

BRIDGEWATER-RAYNHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

CONCUSSION POLICY

6305

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and standardized procedures for persons involved in the prevention, identification, training, management and return to activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in school or extracurricular athletic activities¹ including, but not limited to, interscholastic sports, in order to protect their health and safety as required by Massachusetts law and regulations.

- 6305.1** The requirements of the law apply to all public middle and high schools, however configured, serving grades six through twelve. In addition to any training required by law, the following persons shall complete one of the head injury safety training programs approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health as found on our district website under *Athletics*: coaches; certified athletic trainers; school physicians; school nurses; athletic directors; directors of school marching bands; employees or volunteers working with coaches; and students who participate in an extracurricular activity and their parents. In addition, all coaching staff in the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District shall maintain current CPR certification.
- 6305.2** Upon the adoption of this policy by the School Committee, the Superintendent shall ensure that the MDPH receives an affirmation on school district letterhead that the district has developed policies that have been approved by the School Committee no later than March 1, 2012 in accordance with 105CMR201.000. This policy shall be updated and reviewed at a minimum of every two years.
- 6305.3** The Superintendent shall maintain or cause to be maintained complete and accurate records of the district's compliance with the requirements of the Concussion Law, and shall maintain the following records for three years or, at a minimum, until the student graduates, unless state or federal law requires a longer detention period:
1. Verification of completion of annual training and receipt of materials;
 2. DPH Pre-Participation Forms with receipt of materials, or school based equivalents;
 3. DPH Report of Head Injury Forms, or school-based equivalents;
 4. DPH Medical Clearance and Authorization Forms, or school based equivalents;
 5. Re-Entry Plans for Academics and Return to Play Athletic Activities
- 6305.4** This policy also applies to volunteers who assist with extracurricular activities. Such volunteers shall not be liable for civil damages arising out of any act or omission relating to the requirements of the law, unless such volunteer is willfully or intentionally negligent in his act or omission.

6305.5 All student athletes, age 13 and OVER, will be required to take the *ImPACT Baseline Cognitive Test* before the start of their athletic season.

6305.6 Most student athletes who sustain a concussion can fully recover as long as their brain has time to heal before sustaining another hit; however, relying only on an athlete’s self-report of symptoms to determine injury recovery is inadequate, as many high school athletes were previously unaware of the signs, symptoms or the severity concussive injuries pose, or they may feel pressure from coaches, parents, and/or teammates to return to play as quickly as possible. One or more of these factors will likely result in under-diagnosing the injury and a premature return to play. Massachusetts General Laws and Department of Public Health regulations make it imperative to accurately assess and treat student athletes when concussions are suspected.

¹ Extracurricular Athletic Activity means an organized school sponsored athletic activity generally occurring outside of school instructional hours under the direction of a coach, AD, Marching Band Director, including but not limited to: Skiing, snowboarding, baseball, basketball, cheerleading, field hockey, football, rugby, lacrosse, track, fencing, swimming, golf, gymnastics, marching band, tennis, ice hockey, wrestling, volleyball, softball and squash.

Student athletes or students in the general population who receive concussions may appear to be “fine” on the outside, when in actuality they have a brain injury and are not able to return to play or academics. Incurring a second concussion can prove to be devastating to a student who has not healed from an initial head injury. Research has shown that young concussed athletes who return to play before their brain has healed are highly vulnerable to more prolonged post-concussion syndrome or, in rare cases, a neurological injury known as Second Impact Syndrome.

We have developed procedures and protocols outlining how our district is implementing the requirements of the new Concussion Law. This protocol will also be reviewed on a yearly basis with all staff to discuss the procedures to be followed to manage all sports-related concussions. This protocol will also be reviewed annually by the Athletic Trainer, Athletic Director, Nurse Leader and all of the athletic and nursing staff. The Concussion Education for our athletes, coaches, parents, volunteers and all others required by law is a top priority. Any changes in this document will be approved by the school committee and given to athletic staff, nursing staff, coaches and all school personnel. An accurate summary of this policy shall be placed in the student and faculty handbooks.

LEGAL REFS; M.G.L. 111:222; 105 CMR 201.000

Approved by the Committee on February 29, 2012

Amended August 22, 2012

Proposed Amendment November 1, 2013

Reviewed by: Nurse Leader, Athletic Director, Athletic Trainer on December 11, 2017