

CONCUSSIONS

Administrative Directive

The Division is committed to the safety of students and staff in a safe and caring school learning environment. Students and staff who are supported in a healthy environment are better able to achieve the goals of education. The Board and Division employees will work cooperatively with medical experts, regional health authorities and local partners to promote student health and safety in maintaining a healthy and safe environment where students can learn.

Definition

A Concussion is a head injury that causes change in the way the brain functions and can have a significant impact on a student – cognitively, physically, emotionally and socially. A concussion may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face or neck, or by a blow to the body that transmits a force to the head that causes the brain to move rapidly within the skull. A concussion can occur even if there has been no loss of consciousness; and cannot normally be seen by means of medical imaging test, such as X-rays.

Diagnosis of Concussion

Concussion is the term for a clinical diagnosis that is made by a medical doctor or a nurse practitioner. Since a medical doctor or nurse practitioners are the only health professionals able to diagnose concussions, educators, school staff, or volunteers cannot make the diagnosis of concussion. In the best interest of the child it is critical that a medical doctor or nurse practitioner examine a student with a suspected concussion. Without medical documentation the student's participation in learning or physical activities will be restricted. This decision resides with the school Principal.

Note: It should also be noted that injuries that result from a second concussion may lead to "Second Impact Syndrome", which is a rare condition that causes rapid and severe brain swelling and often catastrophic results, if an individual suffers a second concussion before he or she is free from symptoms sustained from the first concussion.

Procedures

1. Prevention and Minimizing the Risk of Concussions
 - 1.1. Education is the prime factor in supporting the prevention of a concussion. Any time a student/athlete is involved in physical activity (curricular programs,

extracurricular athletics and other activities) there is a chance of sustaining a concussion. Therefore, it is important to take a preventative approach when dealing with concussions.

- 1.2. Prior to any activity, school staff (includes administration staff, teaching staff, support staff, coaches, volunteers, etc.) must meet with participants to provide instruction on strategies for preventing and minimizing the risk of sustaining a concussion and other head injuries; and are expected to follow appropriate safety guidelines established for the particular activity.
 - 1.3. Enhanced supervision must be provided for any activity that has an advanced risk of concussion and must provide vigilant oversight of the activity.
2. The Superintendent will:
- 2.1. Perform a regular review of the Administrative Procedure for Concussion to ensure guidelines align with current best practice recommendations;
 - 2.2. Ensure concussion prevention, identification and management information is shared with students and their parents/guardians.
3. The Principal will:
- 3.1. Abide by the Administrative Procedure for Concussion;
 - 3.2. Ensure staff, volunteers, parents/guardians, and students are aware of the Administrative Procedure for Concussion and understand their roles and responsibilities;
 - 3.3. Ensure the Administrative Procedure for Concussion is followed by all school staff (including occasional staff/support staff, recess supervisors), parents/guardians, students, and volunteers;
 - 3.4. Facilitate attendance and/or completion of concussion in-servicing/training for staff and coaching volunteers, and repeat as necessary;
 - 3.4.1. School staff who are in contact with students who participate in activities that may have athletic injuries including concussions are required to be familiar with the Concussion Guide for Teachers, Concussion Guide for Coaches, and Concussion Recognition Tool and may complete Concussion in Sports - What You Need To Know at <https://thelocker.coach.ca/>.
 - 3.4.2. At least one team official (head coach, assistant coach or teach sponsor) in all Alberta Schools' Athletic Association (ASAA) sports must have completed the ASAA's online concussion course by one month into their respective 'season of play', this team official must be someone who is regularly present with the team during competition. Schools not completing this requirement may lose eligibility for participation in ASAA

sanctioned activities; this will be at the discretion of the ASAA Executive Committee.

- 3.5. Ensure Administrative Procedure for Concussion documentation is readily available to all school staff and volunteers;
 - 3.6. Ensure that the [Safety Guidelines for Physical Activity in Alberta Schools](#) is followed;
 - 3.7. Oversee that the “Permission and Acknowledgement of Risk Form” is completed online by all parents/guardians and remind all staff that the acknowledgment must be completed prior to student participation in any physical activity, physical education class, off-site activity, school intramural program, or interschool program;
 - 3.8. Ensure that all incidents are recorded, reported and filed as required by this administrative procedure, as appropriate;
 - 3.9. Prior to the student returning to school, ensure completion and collection of the following documentation:
 - 3.9.1. [Documentation of Monitoring/Medical Examination Form 314-2](#)
 - 3.9.2. [Documentation for a Diagnosed Concussion - Return to Learn / Return to Physical Activity Plan Form 314-1](#) is completed and signed by Parents/Medical Doctor/Nurse Practitioner as needed, as the student progresses through each step
 - 3.10. File the above documents in the student’s file and provide a copy to appropriate school staff;
 - 3.11. Alert appropriate staff about students with a suspected or diagnosed concussion;
 - 3.12. Work as closely as possible with students, parents/guardians, staff, volunteers, and health professionals to support concussed students with their recovery and academic success ([Appendix A: Academic Accommodations - Return to Learn/Return to Physical Activity](#));
 - 3.13. For students who are experiencing difficulty in their learning environment as a result of a concussion, coordinate the development of an Individual Learning Plan, using [Appendix B: Return to Learn/Return to Physical Activity](#) and approve any adjustments to the student’s schedule as required;
 - 3.14. Attempt to obtain parental/guardian cooperation in reporting all non-school related concussions.
4. School Staff (includes administration, teaching and support staff; and coaches, volunteers, etc) will:
 - 4.1. Understand and follow the Administrative Procedure for Concussion;

- 4.2. Attend and complete concussion training (e.g. staff meeting, online, workshop, read Administrative Procedure for Concussion package, Parachute Concussion Series -links referenced below, etc.);
 - 4.2.1. Coaches and school staff who are in contact with students who participate in activities that may have athletic injuries including concussions are required to complete Concussion in Sports - what you need to know at <https://thelocker.coach.ca/>. A copy of the certification of completion must be supplied to the Principal.
- 4.3. Prior to student participation in school physical education programming, off-site activities, intramural programs, or interschool athletics ensure the participation has been authorized during the online registration process.
- 4.4. Ensure that the [Safety Guidelines for Physical Activity in Alberta Schools](#) is being followed and implement risk management and injury prevention strategies specific to each sport/activity;
- 4.5. Provide concussion educational materials to students and athletes;
- 4.6. Be able to recognize the signs, symptoms and respond appropriately in the event of a suspected concussion;
- 4.7. Be familiar with the resources:
 - 4.7.1. Concussion Guidelines for Teachers
 - 4.7.2. Concussion Guidelines for Coaches
 - 4.7.3. Concussion Recognition Tool
- 4.8. Be able to use the Concussion Recognition Tool;
- 4.9. If a concussion is suspected, fill out and send the [Documentation of Monitoring/Medical Examination Form 314-2](#) home to parent/guardian. This form must be returned to the school signed by the parent/guardian prior to a student re-engaging in physical activity;
- 4.10. When a student concussion has occurred, implement and track the [Documentation for a Diagnosed Concussion - Return to Learn / Return to Physical Activity Plan Form 314-1](#). This should be done in conjunction with the school Principal;
- 4.11. Provide the following resources to parents and students as educational and treatment information as required:
 - 4.11.1. Concussion Recognition Tool
 - 4.11.2. Concussion Guidelines for Athletes
 - 4.11.3. Concussion Guidelines for Parents
 - 4.11.4. Parent Guide to Dealing with Concussions
- 4.12. Ensure the appropriate content from this Administrative Procedure for Concussion is included in teacher lesson plans and that the appropriate forms are carried on field trips and athletic events;

- 4.13. Make sure that occasional teaching staff is updated on concussed student's condition.
5. Parents/Guardians will:
 - 5.1. Reinforce concussion prevention strategies with their child (e.g. following rules of fair play, playground safety rules, wearing properly fitted helmets, using equipment safely);
 - 5.2. Understand and follow parents/guardian roles and responsibilities in the Administrative Procedure for Concussion;
 - 5.3. In the event of a suspected concussion, ensure child is assessed as soon as possible by medical doctor/nurse practitioner;
 - 5.4. Be responsible for the completion of all required documentation;
 - 5.5. Collaborate with school to manage suspected or diagnosed concussions appropriately;
 - 5.6. Follow physician/nurse practitioner recommendations to promote recovery;
 - 5.7. Cooperate with school to facilitate concussion diagnosis and treatment and support their child's progress through the [Documentation for Diagnosed Concussion – Return to Learn/Return to Physical Activity Form 314-1](#);
 - 5.8. Report non-school related suspected concussion to principal ([Documentation of Monitoring/Medical Examination Form 314-2](#) will apply)
 - 5.9. Report non-school related diagnosed concussion to principal ([Documentation for Diagnosed Concussion Return to Learn/Return to Physical Activity Plan Form 314-1](#) will apply);
6. Students will:
 - 6.1. Learn about concussions, including prevention strategies, signs and symptoms, concussion management and student roles and responsibilities, throughout applicable curriculum, coaches modules, and safety lessons connected to personal safety and injury prevention;
 - 6.2. Immediately inform school staff of suspected or diagnosed concussions occurring during or outside of school;
 - 6.3. Inform school staff if they experience any concussion-related symptoms (immediate, delayed or recurring);
 - 6.4. Remain on school premises until parent/guardian arrives if concussion is suspected;
 - 6.5. Follow concussion management strategies as per medical doctor/nurse practitioner direction and [Documentation for a Diagnosed Concussion - Return to Learn / Return to Physical Activity Plan Form 314-1](#);

- 6.6. Communicate concerns and challenges during the recovery process with school lead, school staff, parents/guardians, and health care providers.

7. Return to Learn/Return to Physical Activity Plan:

- 7.1. The [Return to Learn/Return to Physical Activity Plan - Appendix B](#) is a collaborative effort between home and school to support the student's progress through the plan following a diagnosed concussion. Appendix C shows a summary of this plan. Refer to [Form 314-1 Documentation for a Diagnosed Concussion – Return to Learn & Return to Physical Activity Plan](#) for detailed directions.
- 7.2. The 6 Step Plan is necessary and identifies the sequence of supporting a Return to Learn priority prior to a Return to Physical Activity focus.
- 7.3. A minimum of 24 hours is necessary for EACH step. There is no set timeline for a student's progression through each of the steps.

Reference: [Education Act](#) Section 31, 32, 33, 36, 52, 53, 196, 197, 204, 222, 225
[Safety Guidelines for Physical Activity in Alberta Schools](#)
[Concussion Recognition Tool](#)
[Concussion Guidelines for Teachers](#)
[Concussion Guidelines for Coaches](#)
[Concussion Guidelines for Parents](#)
[Concussion Training for Coaches - Making Headway](#)
[Concussion Awareness Training Tools](#)

Adopted: September 2020

Revised: December 2021