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| CONCUSSION POLICY | | | |
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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard Acero Schools’ students who have experienced concussions and assist students, school personnel and parents/guardians with identifying concussions, managing students’ return to a school or sport and complying with state law and concussion management requirements.

II. REFERENCE AND RELATED PROCEDURE

Public Act 099-0245 Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act
[Interscholastic Organization Act](#)
[03.005 Handling Concussions Procedure](#)
[Handling Concussions Responsibilities List](#)

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Athletic Trainer – An Athletic Trainer licensed under the Illinois Athletic Trainers Practice Act.
- B. Coach – Any volunteer or employee of the school who is responsible for organizing and supervising students to teach them or train them in the fundamental skills of an interscholastic athletic activity. The term “Coach” includes both head coaches and assistant coaches.
- C. Concussion – A complex pathophysiological process affecting the brain caused by a traumatic physical force or impact to the head or body, which may include temporary or prolonged altered brain function resulting in physical, cognitive, or emotional symptoms or altered sleep patterns and which may or may not involve a loss of consciousness.

| Signs | Symptoms |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Dazed or stunned | Headache |
| Confused | Nausea or Vomiting |
| Memory Loss | Poor Balance and Dizziness |
| Clumsiness | Light or Sound Sensitivity |
| Impaired Speech | Vision Changes |
| Impaired Consciousness | Neck Pain |

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| Behavior or personality Changes | Change in Sleep Patterns Foggy, Groggy or Confused Impaired Concentration or Memory |
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- D. Game Official – A person who officiates at an interscholastic athletic activity, such as a referee or umpire, including, but not limited to, persons enrolled as game officials by the Illinois High School Association or Illinois Elementary School Association.
- E. Interscholastic Athletic Activity – Any organized school-sponsored or school-sanctioned activity for students, generally outside of school instructional hours, under the direction of a coach, athletic director, or band leader, including, but not limited to, baseball, basketball, cheerleading, cross country, fencing, field hockey, football, golf, gymnastics, ice hockey, lacrosse, marching band, rugby, soccer, skating, softball, swimming and diving, tennis, track (indoor and outdoor), ultimate Frisbee, volleyball, water polo, and wrestling. All are deemed to be interscholastic activities. The term “Interscholastic athletic activity” includes both practice and competition held in relation to the athletic activity.
- F. Licensed Healthcare Professional – A person who has experience with concussion management and who is a nurse, a psychologist who holds a license under the Clinical Psychologist Licensing Act and specializes in the practice of neuropsychology, a physical therapist licensed under the Illinois Physical Therapy Act, or an occupational therapist licensed under the Illinois Occupational Therapy Practice Act
- G. Nurse – A person who is employed by, or volunteers at, the school and is licensed under the Illinois Nurse Practice Act as a registered nurse, practical nurse, or advanced practice nurse.
- H. Physician – A physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches under the Illinois Medical Practice Act of 1987.
- I. Student – A student enrolled in either elementary or secondary school.
- J. Student Athlete – A student enrolled in either elementary or secondary school who is participates in an interscholastic athletic activity.

IV. POLICY

- A. Concussion Oversight Team
 - 1. The Acero Chief Executive Officer/Designee shall appoint a Concussion Oversight Team, which, at a minimum, shall consist of persons who are responsible for implementing and complying with the Return to Play and Return to Learn protocols outlined in the Handling Concussions Procedure.

2. The Concussion Oversight Team shall establish and oversee the implementation of a Return to Play protocol, consistent with this policy, and based on peer-review scientific evidence consistent with the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines](#), for a Student Athlete's return to interscholastic practice or competition following a force or impact believed to have caused a concussion.
3. The Concussion Oversight Team shall establish and oversee the implementation of a Return to Learn protocol, consistent with this policy, and based on peer-review scientific evidence consistent with the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines](#), for a student's return to the classroom after that student is believed to have experienced a concussion, whether or not the concussion took place while the student was participating in an interscholastic athletic activity.
4. The Concussion Oversight Team will be responsible for conducting quarterly compliance reviews to ensure all Return to Learn and Return to Play protocols were followed.

B. Receipt of Information Regarding Concussions

Student Athletes may not participate in practice or competition until the Student Athlete and the Student Athlete's parents or legal guardians sign a consent form, approved by the Illinois High School Association that acknowledges receiving and reading written information that explains concussion prevention, symptoms, treatment and oversight. The consent form must be completed by the Student Athlete's parent or legal guardian for each school year.

C. Student Removal from School Programs

Any student who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion should be promptly evaluated by a Licensed Health Care Professional, in accordance with the Acero Schools [Handling Concussions Procedure](#).

D. Student Athlete Removal from an Interscholastic Athletic Activity

A Student Athlete must be removed from an interscholastic athletic practice or competition immediately if one of the following persons believes the Student Athlete is exhibiting signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion:

1. a coach;
2. a physician;
3. a game official;
4. an athletic trainer;
5. the Student Athlete's parents or legal guardian;
6. the Student Athlete; or
7. any other person deemed appropriate under the return-to-play protocol.

E. Student Athlete Return to Play and Return to Learn

1. A student athlete removed from an Interscholastic Athletic Activity practice or competition for exhibiting signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall not be permitted to practice or compete again until:
 - a. the Student Athlete has been evaluated by a treating physician;
 - b. the Student Athlete has completed each requirement of the Return to Play and the Return to Learn protocols outlined in the Handling Concussions Procedure;
 - c. the Student Athlete's parents or legal guardian provides a written statement from a treating physician indicating that in the physician's professional judgment, it is safe for the Student Athlete to return to play and learn;
 - d. the physician's statement is provided to the person responsible for the Return to Play and Return to Learn protocols and his/her supervisor;
 - e. the Student Athlete and his/her parents or legal guardian have acknowledged that the Student Athlete has completed the Return to Play and Return to Learn protocols; and
 - f. the Student Athlete's parents or legal guardian have signed a consent form indicating that the person signing the form has been informed and
 - i. consents to the student participating in the Return to Play and return-to learn protocols;
 - ii. understands the risks associated with the student returning to play and learn;
 - iii. will comply with any on-going requirement in the Return to Play and Return to Learn protocols; and
 - iv. consents to the disclosure to appropriate persons, consistent with federal and state law, of the information required in Section 22-80(f)(5)(C) of the Illinois School Code, 105 ILCS 5/22-80.
2. A coach of an interscholastic athletic activity may not authorize a Student Athlete's return to play.

F. Student Return to Learn

- a. A student exhibiting signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion, regardless of where the student is believed to have experienced the concussion, shall be evaluated by the student's physician.
- b. A student diagnosed with a concussion shall complete the Return to Learn protocol.

G. Documentation

1. All cases of suspected concussions that occur on school property or during a school-sponsored activity must be promptly reported via the Incident Report Form.
2. Prior to participation in Acero Schools athletics programs, all high school Student Athletes must submit an Illinois High School Association (IHSA) Sports Medicine Acknowledgement and Consent Form (Concussion Information Sheet).
3. Further, in the case of all Student Athletes (elementary and high school) who experience concussions, schools shall comply with the Return to Play and Return to Learn documentation requirements and procedures specified in the Handling Concussions Procedure.

H. Compliance

1. The Chief Education Officer, or that person's designee, shall supervise the person responsible for compliance with the Return to Play and Return to Learn protocol.
2. Training is required for Coaches, Nurses (if applicable), the Concussion Oversight Team, teachers and administrators. Proof of training completion must be submitted to the Chief Education Officer/Designee.

V. APPLICABILITY

This policy is applicable to all Acero employees. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary action up to, and including termination of employment.