



Community Charter School of Cambridge Concussion Policy **Grades 6-12**

Purpose

This policy provides for the implementation of MA 105 CMR 201.000, Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Athletic Activities. This policy applies to all middle and high school students who participate in any extracurricular athletic activity. This policy provides the procedures and protocols for the Community Charter School of Cambridge in the management and prevention of sports-related head injuries within the school. Review and revision of this policy is required every two years.

Participation Requirements for Students and Parents/Guardians

1. Pre-Participation Requirements and Training

Prior to the start of each sports season the Athletic Director will hold a sports meeting so student athletes will be able to receive all necessary paperwork to be filled out before the start of the season. When medical forms are collected the school nurse will review them. Prior to participation the following must be submitted:

- Parent/Guardian Consent
- Current Physical of Student Athlete
- Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form (this form is done before every sports season)
- SCAT3 Concussion Testing

Every student athlete must have, on an annual basis, a physical examination prior to his/her participation in an extracurricular athletic activity. Under current Massachusetts Charter School Athletic Organization (MCSAO) requirements, such physical examination must be conducted within thirteen months of the start of the season. Students participating in multiple sports seasons will be informed that documentation of one physical exam each year is sufficient in accordance with the requirements of 105 CMR 201.006.

2. Ongoing Requirements

If a student athlete sustains a head injury or concussion during the season, but not while participating in an extracurricular athletic activity, the parent/guardian shall complete the Report of Head Injury Form and submit it to the coach, school nurse, or the athletic director.



Documentation and Review of Head Injury and Concussion History and Forms

The Community Charter School of Cambridge will require that any student athlete that is participating in athletics will have the required paperwork turned into the athletic director and school nurse before the start of the season. This paperwork will be reviewed by the school nurse and the student will be deemed eligible to participate as long as he or she meets the medical requirements.

CCSC may use a student athlete's history of head injury or concussion as a factor to determine whether to allow the student to participate in an extracurricular athletic activity or whether to allow such participation under specific conditions or modifications.

1. Before Start of Sports Season

Before the start of every sports season, the student and his/her parents/guardians must submit a Pre-Participation Form signed by both the student and his/her parents/guardians which provides a comprehensive history with up-to-date information and relative to concussion history; and any head, face, or cervical spine injury history; and any history of co-existent concussive injuries. All Pre-Participation Forms will be reviewed by the school nurse prior to any practices for the season so as to identify students who are at greater risk of repeated head injuries. The Athletic Department will follow up with the students and their parents/guardians who do not submit required forms by the specific date. If the students and their parents/guardians still no not return the required forms then the student cannot participate in the sport for that season until the form is returned.

2. Head Injuries or Concussions Sustained While Not Participating in an Extracurricular Activity

If a student athlete sustains a head injury or concussion during the season, but not while participating in an extracurricular athletic activity the parent/guardian of the student shall be required to complete a Report of Head Injury Form and submit it to the coach. The coach shall communicate this information immediately to the school nurse and athletic director for review.

3. Head Injuries or Concussions Sustained While Participating in an Extracurricular Activity

If a student athlete sustains a head injury or suspected concussion while participating in an extracurricular athletic activity, whether during practice or competition, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, shall be removed from the practice or competition immediately and not returned to practice or competition that day. The coach shall communicate the nature of the injury directly to the parent/guardian by person or by phone immediately after the practice or competition in which the student has



been removed and shall follow up with a written report to the parent/guardian by the end of the next business day by using the Report of Head Injury Form. The coach also shall communicate this information immediately to the school nurse and athletic director by forwarding a copy of the Report of Head Injury Form.

If a student complains of a head injury or suspected concussion or if a member of the coaching staff witnesses a head injury or suspected concussion, the student is immediately removed from play. Parents and guardians are notified, given a concussion handout to observe for signs and symptoms of a concussion or head injury, and advised to contact their own medical provider.

A post trauma test will be administered before the student athlete is able to participate with his or her team. The purpose of the post-injury test is to compare neurocognitive functions from before and after the injury. A student athlete will not be permitted to participate in any practice or game until the scores have reached baseline, the student athlete remains symptom free and a Post Sports Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form has been completed by a licensed physician managing the student's recovery and is provided to the school nurse.

4. Exclusion from Play

In cases where the student has equivalent pre and post-injury scores on the SCAT3 assessment, the school may limit participation in athletics in a manner it deems appropriate for the student athlete. However, a student may return to full participation if cleared by a licensed physician managing the student's recovery who has completed a Post Sports Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form. The completed form must be provided to the school nurse before the student is permitted to resume the extracurricular athletic activity.

Each student who is removed from practice or competition and subsequently diagnosed with a concussion shall have a written graduated reentry plan for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities. This plan shall be developed by: the school nurse, the student's teachers, the middle or high school principal, the guidance counselor, parents/guardians, student support team, and the student's physicians who is managing the student's recovery.

The plan shall include instructions addressing but not limited to:

- Physical and cognitive rest as appropriate
- Graduated return to extracurricular athletic activities and classroom studies as appropriate, including accommodations or modifications as needed
- Estimated time intervals for resumption of activities



- Frequency of assessments, as appropriate, by the school nurse, school physician, and athletic director, until full return to classroom activities and extracurricular activities are authorized
- A plan for communication and coordination between and among school personnel, the parent/guardian, and the student's primary care provider or the physician who made the diagnosis or who is managing the student's recovery.

The student must be completely symptoms free and medically cleared in order to begin graduated re-entry to extracurricular athletic activities. The head of school and principal shall oversee the development of the re-entry plan and ensure that the student's teachers, athletic director, and coaches are aware of the plan once developed.

Medical Clearance and Authorization to Return to Play

The protocol for medical clearance for return to play complies with 105 CMR 201.011 is as follows:

Before a student athlete can start the progression set forth below he/she must be symptom free for twenty-four hours. After being symptom free for twenty-four hours, then the return to play progression is as follows:

- No activity, complete rest (for youth athletes, complete rest includes cognitive rest; i.e. no school work, homework, video games, Internet, or text messages).
Once a student athlete is completely symptom free, proceed to step ii.
- Light aerobic exercise such as walking or stationary cycling, no resistance training.
Student athlete cannot progress to next step until symptom free at current step.
- Sport specific training (i.e. skating in hockey, running in soccer).
Student athlete cannot progress to next step until symptom free at current step.
- Non-contact training drill
The student athlete must have seven days free of signs and symptoms before returning to contact.
- Full contact training, ideally only after clearance by a medical doctor.
Student athlete cannot progress to next step until symptoms free at current step. A student athlete cannot return to full participation unless they have been symptoms free for seven days. Additionally, the Post Sports Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form for return to play must be filled out by a licensed physician in order for the student to return to play.



vi. Game play

vii. If any post-concussion symptoms reoccur, drop back to previous asymptomatic level and try to progress again after twenty-four hours.

viii. SCAT3 test taken and reviewed prior to contact.

Important Note: Cannot start the progression until symptoms free at rest, cannot progress to the next step until symptom free at current step.

Return to School and Classes

Procedure for the development and implementation of post-concussion graduated reentry plans to school and academic activities by persons specified in 105 CMR 201.010, is as detailed below:

While some individual student athletes may be able to attend school without increasing their symptoms, the majority of student athletes will probably need some modifications to school attendance and activities depending on the nature of the symptoms. Trial and error may be needed to discover what they can and cannot do. **THE MORE STUDENTS REST THEIR BRAINS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING A HEAD INJURY OR CONCUSSION, THE SOONER THEY HEAL.**

Most important aspect for staff is the cycle of communication regarding the athletic director, parent/guardian, school nurse, teachers, and guidance counselor. The signs and symptoms the student-athlete is reporting to all of the above regarding his/her head injury/concussion must be uniform.

Reporting System: Athletic Director reports to parent/guardian, coaches and school nurse. The school nurse reports to: Head of School, principal, and guidance counselor.

If a student needs accommodations or is absent for more than three days following a concussion, parents/guardians will be informed that the student should be referred to and consult with a medical doctor for guidance and advice regarding return to school.

If it is known that modifications are needed, a meeting should be set up with the school nurse, Director of special programs, parents/guardians prior to returning to school, to determine the need of a 504 accommodation plan.

If students are unable to attend school for an entire day without symptoms, students may request a modified school schedule. Some students may only be able to attend for one



period, some not at all, due to severe headaches or other symptoms. Frequent breaks with rest periods in the nurse's office may be necessary. Often, alternating a class with a rest period may be helpful. As recovery proceeds, gradually hours spent in school may be increased.

Depending on their symptoms, some students may need to be driven to school to avoid walking and should be given an elevator pass to avoid stairs. The student should not attend physical education classes.

Workload and homework may need to be reduced. Frequent breaks while doing homework may be helpful. Term papers should be postponed. Pre-printed class notes and tutors may help to relieve the pressure of schoolwork.

Tests: If there are concentration and memory problems, quizzes, tests, final exams, and College Board tests (such as PSAT and SAT) should be delayed or postponed. The final decision as to whether to postpone or delay any College Board test rests with the student and his/her parents/guardians.

Extra time (un-timed tests) may be necessary initially when test taking is resumed.

Providing Information and Necessary Forms and Materials to All Parents/Guardians, Student Athletes and School Staff

All students who plan to participate in extracurricular athletic activities must satisfy the pre-participation requirements including: parent/guardian consent, updated physical exam on file with the school nurse, SCAT3 concussion testing and a Pre-participation Form which provides a comprehensive history with up-to-date information relative to concussion history; and any head, face or cervical spine injury history; and any history of co-existent concussive injuries. All Pre-Participation Forms will be reviewed by the school nurse prior to the start of any practices for the season so as to identify students who are at greater risk of repeated head injuries.

All new student athletes will have baseline concussion testing done prior to participating in any extracurricular activity using SCAT3. The school nurse will test these students. This test is valid for two years from the date issued. Student athletes who do not experience any head injuries or concussions will be retested when their initial SCAT3 test result expires.

The Athletic Department will follow up with students and their parents/ guardians who do not return required forms by the specified date. If the students and their parents/ guardians still do not return the required forms then the student cannot participate in the sport for that season until the form is returned.



All staff will be instructed that the sharing of information concerning an athlete's history of head injury and concussion, recuperation, reentry plan and authorization to return to play and academic activities shall only be shared on a need to know basis consistent with the requirements of 105 C.M.R. 201.000. The athletic director, school nurse, Head of School, principal, guidance counselor and classroom teachers will be notified by the school nurse of a student's head injury. If accommodations are not being met by a teacher, the director of special programs will follow-up on the necessary accommodations in accordance with the school district's 504 Accommodation Plan policy and procedures.

Responsibilities of the Athletic Director, Coaches, and School Nurse

1. Responsibilities of Athletic Director

A. The athletic director shall participate in the development and biannual review of the policies and procedures required by 105 CMR 201.006 for the prevention and management of sports-related head injuries within the school district or school.

B. The athletic director shall complete the annual training as required by CMR 201.007.

C. The athletic director, unless school policies and procedures provide otherwise, shall be responsible for:

- Ensuring that the training requirements for staff, parents, volunteers, coaches and students are met, recorded, and records are maintained in accord with 105 CMR 201.016
- Ensuring that all students meet the physical examination requirements consistent with 105 CMR 200.000: Physical Examination of School Children prior to participation in any extracurricular athletic activity;
- Ensuring that all students participating in extracurricular athletic activities have completed and submitted Pre-participation Forms prior to participation each season;
- Ensuring that student Pre-participation Forms are reviewed according to 105 CMR 201.009
- Ensuring that Report of Head Injury Forms are completed by the parent or coach and reviewed by the coach, school nurse, and school physician as specified in 105 CMR 201.009

2. Responsibilities of Coaches

A. Coaches shall be responsible for:

- Completing the annual training as required by 105 CMR 201.007
- Reviewing Pre-participation Forms to identify those athletes who are at greater risk for repeated head injuries
 - Completing a Report of Head Injury Form, upon identification of a student with a head injury or suspected concussion that occurs during practice or competition
 - Receiving and reviewing forms that are completed by a parent which report a head injury during the sports season, but outside of an extracurricular athletic activity, so as to identify those athletes who are at greater risk for repeated head injuries



- Transmitting promptly forms in 105 CMR 201.013 to the school nurse for review and maintenance in the student's health record
- Teaching techniques aimed at minimizing sports-related head injury
- Discouraging and prohibiting athletes from engaging in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that endangers the health or safety of an athlete
- Identifying athletes with head injuries or suspected concussions that occur in practice or competition and removing them from play.

B. Coaches are responsible for communicating promptly with the parent of any student removed from practice or competition as directed in 105 CMR 201.010 and with the athletic director and school nurse as directed in 105 CMR 201.010.

3. Responsibilities of the School Nurse

- A. Participating in the development and biannual review of the policies and procedures required by 105 CMR 201.006 for the prevention and management of sports-related head injuries within the school
- B. Completing the annual training as required by 105 CMR 201.007
- C. Reviewing, or arranging for the school physician to review, completed Pre-participation Forms that indicate a history of head injury and following up with parents as needed prior to the student's participation in extracurricular athletic activities
- D. Reviewing, or arranging for the school physician to review, Report of Head Injury Forms, or school-based equivalents, and following up with the coach and parent as needed
- E. Maintaining Pre-participation Forms and Report of Head Injury Forms in the student's health record
- F. Participating in the graduated reentry planning for students who have been diagnosed with a concussion to discuss any necessary accommodations or modifications with respect to academics, course requirements, homework, testing, scheduling and other aspects of school activities consistent with a graduated reentry plan for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities after a head injury and revising the health care plan as needed;
- G. Monitoring recuperating students with head injuries and collaborating with teachers to ensure that the graduated reentry plan for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities required by 105 CMR 201.010 is being followed
- H. Providing ongoing educational materials on head injury and concussion to teachers, staff and students
- I. Reporting annual statistics to the Department in accordance with 105 C.M.R. 201.017



Record Maintenance

The school nurse and athletic director will maintain the records of all athletes for three years or until the student graduates. The following information will be kept on record with the athletic director and/or the school nurse:

- Pre-participation Forms
- Report of Head Injuries Forms
- Medical Clearance and Authorization Forms
- Reentry plan to full academics and extracurricular athletic activities

All records must be available to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, upon request or in connection with any inspection or program review.

Reporting Requirements

The school nurse and athletic director will maintain and report annual statistics as required by the Department of Public Health. Included in the report will be the total number of Head Injury Forms received and the total number of students who sustained a head injury or suspected concussion who engaged in any extracurricular athletic activity at the Community Charter School of Cambridge.