

Concussion

From the moment of impact, our athletic trainer, coaches, and trained staff start a **concussion protocol** to ensure your students and student-athlete's safe return-to-school and play.



Sweetwater County School District 1 (SCSD1) continuously works to provide a comprehensive concussion protocol for students and student athletes. The focus is on protecting student-athletes from further injury and ensuring that they are able to return to school and sports safely. Our protocol uses the most up-to-date, evidence-based research and guidelines available. Ensuring that concussed student-athletes in SCSD1 receive the best care possible is our number one priority.

SCSD1 has always been concerned about student/athlete safety and well-being. The National Federation of State High School Associations has emphasized concussion management for a number of years and most recently the Wyoming State Legislature passed Senate File Number 0038, also known as the School Athletics Safety Act. The following protocols will be used during extracurricular sports/activities sponsored by the District.

Our School District Concussion Protocol

2025-2026 ATHLETIC/ACTIVITIES HANDBOOK

A coach or athletic trainer shall remove a student/athlete exhibiting signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion or other head injury or has been diagnosed with a concussion or other head injury in a practice or a competition from the activity. A student/athlete, who has been removed from a practice or a 50 competition, must be evaluated and if he/she is suspected to have a concussion or head injury he/she shall not return to practice or competition that same day. The coach or athletic trainer will notify the legal parent or guardian if a concussion or head injury is suspected.

Any student/athlete removed from play due to suspicion of a concussion or who continues to have symptoms must follow-up with an appropriate licensed health care professional. For the student/athlete to return to participate in a practice or a competition the student/athlete must no longer exhibit any sign, symptom or behavior consistent with a concussion or other head injury and receive a written release from the treating licensed health care provider. This documentation must be given to the principal or designee and remain on file with the District.

Only after a written release from a licensed health care provider will Sweetwater County School District #1 and RSHS begin to administer the 6-day return to play protocol that will be monitored by the RSHS certified athletic trainer. Once the athlete is symptom free during all [6 stages of Return to Play \(RTP\)](#), only at that time will the athlete be eligible to participate in the next upcoming scheduled competition.

Reference: Journal of Athletic Training 2014; 49(2): 245-265 doi: 10.4084/1062-6050-49.1.07_ by the National Athletic Trainers' Association, Inc. www.natajournals.org

The hallmark of the concussion protocol is the school-based concussion management team. The team consists of the athletic trainer, school nurse, school counselor, and athletic administration. Concussion management teams work together to evaluate, communicate, and monitor the progression of the student as they [recover](#) from a concussion.

First, before a concussion event takes place, student-athletes take a pre-concussion assessment. The pre-concussion assessment is a computerized test that aids in evaluating the recovery of the concussed student-athlete. To achieve this, results of an pre-concussion assessment test are used to evaluate and document many brain functions, including memory, processing speed, reaction time, and post-concussion symptoms. High school and junior high athletes participating in high-risk sports, such as alpine skiing, basketball, diving football, soccer, and wrestling receive a free test by their high school athletic trainer. Sweetwater County School District #1 provides a pre- concussion assessment annually. The purpose is to collect data on the athlete's brain function in a normal, non-injured state. If the athlete sustains a concussion, he or she will retest using the pre-concussion assessment program. Comparison of pre-injury and post-injury results help with [treatment](#) and recovery decisions.

Once all student-athletes have their baseline test data, the following concussion protocol establishes procedures for recognition, evaluation, and management of concussions by all involved parties – coaches, students, parents, athletic trainers, and school nurses.

Step 1: Injury Occurs

Either the athletic trainer and/or coach observe the injury or the student-athlete reports it. At the point that a suspected concussion has occurred, the injured athlete is immediately removed from play.

Step 2: Injury Evaluation

The athletic trainer evaluates the injured student using a district approved assessment guideline (e.g. ACE's). Based on the evaluation, the athletic trainer assesses whether or not a concussion is suspected.

No student who displays symptoms of a possible concussion will return to play the same day.

Step 3: Injury Referral

Once a concussion is confirmed, the athletic trainer contacts the parents with take-home instructions for follow-up care, observation cues, **red flag symptoms** to watch for, and instructions for referral.

The Wyoming Department of Education states that all school student-athletes receive clearance from a physician prior to returning to sports. Therefore, the athlete receives recommendation for referral to a medical provider specializing in concussion assessment and treatment.

The athletic trainer contacts the concussion management team at the school to inform them of the concussion.

Step 4: Injury Follow-up Care

The concussion management team monitors a gradual return to daily activities, school, and exercise.

This includes the development of a return-to-learn plan and specific academic accommodations, if needed, based on the specific symptoms and issues of the injured student-athlete.

Together, the athletic trainer and parents monitor the development and improvement of symptoms on a daily basis.

Concussed student-athletes should refrain from all physical activity immediately following injury. Once their condition begins to improve, they may resume low-level activity, such as walking or riding a stationary bike at a low heart rate.

Once the injured person is symptom free, attending school full-time without accommodations, and their pre-concussion assessment scores are normal, they may begin the return-to-play protocol.

Step 5: Return-to-Play

In order to return to play, the injured student must complete all steps of a graduated exercise progression, and receive written clearance from a healthcare professional.

- » **Graduated Return-to-Play Progression:** Injured students must complete each step without a return of symptoms before progressing to the next step. If symptoms return during a step, the student should rest for 24 hours and then resume activity a step below the level where the symptoms occurred.
- » **Symptom-Limited Activity:** Relative rest for 48-72 hours. Low intensity physical and mental activity at a level that does not exacerbate current symptoms. This also applies to the return-to-learn process and may include recommendations to stay home and limit school hours and homework. Gradual reintroduction of light activity while limiting symptoms.
- » **Light Aerobic Exercise:** Walking or stationary bike at low to moderate intensity; no contact, resistance, or weight training.
- » **Sport Specific Exercise:** Sprinting, dribbling basketball or soccer; no helmet or equipment, no head impact activities.
- » **Non-Contact Training:** More complex drills in full equipment. Weight training or resistance training may begin.

***Before moving to the next stage, the athlete must fully recover, be medically cleared and in school full-time without accommodations, and have normal pre-concussion assessment scores.*

- » **Full-Contact Practice:** Participate in normal, full-contact training activities.
- » **Unrestricted Return-to-Participation/Full Competition:** Game play against opposing team.

GET THE HELP YOU NEED WHEN YOU NEED IT.

If you believe your child has a concussion, you should seek medical attention from a concussion specialist.

In addition, if your child plays high school sports in SCSD1, your high school athletic trainer is available during school hours. Find your high school athletic trainer [HERE](#).

Get the support your child needs to safely recover from a concussion.

GET YOUR CHILD BACK IN THE GAME SAFELY

We are passionate about getting SCSD1 youth the care they need when they have experienced a concussion. To this end, we follow a research-based model of management in treating concussions. Like you, our focus is on getting your child healthy, and safely returning them to the activity they love.

The content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.