

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

Background

Elk Island Catholic Schools is committed to the safety of students and staff in a Christ-centered, safe and caring school learning environment. Students and staff who are supported in a healthy environment are better able to achieve the goals of education. The Board and Division employees will work cooperatively with medical experts, regional health authorities and local partners to promote student health and safety in maintaining a healthy and safe environment where students can learn.

A concussion may be caused by a blow to the head, face or neck that causes the brain to move rapidly within the skull. A concussion can occur even if there has been no loss of consciousness. A concussion is a brain injury that causes change in the way the brain functions and can have a significant impact on a student – cognitively, physically, emotionally and socially. Schools must know how to recognize concussions and work with staff, parents/guardians and partners to manage suspected concussions and help students return safely to school and play after experiencing a concussion.

Procedures

1. The Division will convey the seriousness of concussions to staff, students, parents/guardians and other stakeholders.
2. Prevention will be at the core of concussion awareness.
 - 2.1. Students participating in extracurricular athletics and other activities will follow safety guidelines.
 - 2.2. Teachers and coaches are expected to follow safety guidelines and work with students to reduce the risk of serious injury, including concussions.
 - 2.3. Supervision must be provided in any activity that has a risk of concussion to provide vigilant oversight of the activity.
3. Schools must follow the Safety Guidelines for Secondary Interschool Athletics in Alberta and the Safety Guidelines for Physical Activities in Alberta.
4. It is the responsibility of the coaches, officials, parents/guardians and student-athletes to adhere to the minimum required standards for safety of the equipment.

5. Where, in the judgment of the student him/herself, a witness (being another student or an employee of the Division) there is reason to believe that a student is exhibiting signs and symptoms of a concussion as a result of an impact, then the employee must immediately remove the student from potential further harm and begin the Concussion Protocol (Appendix A – Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion). Notification to the principal will occur as soon as possible. The well-being of the student is the priority and the student shall not be left without supervision.
 - 5.1. Concussions can only be diagnosed by a medical doctor.
 - 5.2. To return to a sport or activity after a concussion, the student must be re-examined by a medical doctor.
 - 5.3. After permission has been granted to return to a sport or activity, the Return to Play Guidelines (Appendix B) must be followed.
6. Training will be provided for coaches and school personal who are in contact with students who participate in activities that may have athletic injuries including concussions.

Prior to the start of any sports season, coaches are required to show that they have completed the following free, on-line course “*Concussions in Sports – What you Need to Know*” located on the website of The Alberta Schools Athletic Association (ASAA) at <https://www.schoolcoach.ca/courses.aspx>

Additional information (e.g., NCCP Prevention and Recovery) is available on-line through Coaching Association of Canada’s (CAC) website at <http://www.coach.ca/>

7. Teachers or coaches are responsible for student safety and for educating students/players about concussions.
 - 7.1. Teachers or coaches are responsible to educate students about the signs and symptoms of a concussion; and that if a student him/herself, or a witness has reason to believe that a student is exhibiting signs and symptoms of a concussion as a result of an impact, that student will immediately be removed from play to protect him/her from further harm.
 - 7.2. The teacher or coach will immediately begin the Concussion Protocol (Appendix A – Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion). Notification to the principal will occur as soon as possible. The well-being of the student is the priority and the student shall not be left without supervision. The student athlete will not be permitted to return until he or she has received written medical clearance from a doctor.
 - 7.3. The teacher supervisor/ coach or principal must summon an ambulance if a student appears to be seriously injured and cannot be moved.

8. The principal is responsible to ensure that appropriate concussion protocols are followed, including the development of the plan for a student with a confirmed concussion.
 - 8.1. The principal will inform staff of a student with a confirmed concussion.
9. Students are responsible for abiding by the rules and regulations of the sport or activity and to abide by the principles of fair and safe play.
 - 9.1. Students who experience an impact such as a blow to the head, face or neck and must disclose this information to the teachers/coach so that the student can be monitored for any potential symptoms of concussion.
 - 9.2. Students who witness a peer receiving an impact such as a blow to the head, face or neck or observing a peer who may be exhibiting symptoms associated with a concussion must disclose this information to the supervising teacher or coach immediately.
10. Each student who has been diagnosed with a concussion will have an individualized Return to Learn plan (Appendix B) developed in consultation with the school team and the parent/guardian.
 - 10.1. The Return to Learn plan will include individual recommendations to be implemented immediately as part of the recovery process.
 - 10.2. Accommodation requests are to be supported by medical documentation clearly identifying the condition, the current functional impact and the current need for accommodation. Potential exam accommodations are listed on the Alberta Education website.
11. Parents are to put the health and safety of their child first.
 - 11.1. Parents/legal guardians will be required to read and sign an Authorization to Participate in Competitive Sports form before their child attends a try out, a practice or a competitive sports activity. (Appendix C)
 - 11.2. Parents/guardians are responsible for cooperating with school personnel when they are informed of a possible concussion to their child.
 - 11.3. Parents/guardians are responsible for acting on information provided by the teacher supervisor/coach and for monitoring their child after a suspected concussion.

References:

Education Act, SA 2012, c E-0.3, ss. 31, 32, 33, 53, 196, 197, 222

MyHealth.Alberta.ca

The Alberta Schools Athletic Association (ASAA) [<https://www.schoolcoach.ca/courses.aspx>]

Coaching Association of Canada's (CAC) [<http://www.coach.ca/>]