

**SUBJECT: CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT**

The Board recognizes that concussions and head injuries are the most commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and recreational activities. The physical and mental well-being of our students is a primary concern. Therefore, the District adopts the following Policy to support the proper evaluation and management of concussion injuries.

A concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI). A concussion occurs when normal brain functioning is disrupted by a 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 academics as well as their athletic pursuits.

**Concussion Management Team (CMT)**

In accordance with the Concussion Management and Awareness Act, the District is authorized, at its discretion, to establish a Concussion Management Team (CMT) which may be composed of the certified athletic director, a school nurse, the school physician, a coach of an interscholastic team, a certified athletic trainer or such other appropriate personnel as designated by the School District. The Concussion Management Team shall oversee and implement the District's concussion policy, including the requirement that all school coaches, physical education teachers, nurses and certified athletic trainers who work with and/or provide instruction to pupils 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) shall complete a course of instruction 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;

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- 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 course can be completed by means of instruction approved by SED which include, but are not limited to, courses provided online and by teleconference.

**Information to Parents**

The District shall include the following information on concussion in any permission or consent form or similar document that may be required from a parent/person in parental relation 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; and
- d) 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, if one exists, to the above list of information on the State Education Department's and 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 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. The student should be observed until an evaluation is completed by a medical professional or turned over to the care of his/her parent or person in parental relation. 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. Athletic activity shall include recess, physical education class, sports practices, intramurals, extramurals and interscholastic sports. The District shall notify the student's parents or guardians and recommend appropriate evaluation and monitoring.

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The following procedure will be followed in the event that a student sustains or is believed to have sustained a concussion during any school-sponsored activity:

- 1) The student will not be allowed to return to play in the current game, practice or event.
- 2) The student will not be left alone, and should be monitored regularly to check for deteriorating symptoms.
- 3) Parents or guardians will be contacted following the injury. Information regarding concussions is available and will be provided to the parents or guardians at their request.
- 4) The student will be picked up by a parent or guardian over the age of 18. The student will not be released on his/her own or to a friend or fellow student.
- 5) If the injury is severe, an ambulance will be called to transport the student to the emergency room. If parents/guardians are not present, they will be contacted and advised as to where the student is being transported.
- 6) The incident will be reported to the school nurse and an accident report will be filled out.
- 7) The District utilizes neurocognitive testing as a concussion tool to obtain baseline and post-concussion performance data; the District will administer such tool to the student to gather post-concussion performance data and evaluate readiness for return to activity.

The District may choose to allow credentialed District staff to use validated Neurocognitive computerized testing as a concussion assessment tool to obtain baseline and post-concussion performance data. The tests measure verbal and visual memory, processing speed and reaction time. The District also allows trained staff to use sideline assessment tools such as SCAT5 (Sport Concussion Assessment Tool 2), IMPACT (Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing) or BESS (Balance Error Scoring System). Neurocognitive testing is not a replacement for a medical evaluation to diagnose and treat a concussion.

**Return to School Activities and Athletics**

The student shall not return to physical activity (including athletics, physical education class and recess) until he/she has been symptom-free for not less than twenty-four (24) hours, and has been evaluated and received written authorization from a licensed physician. If the District has concerns or questions about the private medical provider's orders, the School Physician, with parental permission, should contact that provider to discuss and clarify. In accordance with Commissioner's Regulations, the 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. 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.

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The District shall follow any directives issued by the student's treating physician with regard to limitations and restrictions on school and athletic activities for the student. Orders from the student's physician will be sent to the school nurse. The School Physician may also formulate a standard protocol for treatment of students with concussions during the school day.

In accordance with NYSED guidelines, this Policy shall be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary in accordance with New York State Education Department guidelines. The Superintendent, in consultation with the School Physician and other appropriate staff, may develop additional protocols or strategies related to the prevention and identification of concussions and the procedures for removal from and return to activities or academics.

Education Law Sections 207; 305(42), and 2854  
8 NYCRR 135.4 and 136.5  
*Guidelines for Concussion Management in the School  
Setting,*  
SED Guidance Document, June 2012

Adoption Date: 10/16/2018