

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PITTSVILLE BOARD POLICY

STUDENTS

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELFARE

CONCUSSIONS AND HEAD INJURIES IN YOUTH ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES 453.12-RULE

Per section 118.293 of the state statutes, a District-operated “youth athletic activity” means any organized indoor or outdoor athletic activity sponsored and supervised by the District in which the participants, a majority of whom are under 19 years of age, are engaged in an athletic game or competition against another team, club, or entity, or in practice or preparation for an organized athletic game or competition against another team, club, or entity. A "youth athletic activity" does not include a physical activity that is incidental to a nonathletic program.

District-operated activities that meet the statutory definition of a ‘youth athletic activity’ are ‘youth athletic activities’ for purposes of this rule.

In addition, although not considered a ‘youth athletic activity’ under the definition established in the state concussion law, the following District-operated activities, which do not engage in competitions, shall also be considered 'youth athletic activities' for purposes of the procedures established in this rule: Football Cheer, Pom.

For purposes of these procedures, “health care provider” means a person who (1) holds a credential that authorizes the person to provide health care; (2) is trained and has experience in evaluating and managing pediatric concussions and head injuries; and (3) is practicing within the scope of his/her credential.

A. Distribution of Concussion and Head Injury Information

1. In connection with each District-operated youth athletic activity, the Athletic/Activities Director shall develop and oversee the implementation of procedures to ensure that an appropriate information sheet addressing the nature and risk of concussions and head injuries is distributed:
 - a. To all coaches and other persons holding equivalent positions that involve direct supervision and leadership of a District-operated youth athletic activity (e.g., even if the position is referred to as the activity “advisor” or goes by some other title); and
 - b. To each individual who wishes to participate in a District-operated youth athletic activity.
2. For any District-operated youth athletic activity that is offered to persons who are **12 years of age or older**, the Athletic/Activity Director shall ensure that the concussion/head injury information sheets distributed by the District also include the state-mandated information regarding the nature and risk of sudden cardiac arrest during youth athletic activities.
3. Normally, the distribution of the information sheets shall occur at the beginning of the relevant season and prior to any individual beginning participation in a covered activity. However, for any participant who is a **student enrolled in a District school**, District personnel/agents are not required to distribute or collect an additional signed information sheet for the student during any July 1 to June 30 school year if that student has already returned a properly-signed information sheet for another District-operated youth athletic activity during that same school year.
4. No person may participate in a District-operated youth athletic activity (inclusive of competitions, practices, and other preparatory physical activities occurring as part of any youth athletic activity season) unless the person has returned a properly-signed information sheet (or the relevant signature portion thereof).

- a. The returned document must be signed (1) by the individual who wishes to participate (e.g., the student or other youth); and (2) if the participant is under age 19, by the participant's parent or guardian. The returned signature documents shall be maintained at the appropriate school, rather than being retained by individual coaches. For students enrolled in the District, the returned signature documents shall be maintained as a student behavioral record.
- b. Coaches and other persons who hold equivalent positions are expected to consistently enforce the requirements for returning a properly-signed information sheet prior to permitting an individual to participate in a youth athletic activity. Accordingly, coaches and such other persons are expected to take reasonable steps to verify that each individual who wishes to participate in the relevant activity has the necessary signed document on file.

B. Removal from Participation in an Activity Due to a Possible Concussion or Head Injury

1. A coach (or equivalent supervisory position) for a youth athletic activity, any official/referee involved in a youth athletic activity, or a health care provider is required by state law to remove a participant from the relevant youth athletic activity (inclusive of games/competition, practices, and other preparatory physical activities occurring as part of any youth athletic activity season) if the coach, official/referee, or health care provider either:
 - a. Determines that the participant is exhibiting signs, symptoms, or behavior consistent with a concussion or head injury, or
 - b. Suspects that the participant has sustained a concussion or head injury.
2. To help recognize possible concussions and head injuries, coaches and other persons with responsibility for making or providing input into possible removal decisions should watch for any forceful blow to the head or to the body that results in rapid movement of the head as well as relevant changes in a participant's behavior, judgement, or physical functioning. The following are examples of the types of signs and symptoms that should be considered in the totality of the circumstances as likely evidence of a need to remove a student or other youth from participation in an athletic activity under these procedures:

Symptoms Observed by Coaches or Others

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets sports plays
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can't recall events after hit or fall

Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- Headache or pressure in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not feel "right"

3. If a health care provider is on site and available when a participant is being assessed, he/she may be asked to help make a removal determination. When a coach is making an assessment and determination without the assistance of a health care provider, it is not the responsibility of the coach to make a medical diagnosis or to determine the specific severity of a participant's injury or condition. The expectation is for the coach to take appropriate and timely actions to safeguard the safety of the participant who may have suffered an injury, and, when in doubt, the participant should be removed from the activity.
4. As indicated above, officials/referees who are involved in any youth athletic activity have the same legal duties as coaches and health care providers in relation to initiating the removal of a participant due to a possible

concussion or other head injury. District coaches are expected to respect an official's/referee's decision to remove a participant even if the coach may not have reached the same decision.

5. Upon assessing or removing any student or other youth from participation under these procedures, a coach or qualified designee who is present at the scene shall oversee the provision of appropriate first aid and emergency assistance, which may include contacting Emergency Medical Services or 911.

C. Return to Participation

1. Any student or other youth who has been removed from participation in a youth athletic activity due to an actual or suspected concussion or other head injury under these procedures may not participate in a youth athletic activity (inclusive of any game, competition, practice, or other preparatory physical activity) until he/she is evaluated by a health care provider and receives a written clearance to participate in the activity from the health care provider.
2. The removed participant must provide a copy of the written clearance to Athletic/Activity Director. The clearance shall be maintained in the school health office in accordance with District policies and procedure for such records.
3. Prior to reinstating the participant, the appropriate coach or other activity supervisor shall review the health care provider's statement, obtain any clarification of instructions that may be required, and adhere to any limitations on participation or incremental return-to-participation protocol that may be included in the health care provider's statement. In addition, if a parent or guardian requests a more-conservative (slower) approach to the resumption of activity than is required by the health care provider, the coach(es)/supervisor(s) shall implement the request.
4. If a coach (or other equivalent activity supervisor) observes, or if the participant reports or confirms, symptoms of a concussion or head injury during the return-to-play process, the participant shall be required to cease participation and must be re-evaluated by a health care provider.

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