

Management of Concussions and Other Injuries

The RSU 26 School Board recognizes that concussions and other head injuries are potentially serious and could result in significant brain damage and/or death if not recognized and managed properly. The Board adopts this policy to promote the safety of students and participating in school sponsored extra- curricular activities, including but not limited to interscholastic sports.

TRAINING

By June 30th of each year, the Athletic Director will identify the school sponsored athletic activities that pose a risk of concussion or other head injury. A list of these activities will be distributed to school administrators and coaches.

All coaches, including volunteer coaches, must undergo training in the identification and management of concussive and other head injuries prior to assuming their coaching responsibilities. The training must be consistent with such protocols as may be identified or developed by the Maine Department of Education (DOE) and include instruction in the use of such forms as the DOE may develop.

Coaches are required to undergo refresher training every two years or when protocols and forms have been revised.

STUDENTS AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Annually, students and parents of students intending to participate in school-sponsored athletic activities will be provided information including:

- A. The risk of concussion and other head injuries and the dangers associated with continuing to participate when a concussion or other head injury is suspected.
- B. The signs and symptoms associated with concussion and other head injuries
- C. The school administrative unit's protocol for:
 - a. Removal of the student from the activity when there is suspicion of having sustained a concussion or other head injury,
 - b. The signs and symptoms of a head injury,
 - c. The school's protocol for return to full participation in school activities ("return to play").

The student participating in sports and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) must sign a statement acknowledging that they received and read this information before the student is allowed to participate in any school-sponsored athletic activity.

MANAGEMENT OF CONCUSSIVE AND OTHER HEAD INJURIES

All students who wish to participate in school sponsored extracurricular activities that could result in a concussive injury must undergo an IMPACT preliminary screening every two years. This screening will be conducted by appropriately trained school personnel and will provide information to use to measure

any subsequent suspected injuries.

It is the responsibility of the coach of the activity to act in accordance with this policy when the coach recognizes that a student may be exhibiting signs, symptoms, and behaviors associated with a concussion or other head injury.

Any student suspected of having sustained a concussion or other head injury during any school activity, must be removed from the activity immediately. The student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of the need for an evaluation for brain injury before the student is allowed to return to full participation in school activities including learning.

NO STUDENT IS PERMITTED TO RETURN TO THE ACTIVITY OR TO PARTICIPATE IN OTHER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ON THE DAY OF THE SUSPECTED CONCUSSION.

Any student having sustained a head injury is prohibited from further participation in any school activities until he/she is evaluated for concussion. If a concussion is suspected, the student must be removed from school activities and evaluated by a licensed health care clinician trained in concussion management.

If a concussion is confirmed, the student is not permitted to return to full participation in any school activities until medically cleared to do so by a licensed health care clinician trained in concussion management. More than one evaluation by the student's health care provider may be necessary before the student is cleared for full participation.

Coaches and other school personnel shall comply with the student's treating health care clinician trained in concussion management recommendations regarding gradual return to participation. If at any time during the return to full participation in school activities the student exhibits signs and symptoms of concussion, the student must be removed from the activity and be re-evaluated by the treating licensed health care clinician trained in concussion management.

COGNITIVE CONSIDERATIONS

School personnel will be educated concerning the cognitive and academic issues that may be experienced by a student who has suffered a concussion or other head injury. Symptoms may include but are not limited to: difficulty with concentration, organization, long-and-short term memory and sensitivity to bright lights and sounds. Accommodations will be made for a gradual return to full participation in academic activities as appropriate, based on the recommendations of the student's health care clinician and appropriate designated school personnel (e.g. 504 Coordinator).

School personnel shall accommodate a gradual return to full participation in activities as appropriate, based on the recommendation of the student's concussion trained health care clinician and appropriate designated school personnel (e.g. 504 Coordinator)

CONCUSSION POLICY MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Superintendent will appoint a Concussion Policy Management Team including a school administrator to be responsible, under the administrative supervision of the Superintendent, to make recommendations related to the implementation of this policy.

The Concussion Policy Management Team will include the Athletic Director, school nurse, school physician, and building administrator. Other school officials that the Superintendent deems appropriate may be included. The team shall oversee and implement this policy and related protocols for concussive head injuries based on the generally accepted protocols. This team will identify the school personnel who shall be trained in concussive signs and symptoms and the schools activities covered by this policy.

The policy and/or related protocols should be reviewed when generally accepted protocols change.

Approved: 1/16/13

RSU 26 CONCUSSION INFORMATION SHEET

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. In other words, even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious. You can’t see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your student athlete reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Symptoms may include one or more of the following:

Headaches Don’t feel right “Pressure in head”
Fatigue/Low energy Nausea or vomiting Sadness
Neck pain Nervousness/anxiety Balance problems/dizziness
Irritability Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision More emotional
Sensitivity to light or noise Confusion Feeling sluggish or slow
Concentration or memory loss

Signs observed by teammates, parents or coaches include:

Appears dazed Shows behavior or personality changes
Vacant facial expression Can’t recall events prior to hit
Confused about assignment Can’t recall events after hit
Forgets plays Seizures or convulsions
Is unsure of opponents or game score Moves clumsily
Any change in typical behavior or personality

What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns too soon? Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussions should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact

syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athletes will often under report symptoms of injuries, and concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key for the student athlete's safety

If you think your child has suffered a concussion Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. RSU 26 requires the consistent and uniform implementation of well-established return to play concussion guidelines that have been recommended for several years and reflected in Board policy.

Any student suspected of having sustained a concussion or other head injury during a school sponsored athletic activity including but not limited to competition, practice or scrimmage, must be removed from the activity immediately.

No student will be permitted to return to the activity or to participate in any other school sponsored athletic activity on the day of the suspected concussion.

Any student who is suspected of having sustained a concussion or other head injury shall be prohibited from further participation in school sponsored athletic activities until he/she has been evaluated and received written medical clearance to do so from a licensed health care clinician who is qualified and trained in concussion management.

You should also inform your child's coach if you think that your child may have a concussion. Remember. It's better to miss one game than miss the whole season. And, when in doubt, the athlete sits out.

For current and up-to-date information on concussion, you can go to: <http://www.cc.gov/Concussion>

_____ Student Athlete
Name – Printed Student Athlete Signature Date

_____ Parent or Legal
Guardian – Printed Parent or Legal Guardian Signature Date