JJIF - Management of Concussions and Other Head Injuries

JJIF - MANAGEMENT OF CONCUSSION AND OTHER HEAD INJURIES

The Board recognizes that concussions and other head injuries are serious and could result in significant brain damage and/or death if not recognized and managed properly. The Board further acknowledges that a student may suffer a concussion during any activity during the school day or outside of school. The Board adopts this policy to promote the safety of all MSAD35 students, regardless of where or when the head injury occurred.

CONCUSSION

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way the brain normally works. Concussions can occur from a fall or a blow to the head or body that causes the head and brain to quickly move back and forth. Some causes of concussion may include, but are not limited to, motor vehicle accidents, slips and falls, bumps to the head, and sports collisions.

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT TEAM (CMT)

The Superintendent will appoint a Concussion Management Team to be responsible for making recommendations related to implementation and review of this policy and related protocol. The CMT will include the school nurse and athletic administrator and may include one or more principals or assistant principals, the school physician, and other school personnel or consultants as the Superintendent deems appropriate. The Team shall oversee and implement this policy and related protocol for concussive head injuries based on the currently accepted best practices and consistent with protocols identified or developed by the Maine Department of Education. The CMT, under the direction of the Superintendent, shall identify the school personnel who shall be trained in concussion signs and symptoms and the school activities covered by this policy.

CONCUSSION AWARENESS TRAINING

Annual Concussion Awareness Training shall be provided annually, consistent with protocols identified or developed by the Maine Department of Education.As identified by the CMT, all extra-curricular and athletics-related school personnel (including coaches and volunteers) and non-athletics related school personnel (for example, physical education teachers, school nurses, and

personnel with recess duty)must be made aware of the policy and protocol related to the management of concussive injuries. Prior to the beginning of each school year, said personnel shall also participate in concussion awareness training that includes:

1. Recognizing signs and symptoms that may suggest a concussion.
2. Instruction in the graduated school and activity and re-entry protocols.

Any new personnel in these positions shall complete this training prior to the start of their tenure.

STUDENT AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Prior to participating in any school athletic activity, all students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) will be provided information including:

1. 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;
2. The signs, symptoms and behaviors associated with concussion and other head injuries; and
3. The school administrative unit's protocols for 1) notification of potential concussion or other head injury to parent, 2) removal of the student from the activity when the student is suspected of having sustained a concussion or other head injury, 3) evaluation, 4) referral and medical clearance, and 5) graduated school and activity re-entry protocols.

The student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) must sign a statement acknowledging that they received, read and agree to this policy and related protocols before the student is allowed to participate in any school athletic activity.

Because of the heightened competitive nature of interscholastic athletic activities at the high school level, there is a greater risk of concussion and other head injuries. Therefore, all students wishing to participate in these activities at the high school level (grades 9-12) must have an up to date and valid baseline cognitive assessment test on record with the school in order to be eligible to participate.

If a student suffers a concussion outside of the instructional day and/or school-sponsored athletics or activities, the student and/or parent must notify school staff immediately of the injury:

For students in **grades 9-12**, notification should be made to the Athletic Trainer or School Nurse.

For students in **grades PK-8**, notification should be made to the respective School Nurse.

MANAGEMENT OF CONCUSSIVE AND OTHER HEAD INJURIES

It is the responsibility of all school personnel trained in the signs, symptoms and behaviors related to concussion or other head injury, to act in accordance with this policy when that individual recognizes that a student may be exhibiting such signs, symptoms and/or behaviors consistent with a concussion.

- Any student suspected of having a concussion shall be immediately removed from participation.
- School health personnel trained in concussion recognition will assess the student and determine if referral to a higher level of care is needed.
  - If a referral is necessary, the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of the referral to a licensed healthcare provider for a full medical evaluation for
- Medical Clearance:
  - If referral to a licensed healthcare provider was made, and no signs of concussion are present, the student will require written medical clearance from the healthcare professional in order to return to school and activities.
  - If referral to a licensed healthcare provider is made and the student receives a diagnosis of concussion, the medical clearance note shall be interpreted as clearance to start the graduated school and activity reentry protocols.
  - The student is then required to complete the graduated return to school and activity protocols as determined by the CMT.
- A member of the CMT will notify the relevant educational school personnel of possible symptoms, including cognitive and/or academic issues that may be experienced by a student who has suffered a concussion. This includes but is not limited to, difficulty with concentration, organization, long-and-short term memory, and sensitivity to bright lights and sounds.
- School personnel shall accommodate the graduated return-to-learn protocols as appropriate, based on the recommendation of the student's health care provider and appropriate designated school personnel such as the 504 Coordinator or school nurse.
- No student is permitted to return to full participation in extra-curricular school activities (e.g., competition, games, performances) until they have fully returned to their academic program and have completed the graduated return to school and activity protocols. Each phase in the progression of this protocol takes at least 24 hours. Return to learn and return to extra-curricular school activities may occur at the same time.

COLLECTION AND REPORTING OF CONCUSSION DATA

The Board recognizes the seriousness of concussive injuries and the need for improved understanding of concussions and their impact on learning and school attendance. The school unit will track incidences of concussions, activity associated with the injury, number of school days missed, and other information determined necessary by the Concussion Management Team. The CMT will review this data and make recommendations to the Board as needed.

Legal Reference:

20-A MRSA§254(17)

Cross Reference:

JJIF-E - Marshwood Concussion Protocol

Policy Adopted: February 27, 2013

Policy Revised: April 10, 2024; June 18, 2025

Revision #3
Created 2022-10-03 15:03:33 UTC by Elaine Robinson
Updated 2025-06-20 14:58:56 UTC by Rebekah Williams