

Section J STUDENTS

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 adopts this policy to promote the safety of students participating in school activities.

TRAINING

By September 30 of each school year, school personnel must be made aware of this school policy and protocols related to the management of concussive injuries and participate in concussion awareness training that includes recognizing signs and symptoms that may suggest a concussive or other head injury. This training must be consistent with protocols as identified or developed by the Maine Department of Education (DOE) and include instruction in the use of reporting forms as required by the DOE.

STUDENT AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS

By inclusion in the student handbook, students and parents/guardians of these students will be provided information including:

- 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;
- The signs and symptoms associated with concussion and other head injuries; and
- 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 in school activities.

RETURN TO ACADEMICS

The need for students with a suspected concussion to have physical rest has been well known for years. However, in the past several years it has become more evident that cognitive rest is also important. Just as physical exertion can exacerbate and prolong symptoms of a concussion, cognitive exercise can have the same effect. Following a concussion, students may have difficulty in school, which could last from days to months.

The school nurse will notify appropriate faculty members of all known concussions that affect a student. With this notification, it is expected that the teachers will provide appropriate accommodations for the student.

Return to school should be done as a progression of gradually increasing academic activity and gradually removing accommodations. When necessary, based on school nurse and a medical doctor recommendation, accommodations should be made to assist the student in completing homework, tests, and/or projects.

The student may require rest periods if the symptoms become worse throughout the day. Avoidance of areas or times of noise, crowded places or overstimulation may be needed, including noisy hallways as well as group socializing.

It is the responsibility of staff members involved in school activities and trained in the signs and symptoms 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 and symptoms of a concussion.

Any student suspected of having sustained a concussion or other head injury, shop activities must be removed from the activity immediately. A 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 school activities including learning.

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

Any student having sustained a head injury is prohibited from further participation in any school activities until he/she is evaluated for concussion. If a concussion is suspected, the student must be removed from school activities and evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in concussion management.

If a concussion is confirmed, the student is not permitted to return to full participation in any school activities until medically cleared to do so by a licensed health care provider trained in concussion management. More than one evaluation by the student's health care provider may be necessary before the student is cleared for full participation.

School personnel shall comply with the student's treating concussion trained health care provider(s) recommendations regarding gradual return to participation. If at any time during the return to full participation in school activities the student exhibits signs and symptoms 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, memory and
- sensitivity to bright lights and sounds.

School personnel shall accommodate a gradual return to full participation in 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).

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