

Policy

CONCUSSION AND HEAD INJURY

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head or body.

Requirements

A student who sustains or is suspected of sustaining a concussion or other head injury shall be immediately removed from physical activity. The student may not return to physical activity until they obtain clearance from a medical doctor;

Required Concussion Protocol

- A. A student who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or other head injury during school hours shall be immediately removed from play and may not return to play until cleared by medical physician;
- A. Possible signs of concussion:
 - 1. Appears dazed, stunned, or disoriented;
 - 2. Forgets plays, or demonstrates short term memory difficulty;
 - 3. Exhibits difficulties with balance or coordination;
 - 4. Answers questions slowly or inaccurately;
 - 5. Loses consciousness;
- B. Possible symptoms of concussion:
 - 1. Headache;
 - 2. Nausea/vomiting;
 - 3. Balance problems or dizziness;
 - 4. Double vision or changes in vision;
 - 5. Sensitivity to light or sound/noise;
 - 6. Feeling sluggish or foggy;
 - 7. Difficulty with concentration and short term memory;
 - 8. Sleep disturbance.
- C. Steps to take if student is suspected of sustaining a concussion or other head injury:
 - 1. Immediate removal from school activities;
 - 2. The school nurse should make contact with the student's parent/guardian and inform them of the suspected concussion or head injury;
 - 3. The school nurse shall provide the student with the district's Head Injury Information Sheet;
 - 4. The student must receive written clearance from their physician that he/she may return to school and a date for return to physical activity (i.e. physical education, class, recess);
 - 5. If the student exhibits a re-emergence of any post-concussion signs or symptoms once he or she returns to school, they will be referred to their primary care physician.

Temporary Accommodations for Student with Head Injuries

- A. Consideration of the cognitive effects in returning to the classroom is also an important part of the treatment of sports related concussions and head injuries;
- B. Mental exertion increases the symptoms from concussions, and affects recovery;

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- C. To recover, cognitive rest is just as important as physical rest. Reading, studying, testing, texting -- even watching movies if a student is sensitive to light -- can slow down a student's recovery;
- D. In accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention toolkit on managing concussions, the board of education may look to address the students' cognitive needs. Students who return to school after a concussion may need to:
 - 1. Take rest breaks as needed, including physical education;
 - 2. Spend fewer hours at school;
 - 3. Be given more time to take tests or complete assignments;
 - 4. Receive help with schoolwork;
 - 5. Reduce time spent on the computer, reading, and writing;
 - 6. Be granted early dismissal from classes to avoid crowded hallways.

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Key Words

Concussion, Head Injury, Sports, Athletics,

Legal References: N.J.S.A. 18A:16-6, -6.1 Indemnity of officers and employees against civil actions
N.J.S.A. 18A:35-4.6 et seq. Parents Right to Conscience Act of 1979
N.J.S.A. 18A:40-1 Employment of medical inspectors, optometrists and nurses; salaries; terms; rules
N.J.S.A. 18A:40-3 Lectures to teachers
N.J.S.A. 18A:40-5 Method of examination; notice to parent or guardian
N.J.S.A. 18A:40-6 In general
N.J.S.A. 18A:40-7, -8, -10, -11 Exclusion of students who are ill
N.J.S.A. 18A:40-23 et seq. Nursing Services for Nonpublic School Students
N.J.S.A. 18A:40-41.4 Removal of student athlete or cheerleader from competition, practice; return
N.J.A.C. 6A:16-1.1 et seq. Programs to Support Student Development
See particularly:
N.J.A.C. 6A:16-1.1, -1.3, -2.1, -2.3, -2.4
N.J.A.C. 6A:26-12.1 et seq. Operation and Maintenance of School
See particularly: Facilities
N.J.A.C. 6A:26-12.3
Plainfield Board of Education v. Cooperman, 105 NJ 587 (1987)

Possible

Cross References: *1410 Local units
 1420 County and intermediate units
 *3510 Operation and maintenance of plant
 *3516 Safety
 *4131/4131.1 Staff development; inservice education/visitations/conferences
 4151.2/4251.2 Family illness/quarantine
 *5125 Student records
 *5141 Health
 *5141.1 Accidents
 *5141.2 Illness
 *5141.3 Health examinations and immunizations

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*5141.21	Administering medication
*5142	Student safety
*5200	Nonpublic school students
*6142.4	Physical education and health

*Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual.