

## Document Status: Draft Update

### STUDENTS

#### 7:305 Student Athlete Concussions and Head Injuries

##### Definitions

For purposes of this policy, “interscholastic athletic activity” means any organized school-sponsored or school-sanctioned activity for students, generally outside of school instructional hours, under the direction of a coach, athletic director, or band leader, including, but not limited to, baseball, basketball, cheerleading, cross country track, fencing, field hockey, football, golf, gymnastics, ice hockey, lacrosse, marching band, rugby, soccer, skating, softball, swimming and diving, tennis, track (indoor and outdoor), ultimate Frisbee, volleyball, water polo, wrestling, and all other interscholastic athletics.

“Coach” means any volunteer or employee of a school in the District who is responsible for organizing and supervising students to teach them or train them in the fundamental skills of an interscholastic athletic activity, including both head coaches and assistant coaches.

##### Parental and Student Agreement to Participate

A student may not participate in an interscholastic or intramural athletic activity for a school year until the student and the student’s parent or guardian or another person with legal authority to make medical decisions for the student have signed an *Agreement to Participate* including, at a minimum, all concussion information on the then-current concussion information form approved by the Illinois High School Association. The *Agreement to Participate* must include information that explains concussion prevention, symptoms, treatment, and oversight and guidelines for safely resuming participation in an athletic activity following a concussion. The form shall inform students and their parents/guardians about this policy, and must require the student and the student’s parent, guardian, or other person with legal authority to make medical decisions for the student to acknowledge that they have received and read the information and guidelines in the form.

##### District Concussion Oversight Team and Return-to-Play and Return-to-Learn Protocols

The District shall have a District-wide concussion oversight team. The District concussion oversight team shall:

- a. Establish a return-to-play protocol, based on peer-reviewed scientific evidence consistent with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, for a student’s return to interscholastic and intramural athletics practice or competition and physical education activity following a force or impact believed to have caused a concussion, whether or not the concussion took place while the student was participating in an interscholastic athletic activity;
- b. Establish a return-to-learn protocol, based on peer-reviewed scientific evidence consistent with Centers for Disease Control and prevention guidelines, for a student’s return to the classroom without accommodations, modifications, or monitoring after that student is believed to have experienced a concussion, whether or not the concussion took place while the student was participating in an interscholastic athletic activity;
- c. Include members appointed by the Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee, including, to the extent practicable:
  - i. At least one physician;
  - ii. An athletic trainer, if one is employed by a school in the District;
  - iii. A nurse, if one is employed by a school in the District; and
  - iv. Any other licensed healthcare professionals or other individuals the Superintendent of the Superintendent’s designee determines should be part of the team.

The Superintendent shall appoint a person who is responsible for implementing and complying with the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols adopted by the concussion oversight team. The Superintendent shall supervise the appointed person, or shall designate another person, other than a coach of an interscholastic athletics team, to have such supervisory responsibility.

##### Removal From Interscholastic Athletics Practice and Competition and Physical Education and Return to Learn Protocol

A student must be removed from an interscholastic athletics practice or competition immediately if one of the following persons believes the student might have sustained a concussion, whether or not the concussion took place while the student was participating in an interscholastic athletic activity:

1. A coach;
2. A physician;
3. A game official;

4. An athletic trainer;
5. The student's parent or guardian or another person with legal authority to make medical decisions for the student;
6. The student; or
7. Any other person deemed appropriate under the District's return-to-play protocol.

This includes students exhibiting signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems).

A student suspected under this Policy of having sustained a concussion, whether or not the concussion took place while the student was participating in an interscholastic athletic activity, must also be removed from any intramural athletic activities and from the physical activity portion of the physical education course in which the student is enrolled.

A student suspected under this Policy of having sustained a concussion, whether or not the concussion took place while the student was participating in an interscholastic athletic activity, shall also be assessed by the Concussion Oversight Team under the District's return-to-learn protocol to determine if there are informal or formal accommodations, modifications of curriculum, or monitoring by medical or academic staff necessary in the student's educational courses before the student is fully recovered. If available, the Concussion Oversight Team shall consider any proposed accommodations, modifications, monitoring suggested by or other information provided by the student, the student's parent or legal guardian, or a physician or athletic trainer who has evaluated the student.

#### Parental Notification

In any case where a student is suspected under this Policy of having sustained a concussion, whether or not the concussion took place while the student was participating in an interscholastic athletic activity, the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee shall notify the student's parent or legal guardian in writing of the District's knowledge regarding the incident leading to such removal using a form letter created for that purpose by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.

#### Return to Play

A student removed from an interscholastic athletics, intramural athletics, or physical education activity under this Policy shall not be permitted to return to such athletics or activity until:

1. The student has been evaluated, using established medical protocols based on peer-reviewed scientific evidence consistent with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, by a treating physician (chosen by the student or the student's parent or guardian or another person with legal authority to make medical decisions for the student) or an athletic trainer working under the supervision of a physician;
2. The student has successfully completed each requirement of the return-to-play protocol established by the District's concussion oversight team;
3. The student has successfully completed each requirement of the return-to-learn protocol established by the District's concussion oversight team;
4. The treating physician or athletic trainer working under the supervision of a physician has provided a written statement indicating that, in the physician's professional judgment, it is safe for the student to return to play and return to learn; and
5. The student and the student's parent or guardian or another person with legal authority to make medical decisions for the student:
  - a. Have acknowledged that the student has completed the requirements of the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols necessary for the student to return to play;
  - b. Have provided the treating physician's or athletic trainer's written statement indicating that, in the physician's professional judgment, it is safe for the student to return to play and return to learn to the person appointed by the Superintendent as responsible for implementing and complying with the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols adopted by the District's concussion oversight team; and
  - c. Have signed a consent form indicating that:
    - i. They have been informed concerning and consent to the student participating in returning to play in accordance with the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols;
    - ii. They understand the risks associated with returning to play and returning to learn and will comply with any ongoing requirements in the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols; and
    - iii. They consent to the disclosure to appropriate persons, consistent with the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, of the treating physician's or athletic trainer's written statement indicating that, in the physician's professional judgment, it is safe for the student to return to play and return to learn to the person appointed by the Superintendent as responsible for implementing and complying with the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols adopted by the District's concussion oversight team and, if any, the return-to-play and return-to-learn recommendations of the treating physician or the athletic trainer, as the case may be

A coach of an interscholastic athletics team may not authorize a student's return to play.

#### Return to Learn

A student suspected under this Policy of having sustained a concussion, whether or not the concussion took place while the student was participating in an interscholastic athletic activity, may not return to educational activities without informal or formal accommodations, modifications of curriculum, or monitoring by medical or academic staff deemed necessary by the Concussion Oversight Team until the student has completed the District's return-to-learn protocol and the District has received a treating physician's or athletic trainer's written statement indicating that, in the physician's professional judgment, it is safe for the student to return to learn without such accommodations, modifications, or monitoring. A coach of an interscholastic athletics team may not authorize that a student has completed the return-to-learn protocol.

#### Training

All high school coaching personnel, including the head and assistant coaches, and the athletic directors, shall pass concussion certification training required by the Illinois High School Association before the starting date of their position.

Beginning September 1, 2019, and at least once every 2 years thereafter, the following persons must submit proof of timely completion of an approved concussion training course to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee:

1. A coach or assistant coach of an interscholastic athletic activity must submit proof of completion of a training course on concussions approved by Illinois High School Association;
2. A nurse employed by the District or a volunteer nurse who serves as a member of the District's concussion oversight team must submit proof of completion of a training concerning the matter of concussions that has been approved for continuing education credit by the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation; and
3. An athletic trainer must submit proof of completion of a concussion-related continuing education course from an athletic trainer continuing education sponsor approved by the Department.

A physician who serves as a member of a concussion oversight team shall, to the greatest extent practicable, periodically take an appropriate continuing medical education course in the subject matter of concussions.

A physician, athletic trainer, or nurse who is not in compliance with the training requirements of this policy may not serve on the District's concussion oversight team in any capacity.

#### Emergency Action Plan

The Board shall adopt an emergency action plan for interscholastic athletic activities to address the serious injuries and acute medical conditions in which the condition of the student may deteriorate rapidly. The plan shall include a delineation of roles, methods of communication, available emergency equipment, and access to and a plan for emergency transport. The emergency action plan shall be:

1. In writing;
2. Reviewed by the concussion oversight team;
3. Approved by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee;
4. Distributed to all appropriate personnel;
5. Posted conspicuously at all venues utilized by the District; and
6. Reviewed annually by all athletic trainers, first responders, coaches, school nurses, athletic directors, and volunteers for interscholastic athletic activities.

#### Compliance with IHSA Protocols, Policies, and By-Laws

The District shall comply with the protocols, policies, and by-laws of the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) regarding concussions.

#### Educational Materials

The District shall use education materials provided by the Illinois High School Association to educate coaches, student-athletes, parents and guardians of student athletes, physical education teachers, and students about the nature and risk of concussions and head injuries, including continuing to play after a concussion or head injury, in compliance with State law. At least annually, high school coaching personnel and athletic directors shall require their student athletes to watch the video that is part of the IHSA online concussion certification program to increase athlete awareness of the risk of concussions and sub-concussive hits to the head.

Include a requirement for staff members to distribute the Ill. Dept. of Public Health concussion brochure to any student or the parent/guardian of a student who may have sustained a concussion, regardless of whether or not the concussion occurred while the student was participating in an interscholastic athletic activity, if available. [PRESSPlus1](#)

Include a requirement for certified athletic trainers to complete and submit a monthly report to the IHSA on student-athletes who have sustained a concussion during: 1) a school-sponsored activity overseen by the athletic trainer; or 2) a school-sponsored event of which the athletic director is made aware.

LEGAL REF.:

105 ILCS 5/10-20.53.

105 ILCS 5/22-80.

105 ILCS 5/27-6.

105 ILCS 5/27-8.1(1).

CROSS REF.: 4:170 (Safety), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 7:300 (Extracurricular Athletics)

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**PRESSPlus Comments**

PRESSPlus 1. Required by 20 ILCS 2310/2310-307, added by P.A. 100-747, eff. 1-1-19. **Issue 99, October/November 2018**