

Students

**SUBJECT: CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT**

The Board of Education 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 North Tonawanda City School 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 School 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 School District's concussion policy and regulations, 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;

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- c) How MTBIs may occur;
- 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;
- 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 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 mild traumatic brain injury (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. 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. The District shall notify the student's parents or guardians and recommend appropriate evaluation and monitoring.

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The School 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. These tools are not a replacement for a medical evaluation to diagnose and treat a concussion.

**Implementation**

- a) Immediate removal from athletic activities of any pupil who has sustained, or who is believed to have sustained, a mild traumatic brain injury. In the event that there is any doubt as to whether a pupil has sustained a concussion, it shall be presumed that the pupil has been so injured until proven otherwise.
- b) No such pupil shall resume athletic activity until the pupil has been symptom free for not less than 7 days, and has been evaluated by and received written and signed authorization from a licensed physician; and for extra class activities, has received clearance from the medical director to participate in such activity.
- c) The school shall follow any directives issued by the pupil's treating physician with regard to limitations and restrictions on school attendance and activities for the pupil.
- d) Authorization from the pupil's treating physician shall be kept on file in the pupil's permanent health record.

**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 7 days, and has been evaluated and received written authorization from a licensed physician. In accordance with Commissioner's Regulations, the School District's Medical Director will give final clearance on a return to activity for extra-class athletics. 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. The District's Medical Director 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 District's Medical Director and other appropriate staff, may develop regulations and protocols for strategies to prevent concussions, the identification of concussions, and procedures for removal from and return to activities or academics.

**Management Team**

The Concussion Management Team will oversee and implement the school district's concussion policy and protocols. Members of the team may include:

- Medical Director
- Student Support Services Coordinator
- Athletic Director
- Athletic Trainer
- School Nurses
- PE Teachers/Coaches

**Procedure for Athletes**

Completed by Athletic Trainer and are detailed in the North Tonawanda City School District's *Extra-curricular Activities Handbook*.

**Procedures for Non-Athletes**

Completed by School Nurse-

- a) Students will bring all notes from a physician/clinic/ER to the school nurse.
- b) Recommendation to parents and students that they report to school nurse during school day if current symptoms increase or new symptoms develop.

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- c) Once a student brings in a note from physician/clinic/ER to the school nurse that states he/she can return to PE, the student will begin the 5-day protocol to return to PE class.
- d) If student went to the emergency room and a note states that he/she must follow up with PMD and no note is provided from PMD, then the student may not return to PE classes until seen by his/her PMD. After 7 days, the student will not be legally excused from PE without a note from his/her PMD.
- e) The student will see the nurse each school day for 5 calendar days. The school nurse will complete the Brief Mental Status Assessment Form (F.7522).
- f) Once a student completes the 5-day protocol symptom free, he/she may return to PE.
- g) Nurses should consult their medical director if further discussion and/or clarification is needed regarding a private medical provider's orders.

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

NYSED Student Support Services 136.5 Concussion Management & Awareness

New York Statewide School Health Services Center – <http://www.schoolhealthservicesny.com>

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