

# POLICY

2012

7522

Students

## SUBJECT: CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

The Board of Education recognizes that concussions and head injuries are the most commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and recreational activities. The physical and mental well-being of our students is a primary concern. Therefore, the West Seneca Central School District adopts the following Policy to support the proper evaluation and management of concussion injuries.

A concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI). A concussion occurs when normal brain functioning is disrupted by a blow or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. Recovery from concussion and its symptoms will vary. Avoiding re-injury and over-exertion until fully recovered are the cornerstones of proper concussion management. Concussions can impact a student's academics as well as their athletic pursuits.

### Concussion Management Team (CMT)

In accordance with the Concussion Management and Awareness Act, the School District is authorized, at its discretion, to establish a Concussion Management Team (CMT) which may be composed of the certified athletic director, a school nurse, the school physician, a coach of an interscholastic team, a certified athletic trainer or such other appropriate personnel as designated by the School District. The Concussion Management Team shall oversee and implement the School District's concussion policy and regulations, including the requirement that all school coaches, physical education teachers, nurses and certified athletic trainers who work with and/or provide instruction to pupils engaged in school-sponsored athletic activities complete training relating to mild traumatic brain injuries. Furthermore, every concussion management team may establish and implement a program which provides information on mild traumatic brain injuries to parents and persons in parental relation throughout each school year.

### Staff Training/Course of Instruction

Each school coach, physical education teacher, school nurse and certified athletic trainer who works with and/or provides instruction to students in school sponsored athletic activities (including physical education class and recess) shall complete a course of instruction every two (2) years relating to recognizing the symptoms of concussions or MTBIs and monitoring and seeking proper medical treatment for students who suffer from a concussion or MTBI.

Components of the training will include:

- a) The definition of MTBI;
- b) Signs and symptoms of MTBI;
- c) How MTBIs may occur;
- d) Practices regarding prevention; and
- e) Guidelines for the return to school and school activities for a student who has suffered an MTBI, even if the injury occurred outside of school.

The course can be completed by means of instruction approved by SED which include, but are not limited to, courses provided online and by teleconference.

#### **Information to Parents**

The District shall include the following information on concussion in any permission or consent form or similar document that may be required from a parent/person in parental relation for a student's participation in interscholastic sports. Information will include:

- a) The definition of MTBI;
- b) Signs and symptoms of MTBI;
- c) How MTBIs may occur;
- d) Practices regarding prevention; and
- e) Guidelines for the return to school and school activities for a student who has suffered an MTBI, even if the injury occurred outside of school.

The District will provide a link on its website, if one exists, to the above list of information on the State Education Department's and Department of Health's websites.

#### **Identification of Concussion and Removal from Athletic Activities**

The District shall require the immediate removal from all athletic activities of any student who has sustained, or is believed to have sustained, a mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI) or concussion. Any student demonstrating signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion while participating in a class, extracurricular activity, or interscholastic athletic activity shall be removed from the class, game or activity and must be evaluated as soon as possible by an appropriate health care professional. Such removal must occur based on display of symptoms regardless of whether such injury occurred inside or outside of school. If there is any doubt as to whether the student has sustained a concussion, it shall be presumed that the student has been injured until proven otherwise. The District shall notify the student's parents or guardians and recommend appropriate evaluation and monitoring. The student shall not return to physical activity (including athletics, physical education class and recess) until he/she has been symptom-free for not less than twenty-four (24) hours, and has been evaluated and received written authorization from a licensed physician.

The School District may choose to allow credentialed District staff to use validated neurocognitive computerized testing as a concussion assessment tool to obtain baseline and post-concussion performance data. These tools are not a replacement for a medical evaluation to diagnose and treat a concussion.

### **Return to School Activities and Athletics**

Once a student diagnosed with a concussion has been symptom-free at rest for at least twenty-four (24) hours, a private medical provider may choose to clear the student to begin a graduated return to activities. If the District has concerns or questions about the private medical provider's orders, the District Medical Director should contact that provider to discuss and clarify. Additionally, the School District's Medical Director has the final authority to clear students to participate in or return to extra-class physical activities (including athletics, physical education class, and recess) in accordance with 8NYCRR 135.4(c)(7)(i). All such authorizations shall be kept on file in the student's permanent health record. The standards for return to extra-class physical activities will also apply to injuries that occur outside of school. School staff should be aware that students may exhibit concussion symptoms caused by injuries from outside activities and that these visible symptoms also indicate a removal from play.



Students should be monitored by District staff daily following each progressive challenge, physical or cognitive, for any return of signs and symptoms of concussion. Staff members should report any observed return of signs and symptoms to the school nurse, certified athletic trainer, or administration in accordance with District policy. A student should only move to the next level of activity if they remain symptom-free at the current level. Return to activity should occur with the introduction of one (1) new activity each twenty-four (24) hours. If any post-concussion symptoms return, the student should drop back to the previous level of activity, then re-attempt the new activity after another twenty-four (24) hours have passed. A more gradual progression should be considered based on individual circumstances and a private medical provider's or other specialist's orders and recommendations. The following is the return to physical activity, progressive-exertion protocol:

**Phase 1** - Low impact, non-strenuous, light aerobic activity such as walking or riding a stationary bike. If tolerated without return of symptoms over a twenty-four (24) hour period proceed to;

**Phase 2** - Higher impact, higher exertion, and moderate aerobic activity such as running or jumping rope. No resistance training. If tolerated without return of symptoms over a twenty-four (24) hour period proceed to;

**Phase 3** - Sport specific non-contact activity. Low resistance weight training with a spotter. If tolerated without return of symptoms over a twenty-four (24) hour period proceed to;

**Phase 4** - Sport specific activity, non-contact drills. Higher resistance weight training with a spotter. If tolerated without return of symptoms over a twenty-four (24) hour period proceed to;

**Phase 5** - Full contact training drills and intense aerobic activity. If tolerated without return of symptoms over a twenty-four (24) hour period proceed to;

**Phase 6** - Return to full activities without restrictions.

The District shall follow any directives issued by the student's treating physician with regard to limitations and restrictions on school and athletic activities for the student. The District's Medical Director may also formulate a standard protocol for treatment of students with concussions during the school day.

In accordance with NYSED guidelines, this Policy shall be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary in accordance with New York State Education Department guidelines. The Superintendent, in consultation with the District's Medical Director and other appropriate staff, may develop regulations and protocols for strategies to prevent concussions, the identification of concussions, and procedures for removal from and return to activities or academics.

Education Law Sections 207; 305(42), and 2854  
8 NYCRR 135.4 and 136.5

*Guidelines for Concussion Management in the School Setting*, SED Guidance Document, June 2012

Adopted: 9/10/12