

MANAGEMENT OF CONCUSSIONS AND OTHER HEAD INJURIES

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

TRAINING

By June 30 of each year, the Athletic Director or Principal will identify the school-sponsored 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 or require.

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

STUDENT AND PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION

Annually, prior to the beginning of each sports season, students and parents/guardians of students who will be participating in school-sponsored athletic activities will be provided information regarding:

- 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 of concussion and other head injuries; and
- C. The district's protocols for:
 - 1. removal from the activity when a student is suspected of having sustained a concussion or other head injury;
 - 2. evaluation; and
 - 3. return to participation in the activity ("return to play")

The student and his/her parent/guardian must sign a statement acknowledging that they have received and read this information before the student will be allowed to participate in any school-sponsored athletic activity.

MANAGEMENT OF CONCUSSIVE AND OTHER HEAD 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/or behaviors associated with a concussion or other head injury.

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. The student and his/her parent/guardian will be informed of the need for an evaluation for brain injury before the student will be allowed to return to the activity.

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 provider who is qualified and trained in concussion management.

Coaches and other school personnel shall comply with the student's healthcare provider's recommendations in regard to gradual return to participation. No student will be permitted to return to full participation (competition) until cleared to do so. More than one evaluation by the student's healthcare provider may be necessary before the student is cleared for full participation.

If at any time during the return to play program signs or symptoms of a concussion are observed, the student must be removed from the activity and referred to his/her healthcare provider for re-evaluation.

COGNITIVE CONSIDERATIONS

School personnel should be alert to cognitive and academic issues that may be experienced by students who have suffered a concussion or other head injury, including but not limited to difficulty with concentration, organization, long-and-short term memory and sensitivity to bright lights and sounds, and accommodate a gradual return to full participation in academic activities as appropriate, based on the recommendations of the student's healthcare provider and appropriate designated school personnel (e.g., 504 Coordinator).

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Superintendent will appoint a concussion management team including a school administrator to be responsible, under the administrative supervision of the Superintendent, to make recommendations related to implementation of this policy. The concussion management team will include the Athletic Director and school nurse and may include one or more principals or assistant principals, the school physician and such other school personnel or consultants as the Superintendent deems appropriate.

Adopted by the WOCSD School Committee: 05/15/13