

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

RSU 13 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. RSU 13 adopts this policy to promote the safety of students participating in school-sponsored activities, including but not limited to extracurricular athletic activities and interscholastic sports.

TRAINING

All RSU 13 Coaches will receive training in concussion management. This training must be consistent with protocols as identified or developed by RSU 13, the Maine Principals' Association, the National Federation of High Schools, and the Maine Department of Education (DOE) and include instruction in the use of reporting forms as required by all agencies.

Coaches are required to undergo refresher training based on the recommendations of all governing agencies or when protocols and forms have been revised.

STUDENT AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS

At the beginning of each school year or prior to the beginning of each sports season, students intending to participate in school-sponsored athletic activities and parents/guardians of students will be provided information including:

- 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, symptoms and behaviors associated with concussion and other head injuries; and
- C. The school administrative unit's protocols for 1) removal of the student from the activity when the student is suspected of having sustained a concussion or other head injury, 2) evaluation, and 3: return to full participation including academics.

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

CONCUSSION SYMPTOMS

- **Thinking and Remembering**
 - Difficulty thinking clearly
 - Feeling slowed down
 - Difficulty concentrating
 - Difficulty remembering new information
- **Physical**

- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting (early on)
- Balance problems
- Dizziness
- Fuzzy or blurry vision
- Feeling tired, having no energy
- Sensitivity to noise or light
- **Emotional and Mood**
 - Irritability
 - Sadness
 - More emotional
 - Nervousness or anxiety
 - **Sleep disturbance**
 - Sleeping more than usual
 - Sleeping less than usual
 - Trouble falling asleep

MANAGEMENT OF CONCUSSIVE AND OTHER HEAD INJURIES

It is the responsibility of any staff member involved in a school-sponsored activity and trained in the signs, symptoms and behaviors related to concussion or other head injury, to act in accordance with this policy when the staff member recognizes that a student may be exhibiting such signs, symptoms and/or behaviors.

Any student suspected of having sustained a concussion or other head injury during a school-sponsored activity including but not limited to participation in interscholastic sports, must be removed from the activity immediately. The student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of the need for an evaluation for brain injury before the student is allowed to return to full participation in any school-sponsored activities including learning. This evaluation should be conducted by a medical professional qualified and trained in concussion management.

No student is permitted to return to the activity or to participate in any other school-sponsored activity on the day of the suspected concussion.

Any student suspected of having sustained a concussion or other head injury is prohibited from further participation in any school-sponsored activities until he/she is evaluated and receives written medical clearance to do so from a licensed health care provider qualified and trained in concussion management.

Coaches and other school personnel shall comply with the student's treating health care provider's (trained in concussion management) recommendations regarding gradual return to participation. No student is permitted to return to full participation in any school activities until

cleared to do so. More than one evaluation by the student's health care provider may be necessary before the student is cleared for full participation.

If at any time during the return to full participation in any school-sponsored activities the student exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors of concussion, the student must be removed from the activity and be re-evaluated by the treating licensed health care provider trained in concussion management.

COGNITIVE CONSIDERATIONS

School personnel should be alert to cognitive and academic issues that may be experienced by a student who has 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.

School personnel shall accommodate a gradual return to full participation in all academic activities as appropriate, based on the recommendation of the student's concussion trained health care provider and appropriate designated school personnel (e.g. 504 Coordinator).

RETURN TO PLAY GUIDELINES (Zurich Protocol)

An RSU 13 student/athlete recovering from a concussive incident may return to play using the following guidelines – ***once they have been symptom free at rest for a full day:***

- **Day 1:** light aerobic exercise (walking, swimming, or stationary cycling) keeping exercise heart rate less than 70% of maximum predicated heart rate. No resistance training
- **Day 2:** sport-specific exercise, any activities that incorporate sport-specific skills. No head impact activities.
- **Day 3:** non-contact training drills
- **Day 4:** full contact practice, participate in normal practice activities
- **Day 5:** return to competition

If any concussion symptoms return during any of the above activities, the athlete should return to the previous level, after resting for 24 hours.