

## Concussion Protocols and Procedures

### Grades 6 - 12

In accordance with 105 CMR 201.000, *Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Athletic Activities*, Belmont Public Schools require student athletes and their parents, coaches, athletic directors, school nurses and physicians to learn about the consequences of head injury and concussions through training programs and written materials. The law also requires that athletes and their parents inform their coaches about prior head injuries at the beginning of each season. If a student athlete suffers a known or suspected concussion during a game, practice or unrelated event, written certification from a **licensed medical professional** is required before an athlete can 'return to play'.

All interscholastic athletics are deemed to be extracurricular athletic activities including but not limited to Alpine and Nordic skiing and snowboarding, baseball, basketball, cheerleading, cross country track, fencing, field hockey, football, golf, gymnastics, horseback riding, ice hockey, lacrosse, **marching band**, rifle, rugby, soccer, skating, softball, squash, swimming and diving, tennis, track (indoor and outdoor), ultimate Frisbee, volleyball, water polo and wrestling.

#### **Pre-Participation Requirements and Training**

Concussion training is a pre- participation requirement for all students participating in an extracurricular athletic activity and must be completed prior to practice. The following persons shall also complete annually, one of the head injury safety training programs approved by the Department of Public Health:

- Coaches
- Certified Athletic Trainer
- Volunteers
- School Physician
- School Nurses
- Athletic Director
- Director of Fine and Performing Arts
- Parents of a student participating in an extracurricular athletic activity

This requirement may be met by:

- Completing an approved online program as listed on the BPS website and providing a certificate of completion to the Athletic Director
- Attending a BPS sponsored training session (if offered) and signing the attendance roster

The Athletic Director will keep all certificates and training session rosters for three (3) years.

**All required pre-participation forms shall be completed prior to any participation in interscholastic athletic activities.**

## Forms

- **Physical Examination** completed within 13 months of first day of practice (annually) Physical examinations must be performed by a duly registered Physician, Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner.
- **Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form For Extracurricular Activities** (every sports season)
- **Concussion Education Training completed** (annually)
- **Report of Head Injury During Sports Season** (every sports season)

All forms should be completed and submitted directly to the Athletic Department with the exception of the Physical Examination form. This form shall be submitted directly to the Nurse's Office.

Note: All Physical Examination forms submitted by noon will be processed for play that day. Forms submitted after 12 o'clock will be processed for play the next day.

## Responsibility of Athletic Director

- Participate in the development and biannual review of the policies and procedures
- Complete the annual concussion education training
- Ensure the training requirements for staff, parents, volunteers, coaches and students are met, recorded and records maintained
- Ensure all students meet the physical examination requirements prior to participation
- Ensure all students complete and submit Pre-Participation Forms and are reviewed by Athletic Trainer
- Ensure that Report of Head Injury forms are completed by certified Athletic Trainer
- Report annual statistics to the Department of Public Health per statute (total number of Head Injury Reports received from coaches/ trainer or parents and total number who sustain head injury or suspected concussion during any extracurricular event)

## Responsibilities of the Athletic Trainer

- Complete the annual concussion education training
- Review Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting form- any forms with positive findings will be given to School Nurse for review in a timely manner
- Complete a Report of Head Injury form for student with a head injury or suspected concussion that occurs during practice or competition-provide copy to School Nurse
- Identify athletes with head injury or suspected concussions that occur in practice or competition and remove them from play
- Notify School Nurse of above students the next school day
- Collaborate with staff regarding graduated re entry to play

### **Responsibility of Coaches**

- Complete the annual concussion education training
- Review Pre-Participation Forms to identify those athletes that are at greater risk for repeated head injuries
- Teach techniques aimed at minimizing sports-related head injury
- Identify athletes with head injuries or suspected concussion that occur in practice or competition and remove them from play; notify Athletic Trainer if not present at competition

### **Responsibilities of School Nurse**

- Complete the annual concussion education training
- Review physical examination form / enter expiration date in Administrator's Plus program
- Review all positive findings on Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form – maintain in student's School Health record
- Review Report of Head Injury During Sports Season form– maintain in student's School Health record
- Participate in graduated re-entry planning for academics and competition
- Monitor students recuperating from concussion/ head injury
- Provide ongoing educational materials on head injury and concussion to teachers, staff , students and parents

### **Exclusion from Play**

- Any student, who during practice or competition, sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion or loses consciousness, even briefly, shall be removed from the practice or competition immediately and may not return to the practice or competition that day.
- The student shall not return to practice or competition until the student provides a completed medical clearance form as provided by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (Post Sports Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form). This form may be provided by the coach or athletic trainer or found on the BPS athletic and nursing web sites.
- The coach or athletic trainer shall communicate the injury directly to the parent in person or by telephone by the end of the practice or competition in which a student has been removed from play due to a head injury, signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loss of consciousness.
- The coach shall communicate, by the end of the next school day, with the Athletic Director, the athletic trainer and the school nurse that the student has been removed from practice or competition for a head injury, a suspected concussion, signs and symptoms of a concussion or loss of consciousness.

## **Medical Clearance for Return to Play**

In order for a student to return to play, the form **Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form** must be completed by one of the following health professionals:

- A duly licensed physician
- A duly licensed nurse practitioner in consultation with a licensed physician
- A duly licensed neuropsychologist in consultation with the physician managing the student's recovery

A multidisciplinary team (including but not limited to the athletic trainer, school nurse, school physician, school counselor, primary care provider and parent) will develop a plan for the student's return to play.

The plan shall include the academic recovery plan recommendations from the physician and the medical clearance to return to play.

## **Graduated Re Entry and Return to Play**

### **Step 1:** Light aerobic exercise

The goal is only to increase the athlete's heart rate. Exercise time is 5-10 minutes and includes exercise such as biking, walking, or light jogging -- absolutely no weightlifting, jumping or hard running

### **Step 2:** Moderate exercise

The goal is to limit body and head movement. Exercise time is reduced from a typical routine. Activities include moderate jogging, brief running, moderate-intensity stationary biking, and moderate-intensity weightlifting,

### **Step 3:** Noncontact exercise

The goal is more intensity but without contact. Time should be close to the athlete's typical exercise routine, and activities can include running; high-intensity stationary biking; the player's regular weightlifting routine; and noncontact, sport-specific drills. This stage may add some cognitive component to practice in addition to the aerobic and movement components introduced in step 1 and 2.

### **Step 4:** Resume practice

The goal of this step is to reintegrate in full-contact practice.

### **Step 5:** Return to play

The goal of this final step is to return to competition.

It is important to monitor symptoms and cognitive function carefully during each increase of exertion. Athletes should only progress to the next level of exertion if they are not experiencing symptoms at the

current level. If symptoms return at any step, the athlete should be instructed to stop the activity, because this may be a sign that the athlete is pushing too hard. Only after additional rest, when the athlete is no longer experiencing symptoms, for a minimum of 24 hours, should the athlete begin again at the step during which symptoms were experienced.

The "Return to Play Progression" process is best conducted through a team approach and by a health professional who knows the athlete's physical abilities and endurance level. By gauging the athlete's performance on each individual step, you will be able to determine how far the athlete can progress on a given day. In some cases, you may be able to work through 1 step in a single day, whereas in other cases, it may take several days to work through an individual step. It may take several weeks to months to work through the entire 5-step progression.

### **Graduated Re Entry Plan – Return to Academics**

All students recovering from concussion are required to have a written graduated re entry plan. Instructional accommodations and modifications for routine classroom work and assessments will be developed by school counselor in consultation with school nurse, family and student's medical provider.

### **Staff Education**

Training for all teaching staff will include recognition of concussion symptoms; the need for cognitive rest and assisting the student

Forms may be found on the BPS website (Athletic Department /Health Services Department):

<http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bhs/athletics/>

<http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/health/policies/>

Policies and procedures governing the prevention and management of sports-related head injuries will be reviewed by the Athletic Director, Nursing Services Director, School Physician, and Superintendent in collaboration with the BPS Health Safety and Security Advisory committee every two (2) years.

### **Forms**

Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form

Report of Head Injury During Sports Season

Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form

Graduated Re-entry Plan- Return to Academics

Parent Education Letter

Parent Fact Sheet- Concussion

Athlete Fact Sheet- Concussion