Concussions

The Bethany Public School District (District) recognizes that concussions and head injuries are commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and other recreational activities. The District acknowledges the risk of catastrophic injuries or deaths is significant when a concussion or head injury is not properly evaluated and managed.

Definitions

For purposes of these administrative regulations concerning training regarding concussions and head injuries, the term:

- **Coach** means any person who holds or is issued a coaching permit by the Connecticut State Department of Education and who is hired by the District to coach intramural or interscholastic athletics.

- **Licensed Health Care Professional** means a physician licensed pursuant to Chapter 370 of the General Statutes, a physician assistant licensed pursuant to Chapter 370 of the Connecticut General Statutes, an advanced practice registered nurse licensed pursuant to Chapter 378 of the Connecticut General Statutes, or an athletic trainer licensed pursuant to Chapter 375a of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Mandatory Training

1. Any coach of intramural or interscholastic athletics, who holds or is issued a coaching certificate, must, before commencing their coaching assignment for the season, complete an initial training course concerning concussions, which are a type of brain injury. This training course must be approved by the State Department of Education (SDE).

2. Coaches must provide proof of initial course completion to the Superintendent or designee prior to commencing their coaching assignments for the season in which they coach.

3. One (1) year after receiving an initial training, and every year thereafter, coaches must review current and relevant information regarding concussions prior to commencing their coaching assignments for the season. This current and relevant information shall be that approved by the SDE. Coaches need not review this information in the year they are required to take a refresher course, as discussed below.

4. Coaches must complete a refresher course concerning concussions and head injuries not later than five (5) years after receiving their initial training course, and once every five (5) years thereafter. Coaches must provide proof of refresher course completion to the Superintendent or designee prior to commencing their coaching assignments for the season in which they coach.

Concussion Management

1. Any coach of any intramural or interscholastic athletics shall immediately remove a student athlete from participating in any intramural or interscholastic athletic activity who:

   a. is observed to exhibit signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion following an observed or suspected blow to the head or body; or

   b. is diagnosed with a concussion, regardless of when such concussion may have occurred.

2. Upon removal from participation, the school administration or coach shall notify the student athlete's parent/guardian that the student athlete has exhibited such signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion or has been diagnosed with a concussion. Such school administration or coach shall provide such notification not later than twenty-four (24) hours after such removal and shall make a reasonable effort to provide such notification immediately after such removal.

3. The coach shall not permit such student athlete to participate in any supervised team activities involving physical exertion, including, but not limited to, practices, games, or competitions, until such student athlete receives written clearance to participate in such supervised team activities involving physical exertion from a licensed health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

4. Following receipt of clearance, the coach shall not permit such student athlete to participate in any full, unrestricted supervised team activities without limitations on contact or physical exertion, including, but not limited to, practices, games, or competitions, until such student athlete:

   a. no longer exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion at rest or with exertion; and

   b. receives written clearance to participate in such full, unrestricted supervised team activities from a licensed health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

5. The District shall prohibit a student athlete from participating in any intramural or interscholastic athletic activity unless the student athlete, and a parent or guardian of such athlete, receives training regarding the concussion education plan developed or approved by the SDE by:

   a. reading written materials;

   b. viewing online training videos; or

   c. attending in-person training regarding the concussion education plan developed or approved by the SDE.

6. The District shall annually provide each participating student athlete's parent/guardian with a copy of an informed consent form approved by the SDE and obtain the parent/guardian's signature, attesting to the fact that such parent/guardian has received a copy of such form and authorizes the student athlete to participate in the athletic activity.

Reporting Requirements

1. The school administration or coach who informs a student athlete's parent/guardian of the possible occurrence of a concussion shall also report such incident to the school nurse.

2. The nurse shall follow up on the incident with the student and/or the student's parent/guardian and maintain a record of all incidents of diagnosed concussions. Such record shall include if known:

   a. The nature and extent of the concussion; and

   b. The circumstances in which the student sustained the concussion.

3. The nurse shall annually provide such record to the SDE.

Should a coach fail to adhere to the requirements of these administrative regulations, the coach may be subject to discipline up to and including termination, as well as permit revocation by the SDE.

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes § 10-149b

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-149c

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-149e

Regulation adopted: April 8, 2015
Regulation revised: January 7, 2016
Regulation revised: April 13, 2016
Regulation revised: October 6, 2016
Regulation revised: December 9, 2020
Regulation revised: May 10, 2023

Source: Shipman