

REGULATIONS

SUBJECT: Concussion Protocol
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All partners in education, including the Ministry of Education, other Ontario ministries, school boards, administrators, educators, school staff, students, parents, school volunteers, and community-based organizations, have important roles to play in promoting student health and safety and in fostering and maintaining healthy and safe environments in which students can learn.

A concussion is defined as follows:

- a brain injury that causes changes in the way in which the brain functions and that can lead to symptoms that can be physical (e.g., headache, dizziness), cognitive (e.g., difficulty in concentrating or remembering), emotional/behavioural (e.g., depression, irritability), and/or related to sleep (e.g., drowsiness, difficulty in falling asleep).
- 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.
- can occur even if there has been no loss of consciousness (in fact most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness).
- cannot normally be seen by means of medical imaging tests, such as X-ray standard computed tomography (CT) scans, or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans.

A concussion can have a significant impact on a student – cognitively, physically, emotionally, and socially. It is very important to students' long-term health and academic success that individuals in schools have information on appropriate strategies to minimize risk of concussion, steps to follow if they suspect that a student may have a concussion, and effective management procedures to guide students' return to learning and physical activity after a diagnosed concussion.

Responsibilities of the Lambton Kent District School Board

1. The Board will implement and maintain concussion management strategies that include awareness initiatives, prevention strategies, identification of concussion process, diagnosed concussion management and training.
2. The Board will provide annual training for staff, coaches, volunteers, parents/guardians and students on the concussion management strategies.
3. The members of the program department will provide curriculum links for staff.
4. Board will endeavor to meet the educational needs of the student while the student is recovering from a head injury or concussion.

Responsibilities of the Principal/Teacher/Coach (for specific actions, see LKDSB Concussion Protocol Resource Binder)

1. The individual in charge must administer first aid as soon as an injury occurs and determine if the student needs emergency treatment.
2. The individual in charge must ensure that the student is not left alone.
3. The individual in charge must monitor signs and symptoms for deterioration.
4. The individual in charge must not administer medication.
5. The principal will ensure that the proper documentation contained in the Concussion Handbook is completed and returned to the school by the parent/guardian, doctors and/or nurse practitioners.
6. The school principal should appoint staff members to monitor and ensure adequate communication and coordination to meet the student's academic needs.
7. The school principal will also be responsible for approving any adjustments to the student's schedule.
8. The school principal will share information contained in Concussion Protocol Resource Binder on dealing with students who have had a concussion.
9. In some circumstances, the In-School Team under the direction of the school principal may find it necessary to develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for the student. This will facilitate the collaborative problem solving, decision making and planning for students who are experiencing difficulty in their learning environment as a result of a concussion.

Responsibilities of the teaching and other LKDSB staff

1. Teaching staff will help observe changes in a student.
2. Teachers are also in a position to interact regularly with the student's parents, thereby providing a channel to obtain and share information with them about the student's progress and challenges.
3. School coaching staff with responsibility for a student after-school hours can assist in monitoring participation in after-school activities and observing any changes in symptoms.

Responsibilities of the parents/guardians

1. Parents/guardians must understand:
 - o what a concussion is
 - o that medical attention is required
 - o that most students will get better
 - o the potential effects on school learning and performance
 - o the importance of following guidance from their student's health care provider in order to ensure the most rapid and complete recovery possible
 - o that a student who suffers a second concussion before he or she is symptom free from the first concussion is susceptible to a prolonged period of recovery, and possible Second Impact Syndrome.
2. Parents will ensure that the proper documentation is completed and returned to the school by the parent/guardian, doctors and/or nurse practitioners.

Responsibilities of the student

1. Students will inform principal/teacher/coach of any suspected or confirmed head injury.
2. The affected student will be encouraged to share his/her thoughts about how things are going, and symptoms he or she is experiencing.
3. The student will receive feedback from monitoring staff that is appropriate to his/her age, level of understanding, and emotional status.

Implementation Date:

March 31, 2015

Reference:

Ministry of Education Policy/Program memorandum
No. 158, School Board Policies on Concussion
Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines
LKDSB Concussion Protocol Resource Binder,
LKDSB Administrative Procedures