, if available, and write letters of recommendation. The least they will be able to do is guide students to more knowledgeable resources that can help with decisions. If a student's goal is to compete athletically at the collegiate level it is very important to be aware of the ever-changing NCAA regulations.

The high school Guidance Department has a wealth of information and experience on NCAA regulations. They also have copies of the NCAA Clearinghouse Registration Forms which must be completed by all students planning to participate at the college level.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Durfee High School expects all parties at a contest to display the highest possible level of sportsmanship. Players, coaches, and spectators are to treat opponents, game officials, and visiting spectators with respect and the same "Poise and Class" we speak about in our philosophy.

The MIAA reserves the right to "warn, censure, place on probation, or suspend up to one calendar year any player, team, coach, game or school official, or school determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship. Durfee High School in turn, reserves the right to impose the same penalties on spectators displaying poor sportsmanship at any of our contests, both home and away.

HAZING

MASSACHUSETTS STATE LAW

CH. 269, S.17. CRIME OF HAZING; DEFINITION; PENALTY

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to be contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

CH. 269, S.18. DUTY TO REPORT HAZING

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

CH. 269, S.19. HAZING STATUTES TO BE PROVIDED; STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY REQUIRED

Each secondary school and each public and private school or college shall issue to every group or organization under its authority or operating on or in conjunction with its campus or school, and to every member, plebe, pledge or applicant for membership in such group or organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. An officer of each such group or organization, and each individual receiving a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen shall sign an acknowledgment stating that such group, organization or individual has received a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each secondary school and each public or private school or college shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education, certifying that such institution has complied with the provisions of this section and also certifying that said school has adopted a disciplinary policy with regards to the organizers and participants of hazing. The Board of Regents and, in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such a report.

A Parent's Guide to Concussion in Sports

What is a concussion? A concussion is a brain injury which results in a temporary disruption of normal brain function. A concussion occurs when the brain is violently rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull as a result of a blow to the head or body. An athlete does not have to lose consciousness ("knocked-out") to suffer a concussion.

Concussion Facts:

- It is estimated that over 140,000 high school athletes across the United States suffer a concussion each year. (Data from NFHS Injury Surveillance System)
- Concussions occur most frequently in football, but boys/girls’ soccer, wrestling and girls’ basketball follow closely behind. All athletes are at risk.
- A concussion is a traumatic injury to the brain.
- Concussion symptoms may last from a few days to several months.
- Concussions can cause symptoms which interfere with school, work, and social life.
- An athlete should not return to sports while still having symptoms from a concussion as they are at risk for prolonging symptoms and further injury.
- A concussion may cause multiple symptoms. Many symptoms appear immediately after the injury, while others may develop over the next several days or weeks. The symptoms may be subtle and are often difficult to fully recognize.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS, FRIENDS, TEACHERS OR COACHES	SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE
✓ Appears dazed or stunned	✓ Headache
✓ Is confused about what to do	✓ Nausea
✓ Forgets plays	✓ Balance problems or dizziness
✓ Is unsure of game, score, or opponent	✓ Double or fuzzy vision
✓ Moves clumsily	✓ Sensitivity to light or noise
✓ Answers questions slowly	✓ Feeling sluggish
✓ Loses consciousness	✓ Feeling foggy or groggy
✓ Shows behavior or personality changes	✓ Concentration or memory problems
✓ Can’t recall events prior to hit	✓ Confusion
✓ Can’t recall events after hit	

What should I do if I think my child has had a concussion?

If an athlete is suspected of having a concussion, he or she must be immediately removed from play, be it a game or practice. Continuing to participate in physical activity after a concussion can lead to worsening concussion symptoms, increasing risk for injury, and even death. Parents and coaches are not expected to be able to “diagnose” a concussion, as that is the job of a medical professional. However, you must be aware of the signs and symptoms of a concussion and if you are suspicious, then your child must stop playing:

When in doubt, sit them out!

All athletes who sustain a concussion need to be evaluated by a health care professional who is familiar with sports concussions. You should call your child's physician and explain what has happened and follow your physician's instructions. If your child is vomiting, has a severe headache, is having difficulty staying awake or answering simple questions he or she should be taken to the emergency room immediately.

When can an athlete return to play following a concussion?

After suffering a concussion, **no athlete should return to play or practice on that same day**. Studies have shown us that the young brain does not recover quickly enough for an athlete to return to activity in such a short time.

Concerns over athletes returning to play too quickly have led state lawmakers to pass laws stating that **no player shall return to play following a concussion on that same day and the athlete must be cleared by an appropriate health-care professional before he or she are allowed to return to play in games and practices**. The laws also mandate that coaches receive education on recognizing the signs and symptoms of concussions.

DURFEE HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

CONCUSSION ACTION PLAN

Emergency Management and Referral Procedures:

1. Student-athlete is removed from the contest or practice. No return to play in current contest or practice.
2. Medical evaluation following head injury. The athletic trainer will conduct a *Standardized Assessment of Concussion (SAC) and Concussion Signs and Symptoms Checklist*.
3. If a student-athlete loses consciousness for any reason and /or develops signs and symptoms that worsen, the athletic trainer will activate the Emergency Medical Services System (EMS) and immediately notify the parent(s) or guardian(s).
 - o **If the athletic trainer is not available, the coach should immediately call EMS, check CAB's, do not move the student-athlete until EMS arrives, and notify parent(s)/guardian(s).**
4. A student-athlete showing **stable** signs and symptoms of a concussion that is not worsening is allowed to go home with his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) following the head injury.
 - o If the head injury occurred during practice or contest at Durfee High school athletics Complex, the parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be notified to pick up their child and speak with the athletic trainer.
 - o If the head injury occurred at an **away event**, the coach will notify the student-athlete's parent(s)/guardian(s) and athletic trainer.
5. The athletic trainer, coach, or band director that witnesses a head injury must complete and return the MDPH **Report of Head Injury during Sports Season** form.
6. The athletic trainer will report suspected or diagnosed cases of concussions to the school nurse.

Student-athlete should not be left alone. Parent/guardian will monitor their child using the Concussion Signs & symptoms Checklist for symptoms deterioration over the next

Criteria for Return to Game Play:

1. Parent/Guardian receives and monitors their child using the Concussion Signs & Symptoms Checklist.
2. Parent/Guardian and student-athlete reads: Concussion and Graduated Return to Play Protocol form.
3. Athletic trainer will conduct daily follow-up evaluations and update the parent(s)/guardian(s), coach, and school nurse.
4. School nurse will address and post-injury concerns involving attendance and/or academic performance with the student-athlete's guidance counselor and teachers.
5. Post Injury ImPACT test will be taken by the student-athlete within 24-72 hours following the head injury. Test results/scores must be **normal** before performing the Physical Post Concussion Tests. Post injury ImPACT test will be taken every three to five days until normal score is attained.
6. Student-athlete completes Graduated Return to Play Protocol, involving **Five Physical Post Concussion Tests** under direct supervision of the athletic trainer while being **asymptomatic** at all stages.
7. Student-athlete may not return to game play until written clearance is completed by: team physician, or duly licensed physician, licensed certified athletic trainer in consultation with a licensed physician.
8. MDPH Medical Clearance and Authorization form must be completed, signed and returned to the Athletic Training Department.
9. Athletic trainer notifies parent(s)/guardian(s), athlete, coach, and school nurse. A **copy** of the MDPH Medical Clearance Form and Concussion Management Checklist will be given to the school nurse to be placed in the student-athletes file. *All reporting procedures will meet state standards.*

Graduated Re-Entry Program

Step 1: Light exercise, including walking or riding an exercise bike. No weight-lifting.

Step 2: Running in the gym or on the field. No helmet or other equipment.

Step 3: Non-contact training drills in full equipment. Weight-training can begin.

Step 4: Full contact practice or training.

Step 5: Game play.

If symptoms occur at any step, the athlete should cease activity and be re-evaluated by their health care provider.

How can a concussion affect school work?

Following a concussion, many athletes will have difficulty in school. These problems may last from days to months and often involve difficulties with short and long-term memory, concentration, and organization.

In many cases it is best to lessen the athlete's class load early on after the injury. This may include staying home from school for a few days, followed by a lightened schedule for a few days, or perhaps a longer period of time, if needed. Decreasing the stress on the brain early on after a concussion may lessen symptoms and shorten the recovery time.

What can I do?

- Both you and your child should learn to recognize the "Signs and Symptoms" of concussion as listed above.
- Teach your child to tell the coaching staff if he or she experiences such symptoms.
- Emphasize to administrators, coaches, teachers, and other parents your concerns and expectations about concussion and safe play.
- Teach your child to tell the coaching staff if he or she suspects that a teammate has a concussion.
- Monitor sports equipment for safety, fit, and maintenance.
- Ask teachers to monitor any decrease in grades or changes in behavior that could indicate concussion.
- Report concussions that occurred during the school year to appropriate school staff. This will help in monitoring injured athletes as they move to the next season's sport.

Guidance for Coaches, Athletic Directors and Parents regarding the New Law Regarding Sports-Related Head Injury and Concussions:

An Act Relative to Safety Regulations for School Athletic Programs

This updated Guidance is being offered in advance of regulations to protect the safety and wellbeing of young athletes in Massachusetts. This Guidance is intended to assist schools and individuals comply with their obligations under the new law.

What does the law do?

This law requires that public schools and, in addition, any other schools subject to the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) rules make sure that students athletes and their parents, coaches, athletic directors, school nurses and physicians and others learn about the consequences of head injuries and concussions through training programs and written materials.

The law requires that athletes and their parents inform their coaches about prior head injuries at the beginning of the season. If a student athlete becomes unconscious or suffers a known or suspected concussion during a game or practice, the law mandates removing the student from play or practice, and requires written certification from a licensed medical professional for "return to play".

The law also prohibits coaches, trainers and others from encouraging or permitting a student athlete to use sports equipment as a weapon or to engage in sports techniques that unreasonably endanger the health and safety of him/her or other players, such as helmet to helmet hits.

What schools are covered by this new law?

The law applies to all public middle and high schools. These schools are required to participate in an interscholastic athletic head injury safety training program. However, because sports related head injuries and concussions can have such serious consequences for students, including long term health and educational issues if they are not properly managed, the law strongly encourages all schools whose students engage in extracurricular athletic activities to include these trainings as part of their athletic programs.

Who needs to participate in an interscholastic athletic head injury safety training program?

The law says that the following people must participate in this training program:

- ✓ Coaches
- ✓ Athletic Trainers
- ✓ Parent volunteers for any extracurricular athletic activity
- ✓ Physicians employed by the school or who volunteer for any extracurricular athletic activity
- ✓ School nurses or nurses who volunteer for any extracurricular athletic activity
- ✓ Athletic Directors
- ✓ School Marching Band Directors
- ✓ Parents or legal guardians of children who participate in any extracurricular athletic activity

Written materials described below can be used as an alternative for those individuals without access to the online training or for whom English is not a first language.

The law also recommends that student athletes themselves participate in such a course or receive printed materials with information about concussions.

How can I complete this interscholastic athletic head injury safety training?

Two **free** on-line courses are available and contain all information required by the law, including signs and symptoms of concussion, how to respond to a suspected concussion, what you need to do to help an athlete when he/she is cleared to safely “return to play”, and what you can do to prevent sports related head injuries. Both courses provide certificates of completion. You should keep this certificate because schools may be collecting that information in order to comply with the law.

Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports: (Course #1)

The first on-line course is available through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at:

http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html

The training uses expert interviews and interactive elements to train coaches and others on concussion. This course includes additional materials for coaches, parents, athletes and school nurses. Additional educational materials on concussion and their impact can be found at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/>

CDC has information available for individuals, including parents and athletes whose first language is Spanish and may not find the on-line course accessible:

Coaches: http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/Coach_Guide-a.pdf

http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/coaches_Engl.pdf

School Nurses: <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/schools.html>

Athletes: http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/Athletes_Fact_Sheet-a.pdf

http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/Athletes_Fact_Sheet_Spanish-a.pdf

Parents: http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/Parents_Fact_Sheet-a.pdf

http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/Parents_Fact_Sheet_Spanish-a.pdf

Concussion in Sports: What You Need to Know (Course #2) from the National Federation of State High School Associations. This on-line course is available through NFHS. You need to click the “order here” button and complete a brief registration form to take the course. However, you do not need to be a member of NFHS to access this course. Go to:

<http://www.nfhslearn.com/electiveDetail.aspx?courseID=15000>

How would I know if an athlete may have a concussion?

While the symptoms of concussions vary from person to person, the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention have developed helpful materials that can assist you in understanding the signs.

Go to: http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/signs_symptoms.html

What should I do if one of my players may have suffered a concussion or head injury during practice or a game?

If a student has become unconscious, suffered, or is suspected of having suffered, a concussion during a game or practice, the student **MUST** be removed from play. The student **MAY NOT** go back into that same game or practice even if the athlete says “I feel fine.”

When can an athlete be “returned to play”?

The law is clear that a student who may have suffered a head injury may not return to the same game or practice. It is also required that student athletes be certified for return to play by a licensed medical professional. It is strongly recommended that this professional have familiarity with concussion diagnosis and management.

How will medical professionals be informed of the law?

The Department of Public Health is working with the Massachusetts Medical Society, the American Academy of Pediatrics, Athletic Trainers of Massachusetts and others to inform physicians, athletic trainers, nurses, emergency room personnel around the state about the new law.

How will parents learn about the law?

The law requires that schools make sure that parents of athletes and marching band members and parent volunteers are provided with the sports concussion awareness course, either on-line or through written materials. To comply with this component of the law, schools may provide parents with information on the 2 on-line courses describe above or schools may provide copies of the materials found at:

[http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/Parents Fact Sheet-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/Parents%20Fact%20Sheet-a.pdf)

[http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/Parents Fact Sheet Spanish-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/Parents%20Fact%20Sheet%20Spanish-a.pdf)

[http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/quiz Eng.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/quiz%20Eng.pdf)

Do coaches or trainers have other obligations under the law?

Yes. As noted above, coaches, trainers or volunteers for an extracurricular athletic activity are not allowed to encourage or permit a student to engage in any dangerous athletic technique that unnecessarily endangers the health of him/herself or another player, including using a helmet or any other sports equipment as a weapon.

Who is responsible for keeping track of compliance with this law?

The superintendent of the school district or the director of the school must maintain records of the district’s or school’s compliance with the law.

Do parents and athletes have other responsibilities under the law?

Yes, Students and their parents or legal guardians must provide information to the school regarding any previous sports head injury at the start of each sports season. Parents and athletes can be asked to provide information in a format selected by the school. However, these forms must require the signature of both the student and the parent or legal guardian. Coaches must receive this information prior to

allowing any student to participate in an extracurricular athletic activity so they can identify students who are at greater risk for repeated head injuries.

What does the new law say about the liability of a school district, its officers or employees if one of my players gets hurt?

This new law does not change the existing law regarding lawsuits and legal liability. School districts are advised to consult with their legal advisor as needed.

What does the new law say about the legal liability of other people who volunteer to assist with extracurricular sports if a player gets hurt?

This new law clearly states that volunteers who assist with extracurricular athletic activities will not be liable for civil damages for any acts or omissions related to the law unless they are willfully or wantonly negligent.

Where can I get more information about the law?

The full text of the law is available at: www.mass.gov/legis/laws/seslaw10/sl100166.htm

Where can I get more information about concussions and how to respond if they occur?

Information about sports related concussions is available at the following websites:

<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/>

www.sportsconcussions.org

www.sportslegacy.org

<http://www.biama.org/whatdoes/playsmart.html>

OPIOID MISUSE PREVENTION – FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

All Durfee Coaches, Student/Athletes, and Parents must sign off on receiving information on Opioid Abuse Education. Information will be available at the Athletic Parent Information Nights and on our school website at <http://www.fallriverschools.org/durfeeathletics.cfm>

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) provides workshops and training programs for school administrators, educators, teacher-coaches, and student athletes. The MIAA Partners in Prevention is a consortium of more than 60 health, wellness, and safety organizations working together to provide

resources and programming to schools and communities. The MIAA Sports Medicine Committee, comprising of athletic directors, physicians, school nurses, administrators, and coaches, strives to ensure the safety of our students. The MIAA Youth Substance Misuse Prevention Collaborative is a committee of key Commonwealth stakeholders who provide prevention programming and resources. For more information about MIAA initiatives and programming, please call 508-541-7997 or visit www.miaa.net.

For more information and resources on preventing substance misuse:

Massachusetts Health Promotion Clearinghouse offers a number of free health education resources from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. <https://massclearinghouse.ehs.state.ma.us/>

Massachusetts Substance Abuse Information and Education Helpline provides free and anonymous information and referrals for alcohol and other substance use problems. <http://helpline-online.com/> 1-800-327-5050 TTY: use MassRelay at 711 or 1-800-439-2370

Bureau of Substance Abuse Services, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, oversees treatment for substance use disorders in the commonwealth. <http://mass.gov/dph/bsas>

National Institute for Drug Abuse (part of the National Institutes of Health) is charged with advancing the science of addiction, and provides the latest research and resources. <https://www.drugabuse.gov/>

