Bethel Public Schools
Concussion Policy

Purpose Statement: The District recognizes that concussions, a type of traumatic brain injury (TBI), are serious injuries with negative outcomes that can affect an individual physically, emotionally, behaviorally, and/or cognitively, with the potential for long-term impacts on brain development. While concussions have many causes, these brain injuries are commonly sustained by youth participating in athletics or other recreational activities. The purpose of this policy is to maximize safety with respect to sports- and recreation-related concussions by educating staff, team and game officials, athletes, and parents/guardians about concussions; providing guidance on how to prevent and manage concussions; and supporting you returning to activities after a concussion, in accordance with Oklahoma state law (70 O.S. § 24-155). This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis. The **athletic director and/or school nurse** will be responsible for reviewing requirements of state law against this concussion policy and for seeking any technical assistance needed for policy review and revision. The **athletic staff** will be responsible for implementation of this policy **with a team-based approach**.

Education and Training Requirements: On an annual basis, the **district** will provide athletes and their parents/guardians concussion information on the nature and risk of the injury, including the risk of continuing to play after a concussion. Athletes and parents/guardians must complete, annually, an acknowledgement form affirming receipt and understanding of the provided concussion information. These acknowledgement forms must be **submitted online through the district's Rank One portal** prior to participation in practice or competition; electronic forms will be stored in the **Rank One portal.** The **coaches** will be responsible for verifying receipt of a completed acknowledgement form prior to athletics participation. Staff, including volunteers, who knowingly allow an athlete to participate in practice or competition prior to receipt of the completed acknowledgement form will be subject to discipline according to the Penalties section of this policy

Team and Game Official Education: On an annual basis, team and game officials must complete **NFHS online concussion training.** Training must be completed by **all athletic staff** before **their assigned season begins.** No team or game officials may be entrusted with the care and safety of athletes prior to completion of annual concussion training. Participation in athletics programs without documentation of current concussion training will result in discipline according to the Penalties section of this policy.

Removal from Play: Any team or game official who becomes aware or suspects that an athlete has sustained a concussion should immediately remove the athlete from the practice or game. Athletes should be removed from play when:

- An athlete has taken, or is suspected to have taken, a blow or impact to the head or body with potential to cause a concussion.
- A team or game official becomes aware or suspects that an athlete is exhibiting signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with sustaining a concussion.

The **athletic director and/or coaches** will be responsible for initial and follow-up communication with district staff and the athlete's parents/guardians, documenting injury circumstances and follow-up, and, when appropriate, enacting the Emergency Action Plan.

Evaluation and Clearance to Return: Athletes who have been removed from practice or competition because of a suspected concussion will not be allowed to return to play the same day. Prior to beginning the Return to Play Protocol, the athlete must complete the Return to Learn Protocol (or have returned to all activities of daily living and been symptom free for at least 24 hours when school is not in session) and receive written clearance to return to play from a licensed healthcare provider. An athlete's parent/guardian is not eligible to give consent for the athlete to return to activities. Verbal clearance is not acceptable. The **coaches** will be responsible for collecting records of written clearance, maintaining records in **the student's file,** and coordinating appropriate support(s) for an athlete to return to activities. Staff, including volunteers, who knowingly allow an athlete to participate in practice or competition prior to receipt of written clearance to return to play from a licensed healthcare provider will be subject to discipline according to the Penalties section of this policy.

Penalties: Any team or game official who does not remove an athlete from a practice or competition upon a suspected concussion shall be subject to the following penalties. The first violation will require the official to complete additional concussion recognition and management education. Completion of this training must be documented and submitted to the **athletic director**. The **athletic director** will be responsible for maintaining training documentation to be readily available upon request and storing original hard copy training certificates in the **employee's personnel file**. Upon a second violation, the official will be suspended from the sport or activity until an appearance in front of the **superintendent.**

Return to Learn: Schools will follow the Return to Learn Protocol **(attached to this policy)** to return an athlete to full classroom participation. The **athlete's principal** will coordinate school staff in supporting the athlete during this process.

Return to Play: After a concussion, an athlete must progress through the Return to Play Protocol **(attached to this policy)** before they are allowed to return to full athletics participation. The athlete should have already completed the Return to Learn Protocol or, outside of the academic year, have returned to all activities of daily living and been symptom free for at least 24 hours before beginning the Return to Play Protocol. The athlete must have written clearance from a licensed health care provider to begin the Return to Play Protocol. The **athletic director and/or coach** will be responsible for overseeing and documenting the athlete's return to play progress. If concussion symptoms return while going through the protocol, the **athletic director and/or coach** must document this and report it to the athlete's parent/guardian. The athlete may not participate in full practice or in competition until they have completed the Return to Play Protocol.

CONCUSSION/HEAD INJURY FACT SHEET PARENTS/GUARDIANS

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even a "ding", "getting your bell rung" or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. You cannot see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of a concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear to be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of a concussion or if you notice any symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETES?

- Headache or "pressure' in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not "feel right

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS/GUARDIANS?

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Cannot recall events prior to hit or fall
- Cannot recall events after hit or fall

HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD PREVENT A CONCUSSION?

- Ensure they follow their coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Make sure they use the proper equipment, including personal protective equipment (such as helmets, padding, shin guards and eye and mouth guards—IN ORDER FOR EQUIPMENT TO PROTECT YOU, it must be the right equipment for the game, position and activity; it must be worn correctly and used every time you play.)

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

- www.cdc.gov/TraumaticBraininjury/
- www.oata.net
- www.ossaa.com
- www.nfhslearn.com

Bethel Public Schools
Concussion Fact Sheet Acknowledgement Form

In compliance with Oklahoma Statute Section 24-155 of Title 70, this acknowledgement form is to confirm that you have read and understood the athlete and parent/guardian concussion information sheet(s) on potential concussions that can occur during participation in athletics provided to you by Bethel Public Schools.

I, _____, as an athlete who participates in athletics
(Please PRINT student/athlete's name)

at Bethel Public Schools and I, _____, as the
(Please PRINT legal guardian's name)

parent/guardian, have read the concussion information provided to us by Bethel Public Schools. **We understand the information and warnings, including, but not limited to, the signs and symptoms of a concussion and the dangers of continuing to participate in or returning to athletics too quickly after a concussion.**

_____ _____
(Signature of student/athlete) *(Date)*

_____ _____
(Signature of parent/legal guardian) *(Date)*

This acknowledgement form must be completed annually prior to the student/athlete's participation in practice/competition.

- Concussion Return to Learn Protocol.pdf
- Concussion Return to Play Protocol.pdf
- Concussion facts for parents.pdf
- Concussion facts for athletes.pdf
- Concussion facts for coaches.pdf