

Timberlane Regional School District	Policy Code: JLCJ
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Concussions and Head Injuries

The School Board recognizes that concussions and head injuries are commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and other recreational activities. The Board acknowledges that risk of catastrophic injuries or death is significant when a concussion or head injury is not properly evaluated and managed. This policy is for both student who obtain head injuries/concussions in and out of sports. The Board recognizes that the majority of concussions will occur in "contact" or "collision" sports. However, in order to ensure safety of all District student- athletes this policy will utilize the following definition:

- A "student-athlete" is defined as a student involved in any intramural sports program conducted outside the regular teaching day or competitive student sports program between schools in grades 6-12, including all NHIAA sanctioned activities or any district-sponsored sports or activity as determined by Superintendent or designee.

Consistent with the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association (NHIAA), the District will utilize recommended guidelines, procedures, and other pertinent information to inform and educate coaches, youth athletes, and parents/guardians of the nature and risk of concussions or head injuries, including the dangers associated with continuing to play after a concussion or head injury.

- For purposes of this policy, "head injury" means injuries to the scalp, skull, or brain caused by trauma, and shall include a concussion which is the most common type of sports- related brain injury.

All coaches, including volunteers, will complete training as recommended and/or provided by NHIAA, New Hampshire Department of Education and/or other pertinent organizations. Additionally, all coaches of competitive sports activities will comply with NHIAA recommended procedures for the management of head injuries and concussions.

Diagnosed concussion or suspected head injuries must be reported to the school nurse and (if students associated with sports within the school district) to the athletic trainer.

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Athletic Director or Administrator in Charge of Athletics

Updating: Each spring, the athletic director or designee shall review any changes that have been made in procedures required for concussion and head injury management or other serious injury by consulting with the NHIAA. If there are any updated procedures, they will be adopted and used for the upcoming school year.

Coach/Contact Sports Advisor Training: All coaches and sports club advisors (as identified by the Superintendent or designee) shall undergo training in head injury and concussion management at least once every two years by viewing the NFHS concussion clinic.

Coach's Responsibility: A student-athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury or other serious injury in a practice or game shall be immediately removed from play for evaluation by the designated medical professional identified prior to the commencement of game play.

- A designated healthcare professional may consist of a Physician, Physician's Assistant, Nurse Practitioner or Certified Athletic Trainer.

Administrative Responsibilities: The Superintendent or designee will keep up to date with changes in standards regarding concussions, explore staff professional development programs relative to concussions, and will explore other areas of education, training and programs.

Removal From Play and Protocol For Return To Play

Any designated Timberlane Regional School District coach, certified athletic trainer, medical personnel, health care provider, or assigned game official who suspects that a student-athlete has sustained a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall immediately remove the student- athlete from play. Upon removal, the student-athlete will be evaluated by a designated health care professional, as defined above. The student-athlete's parents or guardians will be notified about the possible concussion and given information on concussions. If the designated medical personnel on site does not suspect a concussion, the athlete may return to play. If a concussion is suspected, the student-athlete will be kept out of play the day of the injury and until an appropriate health-care professional provides written documentation stating he or she is symptom free and allowed to return to activity. The Certified Athletic Trainer will then institute a progressive physical activity program to allow the student to readjust to exercise. If symptoms of a concussion reoccur, or if concussion signs and/or behaviors are observed at any time during the return to activity program, the athlete must discontinue all activity and be reevaluated by their health care provider.

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Concussion Awareness and Education

To the extent possible, the district will implement concussion awareness and education into physical education and/or health education curriculum.

Return To Learning Protocols

1. Return to Learning Protocols. After a student has been diagnosed with a concussion, whether in school or not, before full resumption of academic work, the building principal or his/her designee will work with the school nurse, a student's parent/guardian, medical provider, teacher(s) and other appropriate district staff, to establish a graduated learning re- entry plan as laid out in the health care providers ACE form recommendations. The plan will support the students' full return to academic activities, and ease the stress of making up past work while engaged in present work. The Plan must include:

- Step-by-step instructions and details for students, parents/guardians and school personnel
- Time frames for physical and cognitive rest within the first few days post-injury and throughout the recovery as needed
- Guidance on graduated return to extracurricular athletic activities and classroom studies, including classroom accommodations or modifications
- Frequency of assessments by the school nurse, school physician if applicable, neuropsychologist or (if involved with in school sports) Certified athletic trainer until full return to the classroom and extracurricular athletic activities are authorized
- Any provisions relative to "return -to-play" for student athletes
- **A documented plan for communication and coordination among school personnel and with the parents/guardians and the student's medical provider. Recommend ACE form.**

Section 504 or other such accommodations or modifications when appropriate will be developed in accordance with applicable law and Board policies.

Academic Issues in Concussed Students

In the event a student is concussed, regardless of whether the concussion was a result of a school related or non-school related activity, school district staff should be mindful that the concussion may affect the student's ability to learn.

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In the event a student has a concussion, the student's teachers will be notified. Teachers should report to the school nurse if the student appears to have any difficulty with academic tasks that the teacher believes may be related to the concussion. The school nurse will notify the student's parents/guardians and/or the treating physician.

Administrators and district staff will work to establish a protocol and course of action to ensure the student is able to maintain his/her academic responsibilities while recovering from the concussion.

Legal References:

RSA 200:49, Head Injury Policies for Student Sports

RSA 200:50, Removal of Student-Athlete

RSA 205:51, School Districts; Limitation of Liability

RSA 200:52, Definitions

Additional Resources:

<http://nhiaa.org/PDFs/3076/SuggestedGuideline4r>rManagementofConcussioninSports.pdf>

<http://www.bianlz.org>