

### Concussion Management

The recognition and treatment of athletes who have suffered a concussion has become a national priority. As a result of an increasing number of studies that have revealed that concussions, not properly treated, can result in permanent physical and cognitive deficits, including learning disabilities. The data also suggests that concussions can lead to the development of dementia and other long-term issues earlier than expected. These risks have led the State of Idaho to enact law (of Section 33-1625 of Idaho Code) that all school districts develop policies related to sports concussion that are consistent with the current recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Additional recommendations for these policies come from the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) and the Idaho High School Activities Association (IHSAA), among others.

Recovery from a concussion requires limitation of physical activity, especially sports activity such as practice, drills, games, and physical education classes. In significantly symptomatic athletes, mental activity should also be limited cognitively to allow the brain time to heal. These activities may include limiting assignments, quizzes and tests, allowing greater time to complete such academic tasks, and encouraging frequent breaks from cognitive stressors. In severe cases, additional accommodations may need to be made through an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) in consultation with medical professionals. Additionally, with all concussed athletes, such activities as watching TV, texting, and computer use may also slow recovery.

**If at any time symptoms of a concussion are seen by a parent/guardian, a doctor should be notified immediately.**

To better manage instances of concussion in our sports program, Lake Pend Oreille School District requires the following:

1. All coaches (paid and volunteer) must complete annual training in the area of current concussion management practices and provide proof of that training to the school's athletic director. This training should include up-to-date information on the identification of concussion, the signs and symptoms associated with the injury, the risks involved with allowing athletes to continue to play while symptomatic, methods of concussion assessment, and the importance of gradual return to play practices.
2. Information about sports-related concussion will be provided to parents about concussion annually via the school's website, pre-season meetings, registration dates and parents will be asked to provide written acknowledgement of receiving such information prior to their child(ren) being allowed to participate in any school-sponsored sport activity. These acknowledgement forms will be updated annually and kept by the school's athletic director.
3. Prior to the start of every sport season, a meeting will be held to inform parents about the risks of concussion prevalent in each sport and to help educate those parents on how to identify the signs and symptoms associated with the injury along with the potential risks involved with playing while symptomatic. Parents will also be informed about the district's Concussion Management Plan.
4. Prior to the start of every sport season, the athletic director will work with coaches and medical providers to educate athletes about concussion, its signs and symptoms, and potential long-term risks.

5. If, during a practice or game, an athlete sustains a concussion or exhibits the signs, symptoms or behaviors of the injury, that athlete must be removed from all athletic activity. That athlete may not return to any physical activity until he/she is evaluated by a licensed medical doctor. The athlete and his/her parent/guardian must provide written clearance from that doctor prior to the athlete being allowed to resume physical activity. The school's athletic director will keep evidence of all written clearance forms on file.

6. Once the athlete receives written medical clearance to return to physical activity, coaches at each school will follow the Return to Play Progression (please refer to Policy 3505P).

Legal Reference: I.C. 33-1625 Youth athletes – concussion and head injury guidelines  
Title 54, Chapter 18 Idaho Code

Other Reference: <http://www.idhsaa.org/concussions/default.asp>  
<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/index.html>  
<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/recognize.html>  
<http://www.impact.com>

Policy History:  
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