

## Students

### Student Concussions and Head Injuries

This policy and the provisions of the Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act (105 ILCS 5/22-80) referenced and incorporated herein apply to any interscholastic athletic activity, including practice and competition, sponsored or sanctioned by a school, the Illinois Elementary School Association, or the Illinois High School Association. The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement a program to manage concussions and head injuries suffered by students. The program shall:

1. Prepare for the full implementation of the Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act that provides, without limitation, each of the following:

a. The Board must appoint or approve members of a Concussion Oversight Team for the District.

b. The Concussion Oversight Team shall establish each of the following based on peer-reviewed scientific evidence consistent with guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

i. A return-to-play protocol governing a student's return to interscholastic athletics practice or competition following a force of impact believed to have caused a concussion. The Superintendent or designee shall supervise an athletic trainer or other person responsible for compliance with the return-to-play protocol.

ii. A return-to-learn protocol governing a student's return to the classroom following a force of impact believed to have caused a concussion. The Superintendent or designee shall supervise the person responsible for compliance with the return-to-learn protocol.

c. Each student and the student's parent/guardian shall be required to sign a concussion information receipt form each school year before participating in an interscholastic athletic activity.

d. A student shall be removed from an interscholastic athletic activity practice or competition immediately if any of the following individuals believes that the student sustained a concussion during the practice and/or competition: a coach, a physician, a game official, an athletic trainer, the student's parent/guardian, the student, or any other person deemed appropriate under the return-to-play protocol.

e. A student who was removed from interscholastic athletic practice or competition shall be allowed to return only after all statutory prerequisites listed below are completed, including without limitation, the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols developed by the Concussion Oversight Team. An athletic team coach or assistant coach may not authorize a student's return-to-play or return-to-learn. The statutory requirements for a student who has been removed from an interscholastic athletic practice or competition to return to practice or compete are as follows:

**1)** the student has been evaluated, using established medical protocols based on peer-reviewed scientific evidence consistent with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, by a treating physician (chosen by the student or the student's parent or guardian or another person with legal authority to make medical decisions for the student) or an athletic trainer working under the supervision of a physician;

**(2)** the student has successfully completed each requirement of the return-to-play protocol established under this Section necessary for the student to return to play;

(3) the student has successfully completed each requirement of the return-to-learn protocol established under this Section necessary for the student to return to learn;

(4) the treating physician or athletic trainer working under the supervision of a physician has provided a written statement indicating that, in the physician's professional judgment, it is safe for the student to return to play and return to learn; and

(5) the student and the student's parent or guardian or another person with legal authority to make medical decisions for the student:

(A) have acknowledged that the student has completed the requirements of the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols necessary for the student to return to play;

(B) have provided the treating physician's or athletic trainer's written statement under subdivision (4) of this subsection (g) to the person responsible for compliance with the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols under this subsection (g) and the person who has supervisory responsibilities under this subsection (g); and

(C) have signed a consent form indicating that the person signing:

(i) have been informed concerning and consents to the student participating in returning to play in accordance with the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols;

(ii) understand the risks associated with the student returning to play and returning to learn and will comply with any ongoing requirements in the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols; and

(iii) consents to the disclosure to appropriate persons, consistent with the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ([Public Law 104-191](#)), of the treating physician's or athletic trainer's written statement under subdivision (4) of this subsection (g) and, if any, the return-to-play and return-to-learn recommendations of the treating physician or the athletic trainer, as the case may be.

f. The following individuals must complete concussion training as specified in the Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act: all coaches and assistant coaches (whether volunteer or a District employee) of interscholastic athletic activities; nurses who serve on the Concussion Oversight Team; athletic trainers; game officials of interscholastic athletic activities; and physicians who serve on the Concussion Oversight Team.

g. The Board shall approve school-specific emergency action plans for interscholastic athletic activities to address the serious injuries and acute medical conditions in which a student's condition may deteriorate rapidly.

2. Comply with the concussion protocols, policies, and by-laws of the Illinois High School Association, including its *Protocol for NFHS Concussion Playing Rules* and its *Return to Play Policy*. These specifically require that:

a. A student athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion in a practice or game shall be removed from participation or competition at that time.

b. A student athlete who has been removed from an interscholastic contest for a possible concussion or head injury may not return to that contest unless cleared to do so by a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois or a certified athletic trainer.

c. If not cleared to return to that contest, a student athlete may not return to play or practice until the student athlete has provided his or her school with written clearance from a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois or a certified athletic

trainer working in conjunction with a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois.

3. Require that all high school coaching personnel, including the head and assistant coaches, and athletic directors obtain online concussion certification by completing online concussion awareness training in accordance with 105 ILCS 25/1.15.
4. Require all student athletes to view the Illinois High School Association's video about concussions.
5. Inform student athletes and their parents/guardians about this policy in the *Agreement to Participate* or other written instrument that a student athlete and his or her parent/guardian must sign before the student is allowed to participate in a practice or interscholastic competition.
6. Provide coaches and student athletes and their parents/guardians with educational materials from the Illinois High School Association regarding the nature and risk of concussions and head injuries, including the risks inherent in continuing to play after a concussion or head injury.
7. Include a requirement for staff members to notify the parent/guardian of a student who exhibits symptoms consistent with that of a concussion.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/22-80, 105 ILCS 25/1.15

CROSS REF.: 4:170 (Safety), 7:300 (Extracurricular Athletics)

ADOPTED: