

# MEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## 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*. The policy applies to all public middle and high school students who participate in any extracurricular athletic activity. This policy provides the procedures and protocols for the Medford Public Schools in the management of and prevention of sports-related head injuries within the district or school. Review and revision of this policy is required every two years.

#### **Pre-participation Requirements and Training**

Concussion training is a pre-participation requirement for all students and must be completed prior to practice or competition. The following persons annually shall complete one of the head injury safety training programs approved by the Medford Public Schools (MPS):

- Coaches;
- Certified athletic trainers;
- Trainers;
- Volunteers;
- School and team physicians;
- School nurses;
- Athletic directors;
- Directors responsible for a school marching band, whether employed by a school or school district or serving in such capacity as a volunteer;
- Parents of a student who participates in an extracurricular athletic activity; and students who participate in an extracurricular athletic activity.

This requirement may be met by:

- completing an approved online program listed on the MPS website and pre-participation questionnaire, and providing a certificate of completion to the athletic director,
- signing an acknowledgement that they have read and understand written materials provided to them by the athletic director, or
- Attending a MPS sponsored training session and signing the attendance roster.

The athletic director will keep all certificates, signed acknowledgements and training session rosters for three years.

The training must be repeated every subsequent year.

Game officials must also complete an approved training annually and provide MPS with verification of completion upon request.

Additionally, students who plan to participate in extracurricular athletic activities and their parents must complete and sign the pre-participation *Sports Candidate Medical Questionnaire* prior to each season of participation. The questionnaire will be distributed through the athletic department and may also be obtained in the health office. The questionnaire will be reviewed by the school nurse prior to athletic participation. The school nurse will provide appropriate follow-up when necessary. Annually, students are also required to provide a physical exam to the school nurses' office. No student shall be medically cleared for extracurricular athletic activities until the school nurse has reviewed both the questionnaire and physical exam. The school nurse shall consult with the school physician as necessary regarding a student's medical history and or eligibility.

MPS may use a student'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.

Additional parental requirement:

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

### **Exclusion from Play**

- Any student, who during a 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 unless and until the student provides medical clearance. The coach or athletic trainer shall provide the necessary forms for the student to take to their medical provider. These include a letter explaining the need for the medical clearance from the MPS school physician, an academic recovery plan and recommendation form and an athletic return-to-play protocol.
- The coach shall communicate the nature of the injury directly to the parent in person or by phone immediately after the practice or competition in which a student has been removed from play due to a head injury, suspected concussion signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loss of

consciousness. The coach also must provide this information to the parent in writing, whether paper or electronic format by the end of the next business day.

- The coach or his or her designee shall communicate, by the end of the next business day, with the Athletic Director, the school athletic trainer and school nurse that the student has been removed from practice or competition for a head injury, suspected concussion, signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loss of consciousness.

### **Return to Play**

A MPS multidisciplinary team will develop a plan for the student's return to play. This team may consist of athletic trainer, school nurse, school physician, teaching staff, guidance counselor, primary care physician or physician managing the student's recovery, and parent.

The plan shall include the academic recovery plan recommendations from the physician and the return to play protocol of the athletic trainer.

Students must be symptom free and medically cleared in order to return to play. The following individuals may authorize a return to play:

- A duly licensed physician,
- A duly licensed certified athletic trainer in consultation with a licensed physician;
- A duly licensed nurse practitioner in consultation with a licensed physician, or
- A duly licensed neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student's recovery.

Final return to play in the Medford Public Schools requires the approval of the athletic trainer.

### **Athletic Director Responsibilities**

The Athletic Director participates in the biannual review and revision of the policy.

The Athletic Director completes an annual training.

The Athletic Director shall:

- Ensure the training of coaches, staff, parents, volunteers and students;
- Maintain certificates of completion, attendance rosters, and signed affidavits;

- Ensure that the medically cleared list is provided to all coaches, assistants, and volunteers and that no student participates without this clearance;
- Ensure the Report of Head Injury Forms are completed by parents or coaches and reviewed by the school nurse;
- Ensure that athletes are prohibited from engaging in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that endangers the health or safety of an athlete, including using a helmet or any other sports equipment as a weapon;
- Maintain records of annual trainings, completions, affidavits, and/or attendance rosters for three years.
- Report annual statistics to the Department of Public Health.
  - The total number of Head Injury Reports received from both coaches and parents;
  - The total number of students who incur head injuries and suspected concussions when engaged in any extracurricular athletic activities.

### **Athletic Trainer Responsibilities**

The athletic trainer shall complete the annual training.

The athletic trainer shall participate in the biannual review and revision of the policy.

The athletic trainer shall:

- Review in collaboration with the school nurse the Pre-participation Questionnaire and Report of Head Injury Report forms;
- Identify students with head injury or concussion that occur in practice or competition and remove them from play;
- Monitor the symptoms of students with head injuries and maintain written documentation of such monitoring;
- Implement the individual Concussion Return-to-Play Protocol after diagnosis;
- Collaborate with coaches to ensure that the Concussion Return-to-Play protocol is being followed;
- Determine return to play eligibility; or

- Require, after consultation with the school physician, further medical clearance from the student's physician who is managing their recovery;
  - NB This additional medical clearance may be required for students who may have repeated concussions or severe concussion and who in the opinion of the athletic trainer may be at greater risk of suffering from concussions and potential long term effects from these multiple concussions.
- Maintain all Concussion Return-to-Play protocols for students with head injury or concussion in a secure location.

### **Coach Responsibilities**

The coach completes the annual training and provides the athletic director with a certificate of completion.

The coach reviews the pre-participation information provided by the school nurse regarding a student's history and/or risk of head injury.

The coach shall:

- Identify athletes with head injuries or suspected concussions that occur in practice or competition and remove them from play.
- Complete the Report of Head Injury Form upon identification of a student with a head injury or suspected concussion that occurs during practice or competition;
- Promptly notify parent of any student removed from practice or competition and provide same notification in writing or electronically by the end of the next business day;
- Promptly notify the athletic director and athletic trainer and school nurse of any student removed from practice or competition;
- Teach techniques aimed at minimizing sports-related head injury;
- Discourage and prohibit athletes from engaging in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that endangers the health or safety of an athlete, including using a helmet or any other sports equipment as a weapon;

### **School Nurse Responsibilities**

The school nurses complete the annual training.

The school nurses participate in the biannual review and revision of the policy.

The school nurse shall:

- Review all pre-participation questionnaires;
- Review all annual physical exams;
- Review all Report of Head Injury reports;
- Maintain all questionnaires, physical exams, Report of Head Injury forms and any other pertinent medical information in the student health record.
- Share on a need to know basis any head injury information regarding a student that may impact their ability to participate in extracurricular athletic activities or places a student at greater risk for repeated head injuries;
- Participate in the reentry planning for students 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;
- Monitor recuperating students with head injuries and collaborate with teachers to ensure that the graduated reentry plan is being followed;
- Provide ongoing educational materials on head injury and concussion to teachers, staff and students.

### **Record Maintenance**

The MPS shall maintain the following record for three years:

Verifications of completion of annual trainings;

Pre-participation Questionnaires;

Annual physical exams;

Head Injury Reports;

Concussion Return to Play Protocols for injured students;

These records will be made available to the Department of Public Health and DESE upon request or in connection with any inspection or program review.

10/11 EDiB

