

TITLE: CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

Date issued: 27 January 2015

Last revised: 22 June 2015

Authorization: Board: 27 January 2015

1.0 OBJECTIVE

To ensure awareness about head injury prevention and establish practices to manage concussions.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

In this policy,

2.1 **Board** refers to the Board of Trustees.

2.2 **Concussion** refers to a brain injury that causes changes in how the brain functions, leading to symptoms that can be physical, cognitive, emotional and/or related to sleep. A concussion can occur from a direct blow to the head, face or neck but may also occur from a major physical trauma to other parts of the body and a concussion can occur with or without a loss of consciousness.

2.3 **Concussion Assessment** refers to the process of gathering information, from the student, parents, witnesses, medical professionals, staff and others to assess the physical, cognitive or emotional state of a student, to determine the likelihood of the student having a concussion.

2.4 **District** refers to the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.

2.5 **Return to School Plan** is a personalized strategy to support a student's Return to Learning and Return to Physical Activity after suffering a concussion.

2.6 **Return to Learn** refers to the student's return to doing school work, including activities that involve reading and writing. It does not include physical activities.

2.7 **Return to Physical Activity** refers to the student's return to participation in any physical activity that increases the student's heart rate. It includes a student's return to activities such as sports or physical education class.

3.0 POLICY

Policy Statements

- 3.1 The Board is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of students and recognizes that head injuries and/or concussions can adversely impact the cognitive, physical, emotional and social development of students.
- 3.2 The Board is committed to developing awareness about head injury prevention and concussion management amongst staff, students, parents and community partners.
- 3.3 The District shall have established practices for the identification and management of head injuries and/or concussions.
- 3.4 The Board recognizes the International Concussion Consensus Guidelines (Zurich) on Management of Concussion in Sports, as amended.

Guiding Principles

- 3.5 The following guiding principles shall govern this policy:
 - a) Awareness of the signs and symptoms of concussion and effective concussion management practices are key preventative strategies.
 - b) Head injuries and/or concussions can occur in any activity and are not restricted to only sports or other high risk activities.
 - c) Activities that pose a higher risk for head injuries and/or concussions, may require additional consideration based on the type of activity and its associated risk.
 - d) Whether a concussion happens at school or outside of school, it can affect a student's learning needs.

4.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

Training

- 4.1 The District shall make available information and resources regarding concussion prevention, identification and management to:
 - a) all staff;
 - b) students;
 - c) parents;
 - d) volunteers;
 - e) community partners; and
 - f) childcare providers.
- 4.2 Training shall be made available to all staff and extra-curricular leaders to promote awareness and understanding of concussion management practices.

Identification and Management

- 4.3 The District shall have practices and procedures in place to govern the identification and management of concussions based on the safety guidelines as established by Ontario Physical and Health Education Association (OPHEA).
- 4.4 Where there is a reason for concern about the possibility of a head injury and/or concussion, the safe practice shall be to discontinue student participation in the activity; “when in doubt, sit it out”.
- 4.5 The District shall make it a priority to communicate with parents immediately when a concussion is suspected.
- 4.6 The District shall use a multi-step Return to Learn strategy which includes: Rest, Return to Learn (symptoms improving), Return to Learn (symptom free), Return to Physical Activity (light), Return to Physical Activity (specific sports) and Return to Physical Activity (full participation).
- 4.7 The Director of Education is authorized to issue such procedures as may be necessary to implement this policy.

5.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

OPHEA-Concussion Protocols
PPM 158, School Board Policies on Concussion
South Carleton HS Athletics Health Information Form
District School Board of Niagara, Administrative Procedure on Concussions