



# YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

BOARD POLICY	
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## CONCUSSIONS

### 1. PURPOSE

The York Catholic District School Board is committed to promoting awareness of safety in schools, reducing the risk of injury, and recognizes that the health and safety of students is essential for student learning and wellbeing. All partners in education have important roles to play in promoting student health and safety and in fostering and maintaining healthy and safe environments in which students can progressively Return to Learn/ Return to Play. This policy supports the implementation of the Board's obligations under the *Education Act* and the direction of the Ministry of Education stated in Policy/ Program (PPM) 158, School Board Policies on Concussion.

### 2. OBJECTIVE

It is the policy of the York Catholic District School Board to reinforce the knowledge, skills, management, training and protocol(s) regarding concussion and Second Impact Syndrome, as well as the awareness, prevention and identification of signs and symptoms.

### 3. PARAMETERS

- 3.1 The Board shall implement the procedures related to concussion awareness, prevention, identification, management procedures and training.
- 3.2 The procedure shall be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure compliance with Ministry of Education directives.
- 3.3 The Board shall provide annual training to relevant school board employees, third-party providers and school volunteers based on their roles and responsibilities.
- 3.4 The Board shall report to the Ministry of Education upon implementation, and upon request thereafter, on the activities to achieve the expectations outlined in Policy/Program Memorandum No. 158.
- 3.5 The Board shall work with the York Region Public Health to develop and implement the Concussion policy and related procedures.
- 3.6 The York Catholic District School Board shall establish a Concussion Code of Conduct

for individuals participating in board-sponsored interschool sports.

3.6.1 The Concussion Code of Conduct will include the following requirements:

- (i) maintaining a safe learning environment;
- (ii) teaching and/or learning and applying the rules of a physical activity/sport;
- (iii) implementing the skills and strategies for a physical activity in a proper progression;
- (iv) fair play and respect for all;
- (v) acknowledging and respecting the consequences for prohibited play that is considered high-risk for causing concussions;
- (vi) providing opportunities to discuss potential issues related to concussions;
- (vii) recognizing, reporting and documenting concussions;
- (viii) acknowledging the importance of communication between student, parents, school staff, and any sport organization with which the student is registered;
- (ix) supporting the implementation of a Return to School Plan for students who have a concussion diagnosis;
- (x) prioritizing a student's return to learning as part of the Return to School Plan.

3.7 The York Catholic District School Board will require the confirmation of the annual review of Concussion Awareness Resources and the Concussion Code of Conduct by the following individuals:

- (i) students participating in board-sponsored interschool sports;
- (ii) parents/guardians of student under 18 years of age who are participating in board-sponsored interschool sports;
- (iii) coaches participating in board-sponsored interschool sports;
- (iv) team trainers participating in board-sponsored interschool sports;
- (v) officials participating in board-sponsored interschool sports; and
- (vi) volunteers participating in board-sponsored interschool sports.

3.8 The York Catholic District School Board will ensure that the approved Rowan's Law: Concussion Awareness Resources and the Concussion Code of Conduct are made available and accessible for staff, students, parents/guardians and volunteers.

3.9 Where relevant, student learning about concussions shall be connected to the curriculum to further support awareness and prevention strategies among students.

3.10 The Board shall refer to OPHEA's Concussion and Protocol when developing the process for the identification of suspected concussions that occur during school activities, events or interschool sports.

3.11 The Board shall develop a Return to School Plan for students who have been diagnosed with a concussion, regardless of whether the concussion was sustained at school or elsewhere.

3.12 If a student who is recovering from a concussion is experiencing long-term difficulties that begin to affect learning, the Board shall establish processes for identifying and documenting instructional approaches and resources that may be required for responding to the student's ongoing learning needs.

- 3.13 In accordance with relevant privacy legislation, the Board shall establish a process to document and track a student's progress, from removal from an activity due to a suspected concussion, to the return, through graduated steps, to learning and to physical activity.
- 3.14 The Board will limit the collection, use, and disclosure of personal and health information to that which is reasonably necessary to carry out the Board's concussion identification procedures and Return to School Plan. Personal and health information collected by the Board shall be retained, disclosed, and disposed of in accordance with the Board's Records and Information Management Policy.

#### **4. RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### **4.1 Director of Education**

- 4.1.1 To oversee compliance with the Concussions policy and procedures.

##### **4.2 Superintendents of Education**

- 4.2.1 To support the implementation of the Concussions policy and procedures.

##### **4.3 Superintendent of Human Resource and International Education**

- 4.3.1 To provide Board Employees with the appropriate training for the implementation of the Concussions policy and procedures.

##### **4.4 Superintendent of Curriculum and Assessment**

- 4.4.1 To support schools with resources designed to encourage and support school participation through announcements, an assembly, lessons, and/or activities.

##### **4.5 Principals**

- 4.5.1 To ensure the implementation of the Concussions policy and procedures.
- 4.5.2 To provide Parent(s)/Guardian(s) with information about the prevention and awareness of concussions (Procedures: Appendix C).
- 4.5.3 To provide, on an annual basis, a review of the Concussions policy and procedures to School Staff, Catholic School Council, students on placements, volunteers, and any other individuals who have direct contact with students in the school to ensure familiarization with the policy and procedures.
- 4.5.4 To inform all school staff working directly with a student, that if a concussion is suspected they are to communicate to the student, that they shall not participate in any learning or physical activities until the Parent/Guardian communicates the written results of a medical examination to the school (Procedures: Appendix C).
- 4.5.5 To inform all school staff who work with the student, or are responsible for the supervision of the student, the results of the written medical examination once confirmed by the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) with the school.
- 4.5.6 To share the accommodation request, if a concussion has been diagnosed, with the School Based Resource Team (SBRT) or Student Success Team (SST).
- 4.5.7 To ensure an appropriate Return to Learn / Return to Play plan (Form S30B: Student Disability Accommodation Plan) is developed and implemented to meet the students' academic needs in consultation with appropriate School staff or Board staff, if required.
- 4.5.8 To communicate the Return to Learn/Return to Play plan with the Parent(s)/Guardian(s).

- 4.5.9 To follow and implement the appropriate reporting procedures related to the stages of Return to Learn/Return to Play as outlined in the procedures.
  - 4.5.10 To file all written documentation related to the suspected concussion, medical examination and Return to Learn/Return to Play plan in the student's OSR for the academic life of the student.
  - 4.5.11 To ensure that documentation of a student concussion is recorded.
- 4.6 Manager of Child Care Services**
- 4.6.1 To communicate the Concussions policy and procedures to Operators of Child Care, Extended Day and Before and After School Programs.
- 4.7 Employees**
- 4.7.1 To participate in training that is conducted related to this policy and procedures as required.
  - 4.7.2 To follow the appropriate reporting guidelines outlined in the procedures and Management of Concussion Process (Procedures: Appendix C).
  - 4.7.3 To be a collaborative partner in the development and implementation of the student's Return to Learn / Return to Play plan (Form S30B: Student Disability Accommodation Plan) as required.
  - 4.7.4 To ensure accommodations are made in accordance with the student's Return to Learn / Return to Play plan (Form S30B: Student Disability Accommodation Plan).
- 4.8 Parent(s)/Guardian(s)**
- 4.8.1 To comply with the "documentation of a medical examination", "Return to Learn / Return to Play" requirements outlined within the procedures of the Concussion policy.
  - 4.8.2 To provide the Principal with the appropriate medical information diagnosed by a licensed Medical Doctor or Nurse Practitioner, to support the development of the Student Disability Accommodation Plan, whether the injury occurs during or outside of school sanctioned activities.
  - 4.8.3 To ensure up-to-date current and accurate information is provided by a licensed Medical Doctor or Nurse Practitioner on an ongoing basis to the Principal when monitoring and managing the signs and symptoms of a diagnosed concussion.
  - 4.8.4 To communicate with Child Care and/or Continuing Education program providers and provide the appropriate medical information by a licensed Medical Doctor or Nurse Practitioner if a concussion has been diagnosed.
  - 4.8.5 To review the York Catholic District School Board's Concussion Code of Conduct.
- 4.9 Students**
- 4.9.1 To demonstrate respect for the mutual safety of all persons when participating in physical activity.
  - 4.9.2 To participate in all lessons and/or concussion training related to the awareness, prevention, identification and management procedures.
  - 4.9.3 To inform the school staff of a suspected or diagnosed concussion occurring in or outside of the school.
  - 4.9.4 To remove themselves from an activity if there are any signs or symptoms of a suspected concussion.

- 4.9.4 To report to school staff and/ or volunteer if signs or symptoms of a concussion are recognized by another student.
- 4.9.5 To follow Return to Learn and Return to Play plan.
- 4.9.6 To communicate concerns and challenges during the recovery process to the Principal, teachers, coach, parents/guardians, physician and other pertinent school staff.
- 4.9.7 To review and adhere to the Concussion Code of Conduct.

## **5. DEFINITIONS**

### **5.1. Concussion**

- 5.1.1 A brain injury that causes changes in the way in which the brain functions and that can lead to signs and symptoms that can be physical and emerge immediately or in hours or in days after the injury (e.g., headache, dizziness), cognitive (e.g., difficulty with concentration or memory), emotional/behavioural (e.g., depression, irritability), and/or related to sleep (e.g., drowsiness, difficulty in falling asleep);
- 5.1.2 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;
- 5.1.3 Can occur even if there has been no loss of consciousness;
- 5.1.4 Cannot normally be seen by means of medical imaging tests, such as X-rays, standard computed tomography (CT) scans, or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans.

### **5.2 Concussion Code of Conduct**

Steps to prevent and minimize the risk of sustaining concussion (and other brain injuries) in schools and at off-site events.

### **5.3 Interschool Sports**

Organized and Board sanctioned athletic competitions taking place between two or more schools.

### **5.4 Return to Learn**

A four-step process to support/accommodate a student, as needed, when returning to the classroom after a concussion.

### **5.5 Return to Play**

A six-step process to reintroduce a student to activities and/or athletics after a concussion.

### **5.6 Second Impact Syndrome**

Second Impact Syndrome is a rare condition that causes rapid and severe brain swelling and often catastrophic results. This syndrome may occur if an individual suffers a second concussion before they are free from symptoms sustained from the first concussion.

### **5.7 Sign**

Outward, observed and objective evidence of illness, injury or disease, i.e.: loss of consciousness, slurred speech, slowed reaction time.

## **5.8 Symptom**

Subjective and unseen symptoms can only be detected or sensed by the injured or ill party, i.e.: headache, difficulty concentrating and/or remembering, anxious, drowsy.

## **6. CROSS REFERENCES**

### **Legislation**

Ministry of Education, *Concussion Awareness Resources*

*Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)*

*Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC)*

*Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA)*

*Rowan's Law*

### **YCDSB Policies**

*Policy 208 Student Disability Accommodation*

*Concussion Code of Conduct for Athletes, Parents/Guardians, Coaches*

### **YCDSB Procedures**

*Procedure Concussions*

### **Additional References**

Crisis Response Manual

*Policy/Program Memorandum No. 158: School Board Policies on Concussion*

*OPHEA Guidelines Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines - Concussions*