

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING CONCUSSIONS AND HEAD INJURIES IN STUDENT ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES

Per state law and for purposes of these procedures, "District-organized youth athletic activity" means any indoor or outdoor athletic activity organized and held by the District in which the participants, a majority of which are under 19 years of age, are engaged in an athletic game or competition against another team, club or entity, or practice or preparation for an organized athletic game or competition against another team. "Youth athletic activity" does not include a physical activity that is incidental to a nonathletic program.

As used in these procedures, the term "student" is used to refer to those individuals who are eligible to participate in any District-organized youth athletic activity, regardless of whether the individual is also actually enrolled in the District as a student.

1. **Distribution of Concussion and Head Injury Information**

- a. Prior to the beginning of a school-sponsored sport/organized youth athletic activity season, the Athletic/Activities Director shall distribute a concussion and head injury information sheet to all coaches of each school-sponsored sports team and to each person who is coaching, or who is similarly responsible for supervising and directing, any other District-organized youth athletic activity.
- b. It shall be the responsibility of the head coach/supervisor of the organized youth athletic activity to distribute the concussion and head injury information sheet to each student who wishes to participate in a school-sponsored sport or other District-organized youth athletic activity at the beginning of the sport/athletic activity season. For students participating in WIAA-sanctioned, school-sponsored sports, this information shall be disseminated to and discussed with student participants at the same meeting at which the Athletic/Activity Code is disseminated and discussed. A coach/supervisor does not have to distribute a concussion and head injury information sheet to any student who has already returned an appropriately signed information sheet for another school-sponsored sport or District-organized youth athletic activity during the same school year.

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- c. No student may participate in a school-sponsored sport or other District-organized youth athletic activity, including any training sessions or practices, unless he/she (1) returns a concussion and head injury information sheet to the coach/supervisor signed by the student and, if the student is under the age of 19, his/her parent or guardian, or (2) already has an appropriately signed information sheet on file with the District for the current school year. Signed information sheets shall be maintained in the same manner as other student behavioral records in accordance with District procedures and legal requirements.

2. **Removal of Student with Concussion or Head Injury from Athletic Activity Participation**

- a. In the event a student suffers an injury during an athletic game, competition or practice and either (1) the coach of the sport or other organized youth athletic activity or a health care provider determines that the student exhibits signs, symptoms, or behavior consistent with a concussion or head injury, or (2) the coach or health care provider suspects the student has sustained a concussion or head injury, then the student shall be removed from the athletic game, competition or practice.

The following are examples of the types of symptoms that a coach or health care provider should consider in the totality of the circumstances as likely evidence of a need to remove a student from participation in an athletic activity under these procedures:

<u>Symptoms Observed by Coaches or Others</u>	<u>Symptoms Reported by Athlete</u>
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Appears dazed or stunned	Headache or pressure in head
Is confused about assignment or position	Nausea or vomiting
Forgets sports plays	Balance problems or dizziness
Is unsure of game, score, or opponent	Double or blurry vision
Moves clumsily	Sensitivity to light or noise
Answers questions slowly	Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy

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Loses consciousness (even briefly)	Concentration or memory problems
Shows behavior or personality changes	Confusion
Can't recall events prior to hit or fall	Does not feel right
Can't recall events after hit or fall	

If a health care provider is on site and available, he/she may be asked to help make this determination.

If a health care provider is not on site and available to assess the student's symptoms or injury, this general assessment will be done by the coach. It is not the responsibility of the coach to determine the severity of the student's injury, only to take appropriate and timely actions to safeguard the student who may have suffered an injury. When in doubt, the student should be removed from participation in the athletic activity.

In relation to possible concussions and head injuries, officials involved in any youth athletic activity have the same legal duties to initiate the removal of a student from participating in any such activity as do coaches and health care providers.

- b. First aid will be provided to a student who has been removed from any activity under these procedures as appropriate and necessary in accordance with the Concussion Protocol for Slinger High School, Protocol for Injured Athletes Excused from Activities, and Emergency Plan of Action for Handling Injury Situations. The student shall not be left alone and must be carefully observed to be sure the symptoms do not worsen. Emergency Medical Services or 912 shall be called if a coach/supervisor or other person assigned to observe the student observes that the student exhibits or reports any of the following symptoms: loss of consciousness, neck pain, blood or watery leakage from the ears, nose or mouth, persistent vomiting, seizures, persistent severe headache, loss of/slurred speech, or excessive drowsiness. Emergency Medical Services or 911 may also be called in other circumstances where a coach, supervisor, health care provider or other responsible individual determines that it would be prudent to do so.

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- c. Every time a student is removed from an activity under these procedures, the coach/supervisor of the activity shall be responsible for notifying the student's parent or guardian of the student's injury, actions taken at the scene, and of the need for the student to be evaluated by a health care provider. For purposes of these procedures, "health care provider" means a person who (1) holds a credential that authorizes the person to provide health care; (2) is trained and has experience in evaluating and managing pediatric concussions and head injuries; and (3) is practicing within the scope of his/her credential.
- d. Every time a student is removed from an activity under these procedures, the coach/supervisor of the activity shall be responsible for completing all necessary reports and documentation regarding the incident in accordance with District procedures, including documenting first aid administered and information regarding the injury and completing an accident report.

3. Return to Play

A student who has been removed from an athletic game, competition or practice due to an actual or suspected concussion or other head injury under these procedures may not participate in a school-sponsored sport or other District-organized youth athletic activity until he/she is evaluated by a health care provider and receives a written clearance to participate in the activity from a health care provider. The student must provide the coach of the sport/organized youth athletic activity with a copy of the written clearance, and it shall be maintained as a student physical health record (which is considered a behavioral record) in accordance with District procedures and legal requirements.

Legal References:

Cross References:

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