
MANAGEMENT OF CONCUSSIONS AND OTHER HEAD INJURIES

The Bangor School Committee recognizes that concussions and other head injuries are potentially serious and may result in significant brain damage and/or death if not recognized and managed properly. The School Committee further acknowledges that a student may suffer a concussion during any activity during the school day or outside of school. The School Committee adopts this policy to promote the safety of all students, regardless of where or when the head injury occurred, in our schools. Due to the evolving treatment and management of concussions, this policy shall be reviewed yearly.

TRAINING

Prior to the beginning of each sports season, athletics-related school personnel, including all athletic coaches, volunteer coaches and others identified by the Concussion Management Team, must be made aware of this school policy and protocols related to management of concussive injuries and undergo training in the identification and management of concussive and other head injuries. The training must be consistent with such protocols as may be identified or developed by the Maine Department of Education (DOE) and include instruction in the use of such forms as the DOE may develop or require. Athletics-related school personnel shall be required to undergo refresher training every year and when protocols and/or forms have been revised.

Prior to the beginning of each school year, non-athletics related school personnel identified by the Concussion Management Team (for example, physical education teachers, school nurses, personnel with recess duty), 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).

STUDENT AND PARENT INFORMATION

Annually, at the beginning of each school year, students and parents of students who will be participating in any school-sponsored athletic activity will be provided information regarding:

- 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 and symptoms of concussion and other head injuries; and
- C. The school department's protocols for 1) removal from the activity when a student is suspected of having sustained a concussion or other head injury, 2) evaluation, 3) clearance for return to participation in the activity, and 4) graduated school reentry protocols, as well as "return to play" and the "6 Day Progression" required for players on the interscholastic sports teams identified as collision and contact or limited contact sports listed above.

The student and his/her/their parent(s)/guardians(s) must sign the following statement acknowledging that they have received and read this information before the student will be allowed to participate in any school-sponsored athletic activity.

I, _____ (student), acknowledge that I have to be an active participant in my own health, and have direct responsibility for reporting all my injuries and illnesses to the school staff (e.g. Certified Athletic Trainer, School Nurse, Coaches, Athletic Director). I acknowledge that my physical health is dependent upon providing an accurate medical history and full disclosure of any symptoms, complaints, prior injuries and/or disabilities experienced before, during, or after and athletic activities.



TESTING FOR STUDENTS IN COLLISION OR CONTACT SPORTS

School-sponsored athletic activities that pose a greater risk of concussion or other head injury are identified as collision and contact sports. The following Bangor School Department sports classify as collision and contact sports according to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP): basketball, diving, field hockey, lacrosse, football, ice hockey, and soccer. Limited contact sports offered by the Bangor School Department, as defined by AAP, include: baseball, swimming, cheerleading, track and field (throwing, jumping, sprinting), and softball. All high school and middle school (grades 6-12) athletes participating in collision, contact, and limited contact sports shall undergo an annual baseline ImPACT testing at the beginning of their first sports season of the school year. A list of these activities will be distributed by the school athletic director to school administrators and coaches. ImPACT testing shall be repeated upon request from a physician and during the “Return to Play” progression.

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 person 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 school or a school-sponsored athletic activity, must be removed from the activity immediately.
- No student will be permitted to return to the activity or to participate in any other school activity on the day of the suspected concussion.
- Any student who is suspected of having sustained a concussion or other head injury shall not be eligible for further participation in any school activities until he/she/they have been evaluated by the school nurse or other person trained in such evaluation, such as an athletic trainer, who is able to determine if referral to a licensed health care provider is necessary.
- The student and his/her/their parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of any referral for medical evaluation by a licensed health care provider for possible concussion or brain injury before the student will be allowed to complete the graduated school reentry and/or graduated return to play protocol, and then resume full participation in learning, recess, physical education, and any school activities.
- If referral to a licensed health care provider is necessary, the student will require written medical clearance from a licensed health care provider who is qualified and trained in concussion management. The student also is required to complete the graduated return to school protocol and, for those participating on an interscholastic athletic team in collision and contact or limited contact sports identified above, the graduated return to play protocol (currently the 6 Day “Return to Play” Progression).
- School personnel shall accommodate a graduated school reentry protocol for 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, school nurse). School personnel shall comply with the student’s health care provider’s recommendations in regard to gradual return to participation.
- No student will be permitted to return to full participation 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. No student is permitted to return to full participation in extra-curricular school activities until fully returned to his/her/their academic program.



- If at any time during the gradual return to school process signs or symptoms of a concussion are observed, the student must be removed from the activity for that day and follow the graduated school reentry protocol.

COGNITIVE CONSIDERATIONS

School personnel should be alert to cognitive and academic issues that may be experienced by students who have 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. Processes established under Section 504 provide an opportunity for school personnel to consider the need for accommodations to enable a student suffering from the symptoms of concussion or head injury to access his or her education. A 504 plan may not be appropriate for every concussion.

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Superintendent will appoint a concussion management team including a school administrator to be responsible, under the administrative supervision of the Superintendent, to make recommendations related to implementation of this policy. The concussion management team will include the Athletic Director and school nurse and may include one or more principals or assistant principals, the school physician, the school athletic trainer, and such other school personnel or consultants as the Superintendent deems appropriate.

DATA

The School Committee recognizes how serious concussions are and the need for improved understanding of concussions in our schools and their impact on learning and school attendance. The school department will track the number of concussions, activity associated with the injury, number of school days missed, and other information determined necessary by the Concussion Management Team. The Concussion Management Team will review this data and make recommendations as needed.

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA §1001(19); 20-A MRSA §254(17)

ADOPTED: October 23, 2012
REVISED: March 22, 2023
REVIEWED: December 19, 2022

