

CONCUSSIONS AND HEAD INJURIES

The New Boston School District recognizes that concussions and head injuries are commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents. Head injuries may occur both within and outside of the recognized school day to students participating in sports, extra-curricular activities and other non-school related recreational activities. The risk of significant complications can occur when a concussion or head injury is not properly evaluated and managed. Students are likely to experience cognitive difficulties that affect academic performance during the recovery period. The majority of concussions will occur in “contact” or “collision” sports. However, in order to ensure the safety of ALL district students, this policy applies to ALL New Boston School District students.

Consistent with recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) the District will develop guidelines, procedures and other pertinent information to inform and educate teachers, coaches, extra-curricular activity supervisors, students, and parents/guardians of the nature and risk of concussions or head injuries, including the educational concerns and medical risks.

Concussion and Head Injury Education and Training:

Parent and Student Education: Annually, the district will distribute head injury and concussion information to the parents/guardians of all district students

Extra-Curricular Advisors Training: All extra-curricular activity advisors shall undergo training in head injury and concussion management by completing a training program approved by the District. All community-based organizations that utilize the School District’s facilities will be asked to adhere to this policy.

Teacher Training: Teachers in the New Boston School District will be provided information on the recognition and school day management of educational issues related to concussions on a case by case basis.

Academic Issues in Concussed Students:

In the event a student is concussed, regardless of whether the concussion was a result of a school-related or non-school-related activity, school district staff should be mindful that the concussion could affect the student’s ability to learn. In the event a student has a concussion, that student’s teachers will be notified. Teachers should report to the school nurse if the student appears to have any difficulty with academic tasks that the teacher believes may be related to the concussion. The school nurse will notify the student’s parents. The student’s parent(s) will notify the treating physician. Administrators, the treating physician and district staff will work to establish a protocol and course of action to ensure the student is able to maintain his/her academic responsibilities while recovering from the concussion. Students requiring educational modifications may be ineligible for participation in athletic and extra-curricular activities until normal school activities are resumed, and written physician clearance is provided.

**CONCUSSIONS AND HEAD INJURIES
(Continued)**

Section 504 accommodations may be developed in accordance with applicable law and board policies.

Removal from Activity and Protocol for Return to Activity:

Any coach, advisor, volunteer or teacher who suspects that a student has sustained a concussion or head injury shall immediately remove the student from physical and/or extra-curricular activity (sports participation, PE, recess and/or other extra-curricular activity). The student's parent/guardian shall be notified. A student who has been removed from activity shall not return to activity on the same day and shall not participate until he/she is evaluated by a health care provider and receives medical clearance and written authorization from that health care provider to return to participation. The student shall also present written permission from a parent/guardian to return to activity.

The District may limit a student's participation in any/all district sponsored educational and extra-curricular activity as determined by the student's health care provider. The District may also choose to follow more conservative recommendations in the interest of the student.

Concussion Awareness and Education:

To the extent possible, the Board encourages the administration to implement concussion awareness and education into the district's educational curriculum. The administrative decision will take into account all relevant considerations, including time, resources, access to materials, and other pertinent factors.

District Responsibility for Concussion and Head Injury Management:

A student who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury or other shall be immediately removed from all physical activity. Parents/guardians will be notified and the student should be referred to an appropriate licensed healthcare provider as soon as possible for medical assessment and management. Advisors, employees and/or volunteers who use district facilities will report to the appropriate school nurse any serious injury including a concussion or head injury by the start of school on the following day.

Additional Administrative Responsibilities: The Superintendent or his/her designee will keep abreast of changes in standards regarding concussion, explore staff professional development programs relative to concussions, and will explore other areas of education, training and programs.

CONCUSSIONS AND HEAD INJURIES
(Continued)

Legal References:

RSA 200:49, Head Injury Policies for Student Sports

RSA 200:50, Removal of Student-Athlete

RSA 200:51, School Districts; Limitation of Liability

RSA 200:52, Definitions

Additional Resources:

<http://nhiaa.org/PDFs/3076/SuggestedGuidelinesforManagementofConcussioninSports.pdf>

<http://www.bianh.org/concussion.asp>

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