

STUDENTS

SUBJECT: CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

The Board of Education of the Gouverneur Central School District recognizes that concussions and head injuries are commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and recreational activity and can have serious consequences if not managed carefully. Therefore, the District adopts the following policy to support the proper evaluation and management of head injuries.

Concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury. Concussion occurs when normal brain function is disrupted by a blow or jolt to the head. Recovery from concussion will vary. Avoiding re-injury and over exertion until fully recovered are the cornerstones of proper concussion management.

While district staff will exercise reasonable care to protect students, head injuries may still occur. Physical education teachers, coaches, nurses and other appropriate staff will receive training to recognize the signs, symptoms and behaviors consistent with a concussion. Any student exhibiting those signs, symptoms and behaviors while participating in a school sponsored class, extracurricular activity or interscholastic athletic activity shall be removed from the game or activity and be evaluated as soon as possible by an appropriate health care professional. In the event that there is any doubt as to whether a pupil has sustained a concussion, it shall be presumed that he or she has been so injured until proven otherwise. The school nurse will notify the student's parents or guardians and recommend appropriate monitoring to them. If the school nurse is not available at the time signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion are exhibited, the athletic trainer or the coach or staff member in charge of supervising the student will notify the student's parents or guardians and recommend appropriate monitoring to them.

If a student sustains a concussion at a time other than when engaged in a school-sponsored activity, the district expects the parent or guardian to report the condition to the school nurse so that the district can support the appropriate management of the condition.

The student shall not return to school or activity until authorized to do so by an appropriate health care professional. The school's chief medical officer will make the final decision on return to activity including physical education class and after-school sports. Any student who continues to have signs or symptoms of concussion upon returning to activity must be removed from play and reevaluated by their health care provider.

The Superintendent, in consultation with appropriate district staff, including the chief school medical officer, will develop regulations and protocols to guide the return to activity.

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SUBJECT: CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT (Cont'd.)**Education**

Concussion education should be provided for all administrators, teachers, coaches, school nurses and guidance counselors. Education of parents should be accomplished through preseason meetings for sports and/or information sheets provided to parents. Education should include, but not be limited to, the definition of concussion, signs and symptoms of concussion, how concussions may occur, practices regarding prevention of concussions, why concussions are not detected with CT Scans or MRI's, management of the injury and the protocol for return to school and return to activity or interscholastic athletics. The protocols will cover all students returning to school after suffering a concussion regardless if the accident occurred outside of school or while participating in a school activity.

Concussion Management Team

The District will assemble a concussion management team (CMT). The CMT will consist of the chief medical officer, a school nurse, the athletic director or director of physical education, a parent and one or more board appointed coaches. The District's CMT should coordinate training for all administrators, teachers, coaches and parents. Training should be mandatory for all coaches, assistant coaches and volunteer coaches that work with student athletes regularly. In addition, the CMT is responsible for reviewing and providing all the information related to concussions provided to athletes, parents and coaches. Parents must be made aware of the schools district's policy and how these injuries will ultimately be managed by school officials.

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Communication with Parents

The parental permission slip allowing participation in athletics will contain a copy of this "Concussion Management Policy." The parent or guardian's signature of the permission slip will serve as proof that he or she has received a copy of this policy.

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Consistent with the Concussion Management and Awareness Act, information from the New York State Department of Health and the New York State Education Department regarding concussions will be included on the Gouverneur Central School District's website.

*School district CMT's can utilize the NYSPHSAA website as well as www.keepyourheadinthegame.org for information related to the signs and symptoms of concussions and the appropriate return to play protocols. A handout describing the role of the Concussion Management Team is also available on the NYSPHSAA website. Finally, a concussion Management Check List that has been approved and recommended by NYSPHSAA is available on this site.

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SUBJECT: CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT (Cont'd.)

**CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL:
RETURN TO PARTICIPATION PROTOCOL FOLLOWING A CONCUSSION/HEAD INJURY**

The following protocol has been established in accordance with the National Federation of State High School Associations and the International Conference on Concussion in Sport, Zurich Nov. 2008. In addition, it has been developed through a collaborative effort with concussive experts, and the Gouverneur Central School's Supervising Physician and Concussion Management Team. As such, it is imperative to remember that the safety of our students is the primary concern of Gouverneur School District and its medical personnel.

The information contained below is to be used as guidelines and are to be implemented following a concussive event. The Gouverneur Central School District reserves the right to develop more stringent protections at any time, and to act in a manner that is more cautious in protecting the health and well-being of its students.

When a student shows signs or symptoms of a concussion or is suspected to have sustained a brain injury after an evaluation by medical personnel or a coach, at the time of the incident:

1. The student shall not be allowed to return to play in the current game or practice.
2. The student's general cognitive status should be determined by the School Nurse, an Athletic Trainer or, if appropriate medical personnel are not available, the coach or District personnel responsible for supervising the student through the use of the Gouverneur Central Schools Student Initial Concussion Checklist.
3. The student shall not be left alone. The student shall be monitored for a minimum of 2 hours following the injury.
4. Following the injury, the student shall be instructed to see his/her primary care physician or an emergency department physician within 24 hours.
5. The "Initial Concussion Checklist by Coach or Nurse" and the "Concussion Checklist Physician Evaluation" shall be signed and dated by the primary care or ER physician and returned to the School Nurse at Gouverneur Central Schools.

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6. For the student to return to participation, medical clearance and successful completion of the "Return to Participation Protocol" shall occur.
7. The school nurse will supervise and document the "Return to Participation Protocol." The school district appointed physician shall have final determination regarding return to participation status.

The cornerstone of proper concussion management is rest until resolution of all symptoms, clearance by the student's treating physician, and then a gradual return to activity. The program involves six steps with each step lasting 24 hours. The six steps of the Return to Participation Protocol are:

- Step 1. No exertion activity until asymptomatic and has received written authorization from his or her treating physician to resume activity.
- Step 2. Light aerobic exercise (walking or stationary bike, etc.) **No resistance training.**
- Step 3. Sport/activity specific exercise such as skating, running, etc. Progressive addition of resistance training may begin.
- Step 4. Non-contact training/skill drills.
- Step 5. Full contact training **in practice setting** (if a contact/collision sport as defined by 8 N.Y.C.R.R. § 135.4).
- Step 6. Return to competition.

If any concussion symptoms recur, the student shall submit to an examination by his or her treating physician, receive written authorization from such physician to resume activity, **rest for 24 hours**, drop back to the previous step, and then resume the protocol. In addition, the student shall be monitored for recurrence of symptoms with mental exertion (e.g. reading, working on a computer, or test taking.) Upon successful completion of the protocol, return to participation shall be permitted.

Concussion Management and Awareness Act
8 New York Code of Rules and Regulations
(NYCRR) Sections 135.4

Adopted: 2/27/12