



## PURPOSE

The Laboratory Schools are responsible for the care and education of our students. For the student diagnosed with a concussion, the academic and extracurricular impact will be varied and unique to the situation. This policy establishes roles, responsibilities, guidelines, and authority for managing a student's education at Lab when diagnosed with a concussion.

## POLICY

*A concussion is an invisible injury that disrupts the way the brain normally works by affecting mental stamina, as the brain must work longer and harder even to complete simple tasks. Concussions also affect reaction time, shortterm memory, working memory and cognitive processing speed.*

- Nationwide Children's Hospital

Every concussion case will be different, as each student and their prior experiences differ. Some students may not miss any classes and some students may need more support in their recovery process. Recovery time will vary and in some instances can be extensive.

Concussions are both a medical and educational issue. Assessing problems with learning and school performance are not medical decisions, but are academic decisions. Medical recommendations, while not educationally binding, will be taken into consideration as the school determines the proper academic plan.

If students miss any class due to healing from a concussion, they may not be present at, or take part in, school-sponsored activities on those days (i.e. field trips, theater productions, athletic practices or contests, dances). Specifically, student-athletes healing from a concussion are not expected to attend athletic team practices or contests during their recovery period. The athletic trainer, in consultation with the school nurse and Concussion Management Team (CMT), will determine when the student may return to their team.

During Planning Week each fall the school nurse(s) will be identified to teachers, coaches, parents/guardians, and administrators so all know to whom any injury, including head injuries, should be reported.

## CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT TEAM (CMT)

**Academic Team:** Counselor, Administrator, Teachers as needed

**Medical Team:** School Nurse, Student's Physician (in person or by report)

**As needed:** Student & Family, Athletic Trainer, Coach, Athletic Director

### STEP 1:

- a) Concussion reported to school personnel by student, family, or any member of the school community.
- b) Information is then reported to the Nurse, who contacts student and family for confirmation.
- c) Nurse contacts the student's counselor and involves the appropriate members of the CMT.
- d) Nurse documents student status.

### STEP 2:

- a) Nurse assesses student's medical needs directly and/or through medical documentation.
- b) Nurse communicates relevant information to counselor.
- c) Nurse, or designee, contacts student and family to explain the steps of the management process and the responsibilities of the student and family.



**STEP 2 (continued):**

**Student and Family Responsibilities:**

- Student must communicate candidly and openly with the Nurse and counselor.
  - Student must follow the plan created by the CMT.
  - Family must forward physician notes and other relevant documentation of the injury and physician recommended treatment plan.
- d) Phases of Management Process; starting point depends on severity of injury.
- Phase 1: No School.
- Phase 2: Half-day attendance with recommendations and accommodations.
- Phase 3: Full-day attendance with recommendations and accommodations.
- Phase 4: Full-day attendance without recommendations and accommodations.
- Phase 5: Full school and extracurricular involvement.
- e) Nurse documents the communication with the family and student.

**STEP 3:**

- a) Counselor coordinates assessment of academic needs.
- b) The CMT determines the academic plan and/or accommodations. Medical recommendations, while not educationally binding, will be taken into consideration as the school determines the proper academic plan.
- c) The counselor communicates and distributes plan to teachers (and athletic team if needed). Student-athletes have additional requirements to meet under the IHSA before returning to play.
- d) If student has missed school days, counselor meets with student upon student's return to school.
- e) Counselor documents and shares the plan created by the CMT with the student, family, and relevant school personnel.

**STEP 4:**

- a) CMT identifies appropriate timeframe for medical and/or educational reassessment.
- b) Nurse conducts medical re-assessment when:
  - A school break has ended (such as winter or spring), by reaching out to the student/family in order to learn the student's current symptoms.
  - New physician documentation arrives dictating a new course of action.
  - Symptoms have changed.
  - Symptoms have resolved and are no longer a barrier.
- c) Counselor coordinates educational re-assessment
  - If teachers, parents/guardians, counselor, advisor, or administrators identify concerns in current plan that are not being adequately addressed.
  - Anytime after a nurse communicates findings after a medical re-assessment.
- d) Nurse communicates medical re-assessment to CMT and documents medical status after each re-assessment.
- e) Counselor documents outcomes of educational re-assessment each time.
- f) At the end of each academic quarter the CMT will meet to discuss each student being tracked under this policy to review the students' progress and determine any additional needs for the next quarter. If a student is transitioning from one school to the next, the director of student services may also attend the meeting.
- g) If symptoms have not improved to where the student can perform at or near full capacity and the passage of time now has a detrimental effect on the student completing the academic program successfully (e.g. not earning passing course grades) as determined by the school, a medical leave of absence, which will include alternative ways to complete the curriculum and ensure readiness for the next phase of school, will be recommended by the school. Parents/guardians and administration will meet again prior to the start of the fall quarter to assess progress and placement.