

McLean School

Athletics Handbook

[Introduction](#)

[Athletics, Coaching, and Mentoring](#)

[Sports Offerings](#)

[Upper School Physical Education Requirements](#)

[Eligibility Rules and Team Commitment](#)

[Roster Selections and Playing Time](#)

[Communication and Early Dismissal](#)

[Uniforms](#)

[Practice Times](#)

[Transportation and Travel](#)

[Recommended Weather Guidelines for Practice](#)

[Sportsmanship](#)

[Athletic Trainer](#)

[Injured Athlete Evaluation Process](#)

[Concussion Policy](#)

[Acknowledgement of Receipt and Review of Handbook](#)

Introduction

At McLean School, we work to create the best athletic experience possible for our students. The Athletics Program provides lasting opportunities to connect, compete, persevere, lead, laugh, belong—and especially, grow—both in a specific sport, and most importantly, as a team member and person.

Our coaches meet students where they are, and work collaboratively with them to deepen their skills and promote a positive experience within their sport. Our teams are competitive while also being inclusive, and it's a formula that has served us well through many winning seasons.

The Athletic Program begins in Middle School with interscholastic sports that build the foundation of teamwork, skill building, conditioning, and sportsmanship. In our Upper School, we offer both Varsity and Junior Varsity teams. McLean competes against independent schools in the greater Washington, DC area as a member of the [Potomac Valley Athletic Conference](#).

This Handbook is required reading for everyone with a vested interest in the success of our Athletics Program: student athletes, parents, coaches, and members of our school community. It is not only a valuable overview of the goals of our program, generally, but also provides important information about rules and regulations, team expectations, and details related to communication, travel, uniforms, and much more.

We ask all parents of athletes to acknowledge their receipt and review of the Handbook using the link provided at the end. If you have any questions, please contact the Director of Athletics, Coaching, and Mentoring.

McLean School

Athletics, Coaching, and Mentoring

McLean's Athletics Program is about more than coaches and athletes on a court or x's and o's in a playbook—it's about the relationships our coaches build with student-athletes to support their growth on and off the playing field. Expert coaching and mentoring plays a crucial role in the success of our teams as they navigate competition, teamwork, strategy, and sportsmanship.

The Athletics, Coaching, and Mentoring Program is a core part of McLean's holistic approach to student development. Our approach is both competitive and inclusive, enabling student learning and growth in a number of areas. We see athletics, and the benefits of physical fitness and stress reduction that result from regular exercise, as keys to well-being, while also exposing students to competition, team work, strategy, resilience, and sportsmanship. Our student-athletes translate many of these skills to success in the classroom, as well.

Highlights of McLean's Athletics, Coaching, and Mentoring Program:

- **Promoting inspired coaching and mentoring** in athletics with a view to holistic academic, social-emotional, and physical development of student athletes.
- **Employing coaches with talent, commitment, and understanding** of the larger role they play in the lives and education of our student-athletes.
- **Offering professional development to coaches** in pedagogical practices developed and deployed in McLean classrooms to enhance their effectiveness in mentoring and coaching our students.
- **Encouraging and promoting our student-athletes' voice** and self advocacy in the Athletics Program.

McLean School

Sports Offerings

McLean is a member of the Potomac Valley Athletic Conference (PVAC). A copy of the PVAC Handbook is available in the Director of Athletics, Coaching and Mentoring's Office. The following sports are currently offered to students:

Middle School Sports Offerings			
	Fall	Winter	Spring
Boys	Soccer, Cross Country	Basketball, Winter Fitness, Dance	Baseball, Track & Field, Lacrosse
Girls	Soccer, Cross Country, Volleyball	Basketball, Winter Fitness	Softball, Track & Field

Upper School Sports Offerings			
	Fall	Winter	Spring
Boys	Soccer, Cross Country	Basketball, Climbing	Baseball, Track & Field, Tennis, Golf
Girls	Soccer, Cross Country, Volleyball, Tennis	Basketball, Climbing	Softball, Track & Field, Golf
Intramural	Fall Fitness	Winter Fitness	Spring Fitness

Upper School Physical Education Requirements

Upper School students must fulfill a Physical Education (PE) requirement for graduation through participation in a sport or independent activity.

The following criteria are necessary in order to receive independent credit and must be approved by the Health & PE Department Chair:

- The student must be under the direction of an instructor/coach during the activity/sport.
- The student must complete 160 hours of physical activity over four years.
- The instructor/coach must be willing to certify and verify the number of hours participated.
- The Independent Physical Education Contract must be completed and signed by the student and parent/guardian.

The following is necessary in order to obtain credit via a sport:

- The student must participate in four seasons of a sport as an athlete or being a full-time student manager for an Upper School sports team. Each season will equal 40 hours.

McLean School

Eligibility Rules and Team Commitment

Students are eligible to participate in a sport if they have met the required deadline for sign-ups, and commit to team practice and game schedules.

Sign-Ups

Team sign-ups for each sport will take place online, via an Athletics Google Form that is sent out by email; students must register by the fall, winter, or spring sign-up deadlines to be eligible to participate (advance sign-up is necessary to secure the required number of coaches, assistants, uniforms, etc.). Students will be notified about sport sign-ups via their McLean School email accounts, weekly divisional assemblies, divisional Friday newsletter, and in their PE classes.

Commitment

We understand that there are many competing time demands on our student athletes' schedule and also appreciate the need to prioritize academics. However, joining a team is a commitment to fellow teammates and the coaches who are counting on each student to fully participate in all practices and games. If there is a reason a student has to miss a practice or game, it needs to be communicated in advance to the coach and/or Director of Athletics, Coaching, and Mentoring.

Middle School

Students should plan to attend all scheduled practices and games. Club practices and/or outside activities should be scheduled around school practices and games.

Upper School

Students are granted an initial 7-day trial, after which they may elect to try out for a different team. This trial period covers only the first week of the practice schedule and can be used once per season. Students must finish the season on the active roster in order to receive PE credit.

Roster Selections and Playing Time

All teams will require tryouts. During tryouts, coaches will assess students based on their current skill and experience. Some teams are limited in roster size due to the gym/field space, transportation, number of available coaches, etc. At the Middle School level, if there are enough interested students and available coaches, "B" teams will be created for students that are not selected for the "A" team. The B team focuses heavily on skill development, in addition to creating opportunities for competitive play.

Grades 5 & 6

- We believe this is a time for exploration and discovery; students are provided the opportunity to experience a variety of sports.
- Coaches include all interested students on a roster while fostering both the social and sport-specific skill development necessary to prepare participants for competition.
- Regular attendance by student-athletes is expected at all practices, as well as all games.
- Whenever possible, each season will culminate with opportunities for interscholastic play.
- Coaches will make every effort to play everybody during games, with an emphasis on

McLean School

participation. However, that may not always be possible, and there is no minimum amount of playing time that players should expect.

Grades 7 & 8

- We believe these years are the gateway to the competitive program of the Upper School, by fostering an increased level of competitiveness, skill development, and game strategy. Utilizing a “no-cut” policy, teams are selected based upon skill and include A/B subdivisions when possible.
- Emphasis is placed on honoring commitment to the team, accountability to others, and developing the time management skills necessary for a competitive program.
- Regular attendance by student-athletes is expected at all practices, as well as all games.
- Playing time is based upon skill, an understanding and ability to employ team strategy, coachability, and sportsmanship.
- Coaches will make every effort to play everybody during games, with an emphasis on participation. However, that may not always be possible, and there is no minimum amount of playing time that players should expect.

Grades 9-12

- When possible, we create Junior Varsity (JV) teams to accommodate a large number of students interested in playing a particular sport. The coaches will make decisions about JV/Varsity placement based on a player's experience and skill.
- Any athlete who is not selected for a team will have the opportunity to meet with the coach, and recommendations will be made so they can improve their skills.
- Playing time is earned and is at the coach's discretion.

Communication and Early Dismissal

Coaches will send out a weekly email to both students and parents regarding the practice/game schedule for the week and notify the team regarding any changes or cancellations. Student athletes should inform their teachers in advance when they will be leaving early for an athletic event.

Please note: all classroom work due the day of an early dismissal must be turned in that day; tests and/or quizzes scheduled for that day are to be made up in a timely manner and arranged with the teacher ahead of time. Because there is a possibility that weather or other situations will arise that will result in the postponement of a game/match/meet, students who think they will miss class because of an early dismissal **MUST** be prepared to take a test that day if the game/match/meet is postponed.

Scheduled games may be canceled due to bad weather, poor field conditions, or other reasons. A team may also be delayed in its return to school due to a change in game start time. Updates regarding any schedule change will be on the [School's Athletic Calendar](#) as well as McLean's Athletics Twitter and Instagram accounts. Families are strongly encouraged to sign up for [Athletics Notifications through the Mustang Portal](#) to receive timely schedule and game day information.

McLean School

Uniforms

The Athletics Department will issue game uniforms to members of McLean teams. Some teams may be required to purchase additional attire/equipment for their particular sport. Teams may also place orders for additional gear via Team Stores, however these items are not mandatory for participation. If a student-athlete is issued any equipment/uniforms and an item is lost, the student will be billed for that item. Coaches are responsible for distributing and collecting uniforms.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT/GEAR NOT PROVIDED BY SCHOOL		
Sport	Equipment	Gear
Baseball	Gloves	Cleats/turf Shoes, practice & game pants
Basketball	None	Basketball shoes
Cross Country	Distance running shoes	Synthetic socks, non-cotton training clothes (shorts, sweats, short and long sleeved shirts)
Golf	Golf clubs	Golf cleats
Lacrosse	Lacrosse stick, gloves, shoulder pads, arm pads	Cleats, athletic cup
Soccer	None	Shin guards, cleats
Tennis	Tennis racquet	Tennis shoes, practice/match shorts, practice shirt
Track & Field	Running shoes and/or racing spikes	Synthetic socks, non-cotton training clothes (shorts, sweats, short and long sleeved shirts)
Volleyball	None	Black spandex shorts, knee pads, volleyball shoes
Wrestling	None	Wrestling shoes, shorts, t-shirts

Practice Times

We are committed to offering a wide variety of sports for our students. Due to the limited space and size of our facilities, we often must rent practice and playing space at other locations (ex: all varsity soccer home games are played at Laytonia Recreational Park). Because of the amount of teams practicing at one time, there may be instances where teams will not be able to practice at School, practice times and locations will vary week by week, and could potentially extend later into the afternoon or evening. If there are any changes to the below schedules coaches will notify families in advance.

McLean School

Middle School

Practices generally begin at 3:30 pm and finish by 4:45 pm/5:00 pm. Grades 5 & 6 level teams will practice 2x/week, Grades 7 & 8 level teams will practice 3x/week.

Upper School

Practices for fall sports generally begin prior to the first day of school. Practice times are typically 3:30-4:45 pm or 4:45-6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Coaches have the option of scheduling Saturday practices as needed upon approval from the Director of Athletics, Coaching, and Mentoring.

Transportation and Travel

Transportation to and from competitions will be provided. On some occasions—during a school break or a local game over the weekend—students and families will provide their own transportation. If a student is injured, and not participating in the competition, the student must get permission from the Director of Athletics, Coaching, and Mentoring to leave class early to attend a game. Generally, teams play two to three contests per school week (Monday through Saturday).

Supervision After Games—Middle School

Parents are expected to arrange for their child to be picked up immediately after the game either at the game site or at the Lochinver Lane Campus. When students are traveling by bus to and from McLean for away games, parents should pick up their children upon the team's return to the School.

Recommended Weather Guidelines for Practice and Games

In hot, humid weather, coaches are expected to use good judgment to determine the length and type of outdoor practice. Frequent breaks and drinking water must be provided. Coaches must be aware of signs of heat exhaustion. Players who exhibit these signs are to cease practicing immediately. If there is a Code Red air quality alert, practices will be no more than one hour in length with mandatory water breaks every 20 minutes and games will be canceled. In extreme cold weather, coaches are expected to use good judgment to determine the length and type of practice.

Any game or practice will be suspended immediately by the officials or coach in charge at the first sight of lightning. All players and fans must leave the field immediately. No practice or game will resume until 20 minutes have elapsed from the last sign of lightning or thunder.

McLean School

Sportsmanship

It is the duty of all concerned with the Athletics Program to exemplify the highest ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play.

Code of Ethics for Students and Parents

Both athletes and parents are expected to respect the integrity and judgment of officials and coaches and to show courtesy to visiting teams. Both athletes and parents are expected to recognize that an athletic contest is a game, the purpose of which is to promote the physical and social development of the individual athletes. Please respect and abide by the guidelines for behavior described in the Code of Ethics for athletes and parents.

Athletes Code

- Embrace the highest ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play.
- Show courtesy and respect to visiting teams, officials, teammates, and coaches at all times.
- Understand thoroughly the rules of the game and uphold them.
- Refrain from the use of language that degrades, baits, or intimidates others.
- Treat the coach with respect and discourage fans, fellow students, and parents from undermining the coach's authority.
- Represent yourself, your parents, your School, and the community with proper conduct at all times, on or off the playing field.

Parents Code

- Embrace the highest ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play.
- Show courtesy and respect to visiting teams, officials, and coaches at all times.
- Support the coaching staff of McLean at all times. Refrain from undermining their authority or criticizing them in public, and approach coaches in private to discuss concerns or suggestions related only to your child.
- Refrain from entering onto the field or court, standing on the sidelines, or yelling instructions to the coach or players from the bleachers.
- Make every effort to stay informed about athletic schedules and events.

Communication

Open communication is the foundation of the relationship among student-athletes, parents, coaches, and the Director of Athletics, Coaching, and Mentoring. Below are guidelines to help foster this communication.

Communication parents will receive from coaches:

- Team philosophy
- Team and individual expectations
- Team rules
- Procedures to follow when an athlete is injured or sick
- Ways to help the child improve
- Weekly schedule of practices and games
- Timely notification if a practice or game is canceled

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:

McLean School

- Notification of any illness or injuries that will cause the athlete to miss a practice or game
- Treatment of your child, emotionally and physically
- Ways to help your child improve
- Concerns about your child's behavior
- Any personal issues that you feel may influence your child's performance or well-being

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:

- Team strategy
- Other members of the team

Parental Procedure for Communicating Concerns

- As developmentally appropriate, have your child speak to the coach about any concerns. We believe it is important to empower students to advocate for themselves and to communicate with adults in a mature manner.
- If you believe your child's conversation with the coach did not help reach a resolution, then you should speak with or meet with the coach directly.
- If the issue still has not been resolved, arrange an appointment with the Director of Athletics, Coaching, and Mentoring. Some situations may require a conference with the coach, athlete, and parent in order to reach a solution.
- Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both parents and coaches. Meetings of this nature rarely promote resolution.

Athletic Trainer

McLean's Athletic Trainer is a certified healthcare professional who possesses in-depth knowledge of sports medicine, anatomy, and injury prevention. The Athletic Trainer collaborates with athletes, coaches, physicians, and other healthcare professionals to provide comprehensive care and support for our student-athletes. The Athletic Trainer will be available during all practices/games that are held on McLean School's campus.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- **Injury Prevention:** McLean's Athletic Trainer helps prevent injuries by educating athletes on proper warm-up techniques, conditioning programs, and injury prevention strategies. They may also assess and make recommendations regarding sports equipment and playing surfaces.
- **Injury Evaluation:** When an athlete sustains an injury, McLean's Athletic Trainer assesses and diagnoses the nature and severity of the injury. They use their knowledge of anatomy and biomechanics to identify the best course of action and provide immediate care.

McLean School

- **Emergency Care:** McLean's Athletic Trainer is trained in emergency procedures and is often the first responder on the field in case of acute injuries, concussions, or medical emergencies. They provide immediate care, stabilize injuries, and coordinate further medical attention when necessary.
- **Return-to-Play Protocol:** McLean's Athletic Trainer will follow a 6-step process to determine when a student-athlete is ready to return to their sport. If an athlete sees a physician regarding their injury, the Athletic Trainer must receive a note from the physician clearing that athlete before the student-athlete is allowed to return to activity.
- **Educational Support:** Athletic Trainers educate athletes on proper nutrition, hydration, injury prevention, and overall wellness. They may conduct workshops, seminars, or individual counseling sessions to promote healthy habits and lifestyle choices.

Training Room Rules

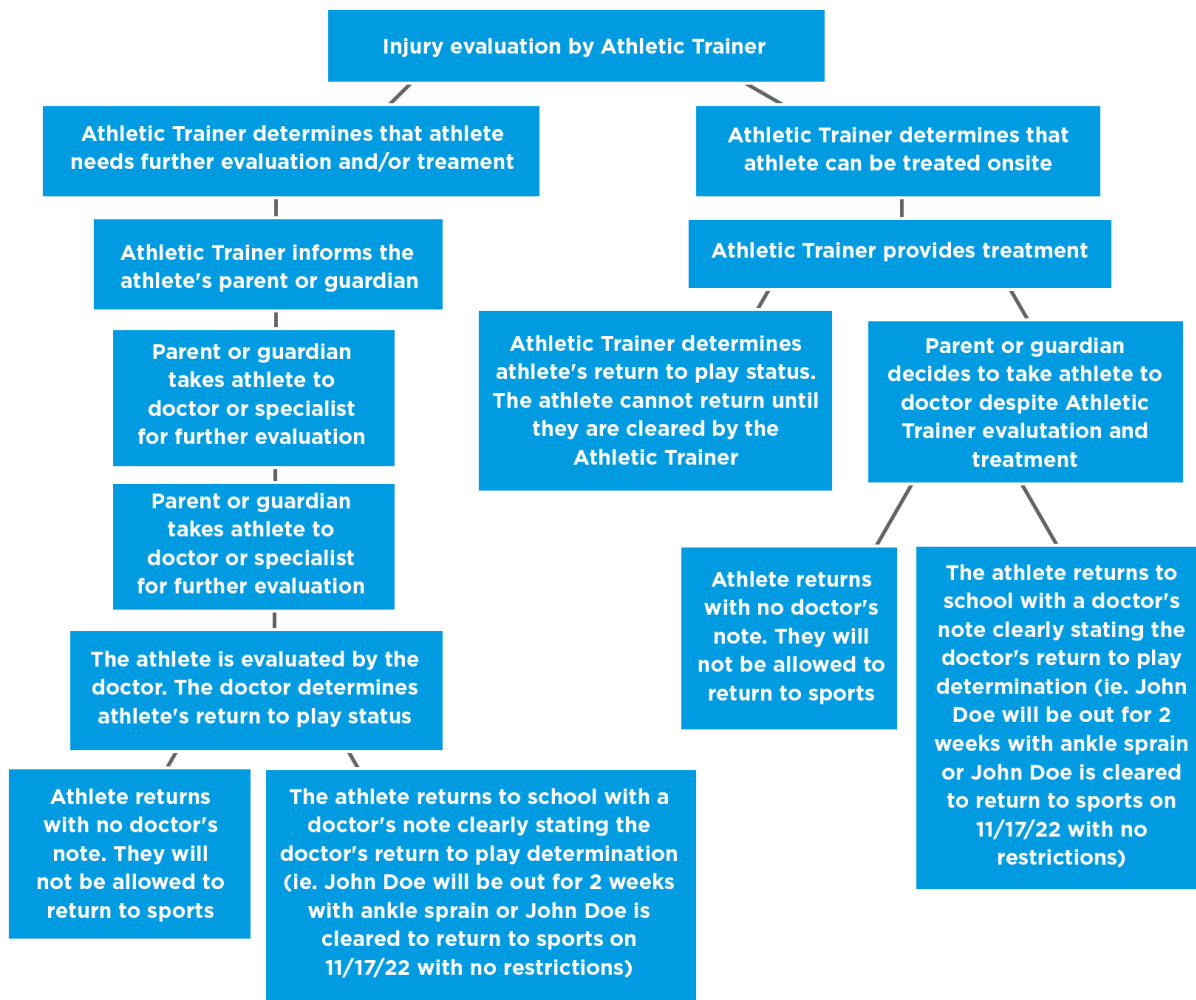
- The Athletic Training Room (ATR) is designed for students needing care from the School's Athletic Trainer. It should not be used as a space for socializing before or after a practice or game.
- To minimize clutter, athletes needing treatment will need to place their belongings outside of the ATR.
- Athletes seeking treatment from the Athletic Trainer are required to sign in on the log in the ATR.
- Do not take pictures or videos in the athletic training room. This is to ensure athletes' privacy while seeking treatment and or rehabilitation.
- Medical kits are kept under the treatment table for each sport team. The kits have emergency medications for athletes that need them. If an athlete needs to use their emergency medication, it must be returned to the med kit. The Athletic Trainer should also be notified, if not present.
- Athletes may use the Gatorade bottles or coolers for water, however, they must be emptied then returned to the ATR and placed into the sink to be cleaned. Permission is needed to remove or utilize equipment in the ATR.
- All equipment borrowed or on loan from the ATR must be returned when they are done being used (i.e. wraps, crutches, foam rollers, scissors, etc.)
- Arrive early for evaluations, treatments, to complete rehabilitation exercises or to get taped, to ensure that you may attend practice or games on time.

McLean School

- Use appropriate language and behavior when in the ATR.
- The Athletic Trainer will not be dispensing medications of any kind. If medication is needed during the day, the athlete should go see the school nurse. If the nurse is not present, athletes will need to see their own parent or guardian.

Injured Athlete Evaluation Process

In the event of injury, the athlete will be evaluated by the Athletic Trainer who will determine the best treatment option. In some cases, athletes can receive the necessary treatment at school. In other cases, the athlete may be referred for additional evaluation and/or treatment as outlined below:



McLean School

** If there was no evaluation conducted by the Athletic Trainer and the athlete is still seen by a doctor, a note is still required.*

Please feel free to contact the Athletic Trainer with any additional questions or concerns.

Concussion Policy

The goal of this policy is to ensure that any McLean student who sustains a concussion, whether during school, athletics, or a non-school sponsored activity, is properly diagnosed and cared for.

Concussion Facts

A concussion is defined as a trauma-induced alteration in mental status that may or may not lead to a loss of consciousness.

Signs and symptoms of a concussion may include, but are not limited to:

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Difficulty concentrating
- Sensitivity to light (photophobia) and/or noise
- Drowsiness/fatigue
- Feeling foggy
- Irritability
- Loss of consciousness
- Amnesia

Symptoms may not appear until several hours after a concussion episode. Athletes that may appear to be "fine" after an initial hit may later be diagnosed with a concussion once symptoms appear. Although 80-90% of concussions heal in 7 to 10 days, the recovery period may be longer for children and adolescents.

Initial Evaluation

Any student who is suspected of having a concussion will be immediately removed from activity. If a student-athlete is removed from a practice or game and the Athletic Trainer is present, the Standardized Assessment of Concussion (SAC) or Acute Concussion Evaluation form (ACE) will be used as an evaluation tool. Objective and subjective signs and symptoms will also be assessed. Exertional testing will take place when appropriate. If the SAC and or signs/symptoms indicate a concussion, the athlete will not be allowed to return to activity. If the

McLean School

Athletic Trainer is not present (i.e. the incident occurs at an away game) the athlete will not return to the activity and will be evaluated upon return to campus. A student who is suspected of sustaining a concussion will undergo further testing using the SCAT-5, which can be compared to their baseline test.

If a head injury occurs during the school day the student will be evaluated by the school nurse. If a concussion is suspected, parents will be notified, the student will be picked up, and a copy of the concussion note will be sent with the student. If a concussion is not suspected parents will be notified by phone and a Concussion Fact Sheet will be sent home with the student and the student will return to class. Parents are required to provide the School with written documentation of any evaluations, restrictions, accommodations, and or recommendations completed by a physician.

Student and Parent Responsibility

When a student is diagnosed with a concussion by a physician, parents must send in all paperwork related to the diagnosis. This includes all activity and academic restrictions and limitations, as well as return-to-play information.

Return to Play Criteria

An athlete may not return to athletic participation until they are asymptomatic and have completed the return-to-play protocol. The athlete must remain symptom free at each step before progressing to the next step. The following protocol will be adhered to with all athletes diagnosed with a concussion:

- Step 1: No activity.
- Step 2: Light aerobic exercise (ie. stationary bike, walking, or elliptical); the athlete should keep their heart rate below 70% of max heart rate.
- Step 3: Non-contact sport-specific exercise.
- Step 4: Non-contact training drills. Resistance training, if applicable. More complex drills specific to the athlete's sport.
- Step 5: Full contact practice. No restrictions.
- Step 6: Return to play. The athlete is cleared to play in competition.

There should be at least 24 hours between each step of the progression. If symptoms return or worsen during exercise, activity is to be stopped. When asymptomatic, the athlete may resume the previous step. If a student-athlete's symptoms last more than one month, the student-athlete should be referred to a concussion specialist.

If an athlete sees a physician regarding a concussion, the Athletic Trainer must receive a note from the physician clearing that athlete before they are allowed to return to activity. The athlete will still progress through the above steps, unless another plan is indicated by the physician.

Even with written clearance from a physician the Athletic Trainer or School Nurse may withhold the athlete from returning to play if it is deemed to be a risk to their overall health.

McLean School

Academic Accommodations

If the Athletic Trainer or School Nurse believes a student has sustained a concussion, they will inform the student's Coordinator of Learning Services and teachers. If the student is seen by a physician and provided with academic accommodations, those instructions will be passed on to the appropriate Division Head, Coordinator of Learning Services, and teachers.

References

1. Broglio, S., Cantu, R., Gioia, G., et al. National Athletic Trainers' Association Position Statement: Management of Sport Concussion. *Journal of Athletic Training*. 2014;49(2)245-265
2. McCrory P, Meeuwisse W, Dvorak J, et al. Consensus statement on concussion in sport—the 5th international conference on concussion in sport held in Berlin, October 2016. *British Journal of Sports Medicine*. 2017;51(11)838-847.

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