

SUBJECT: CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

A concussion is a type of mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI) caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. Recovery from concussion and its symptoms will vary. Avoiding re-injury and over-exertion until fully recovered are the cornerstones of proper concussion management. Concussions can impact a student's academic performance as well as their athletic pursuits. As such, the District supports the proper evaluation and management of concussion injuries.

Concussion Management Team (CMT)

In accordance with the Concussion Management and Awareness Act, the School District may establish a Concussion Management Team (CMT) which may be composed of the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, and/or Director of Health, Physical Education and Athletics, a school nurse, the school physician or designee, a coach of an interscholastic team and/or physical education teacher, a certified athletic trainer and other appropriate personnel as designated by the School District. If established, the Concussion Management Team will oversee and implement the School District's concussion policy and regulations, including the requirement that all school coaches, physical education teachers, school nurses and certified athletic trainers who work with and/or provide instruction to students engaged in school-sponsored athletic activities complete training relating to mild traumatic brain injuries. Furthermore, every concussion management team may establish and implement a program which provides information on mild traumatic brain injuries to parents and persons in parental relation throughout each school year.

Staff Training/Course of Instruction

Each school coach, physical education teacher, school nurse and certified athletic trainer who works with and/or provides instruction to students in school-sponsored athletic activities (including physical education class and recess) will complete a training every two (2) years relating to recognizing the symptoms of concussions or MTBIs and monitoring and seeking proper medical treatment for students who suffer from a concussion or MTBI.

Components of the training will include:

- a) The definition of MTBI;
- b) Signs and symptoms of MTBI;
- c) How MTBIs may occur;
- d) Practices regarding prevention; and
- e) Guidelines for the return to school and school activities for a student who has suffered an MTBI, even if the injury occurred outside of school.

The training must be completed by means of instruction approved by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) which include, but are not limited to, courses provided online and by teleconference.

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Staff Training/Course of Instruction (Cont'd.)

Each time a staff member completes this training or a related professional development course, they must forward proof of completion to the CMT or, if a CMT has not been established, the Director of Health, Physical Education and Athletics will enter the information into the District's existing system for tracking completed trainings and professional development courses. The system will also use an email to remind staff of the need to complete the training as needed.

Information to Parents

The District shall include the following information on MTBIs or concussions in any permission or consent form or similar document that may be required from a parent for a student's participation in interscholastic sports. Information will include:

- a) The definition of MTBI;
- b) Signs and symptoms of MTBI;
- c) How MTBIs may occur;
- d) Practices regarding prevention; and
- e) Guidelines for the return to school and school activities for a student who has suffered an MTBI, even if the injury occurred outside of school.

The District will provide a link on its website to this information on the NYSED's and New York Department of Health's websites.

Identification of Concussion and Removal from Athletic Activities

The District shall require the immediate removal from all athletic activities of any student who has sustained, or is believed to have sustained, a mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI) or concussion. Any student demonstrating signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion while participating in a class, extracurricular activity, or interscholastic athletic activity shall be removed from the class, game or activity and must be evaluated as soon as possible by an appropriate health care professional. Such removal must occur based on display of symptoms regardless of whether such injury occurred inside or outside of school. If there is any doubt as to whether the student has sustained a concussion, it shall be presumed that the student has been injured until proven otherwise. The District shall notify the student's parents and recommend appropriate evaluation and monitoring.

The School District may, in collaboration with their School Physician allow District staff who are appropriately licensed or certified healthcare professionals and credentialed to use validated neurocognitive computerized testing to review and obtain baseline and post-concussion performance data. These tools are not a replacement for a medical evaluation to diagnose a concussion or clear a student to return to activities. The District must seek authorization from the parent prior to the testing. Additionally, parents should be given a copy of the results.

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Return to School Activities and Athletics

A student shall not return to physical activity (including athletics, physical education class and recess) until they have been symptom-free for not less than twenty-four (24) hours, and have been evaluated and received written and signed authorization from a licensed physician. This written authorization should be sent to the school for review by the school nurse. Additionally, the School District's School Physician has the final authority to clear students to participate in or return to extra-class athletic activities. All such authorizations shall be kept on file in the student's permanent health record. The standards for return to athletic activity will also apply to injuries that occur outside of school. Staff should be aware that students may exhibit concussion symptoms caused by injuries from outside activities and that these visible symptoms also indicate a removal from play.

The District will follow any directives issued by the student's treating physician with regard to limitations and restrictions on school and athletic activities for the student. The District will also develop a coordinated communication plan among appropriate staff to ensure that the private provider's orders for post-concussion management are implemented and followed, and for students to resume participation in athletic activities with the District's School Physician's approval. The school nurse will work to ensure that all the necessary staff get the information they need to care for and work with the injured student.

The District's School Physician and other licensed healthcare professionals employed by the District will also establish a procedure and treatment plan to be utilized by District staff who may respond to students or staff with possible concussions during the school day or at a school-sponsored athletic event.

In accordance with NYSED guidelines, this policy shall be reviewed periodically and updated at least every three years or with updates to guidance. The Superintendent and/or his/her designee, in consultation with the District's School Physician, Director of Athletics, Physical Education & Health and the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services and other appropriate staff, may develop regulations and protocols for strategies to prevent concussions, the identification of concussions and procedures for removal from and return to activities or academics.

Education Law § 305(42)
8 NYCRR §§ 135.4 and 136.5
Guidelines for Concussion Management in Schools, NYSED Guidance Document, 2022

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Reviewed by Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Director of Pupil Services on 12/18/2019. BOE reviewed and agreed on 1/12/2021

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