



Global Learning Charter Public School

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CONCUSSION POLICY

The Global Learning Charter Public School (GLCPS) seeks to prevent concussions and provide a safe return to activity for all students after an injury, particularly after a head injury. This policy provides for the implementation of Massachusetts Law 105 CMR 201.000, Head Injuries and Concussions in Extra-Curricular Athletic Activities. The policy applies to all students who participate in any extracurricular athletic activity. This policy provides the procedures and protocols for the Global Learning Charter Public School in the prevention and management of extracurricular athletic activity-related head injuries within the school. Review and revision of this policy is required every two years.

Annual Training Requirement

GLCPS has designated the Director of Student, Family and Community Life, or his/her designee, who has administrative authority to oversee the implementation of these policies and protocols governing the prevention and management of extracurricular athletic activity-related head injuries. In addition, the Director of Student, Family and Community Life, or his/her designee, will be responsible for:

1. Supporting and enforcing the protocols, documentation, training and reporting outlined in these procedures;
2. Supervising and reviewing that all documentation is in place;
3. Reviewing, updating, and implementing the policy every two years, including updates in annual training and student handbook.

It is extremely important to educate our coaches and any individual involved with the GLCPS extracurricular athletic activity programs about concussions. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires annual safety training on prevention, identification, and management of an extracurricular athletic activity-related injury including head trauma and second impact syndrome for designated school personnel as well as parents or legal guardians of students who participate in any extracurricular athletic activity. This annual safety training shall be required for:

- Director of Student, Family and Community Life
- GLCPS coaches/facilitators
- GLCPS extracurricular athletic activity volunteers
- School nurses
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child who participates in an extracurricular athletic activity
- Student who participates in an extracurricular athletic activity

This training effort shall be completed in collaboration with GLCPS School Administration and Student Support Services Team. Documentation of such training will be kept in a central file in the office of the Director of Student, Family and Community Life.

The annual required training, which is approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, is below. It is available online, free of charge and lasts only about thirty (30) minutes.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports Online Training Program www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html

You can find this link, made available, at the Global Learning Charter Public School website (www.glcps.org). Hard copies are available through the office of the Director of Student, Family and Community Life.

The Director of Student, Family and Community Life is responsible for ensuring that the training requirements are met, recorded, and records are maintained. The written verification of completion of the annual training will be kept on file by the Director of Student, Family and Community Life.

Pre-Participation Requirements

Physicals

Each student who will be participating in an extra-curricular athletic activity, must have a physical examination on an annual basis, i.e. within twelve (12) or thirteen (13) months of the student's last physical examination. Any student, who does not have a current physical on file with the nurse, prior to the first day of tryouts/practice, is not eligible until a new/updated physical is submitted. If the student's physical examination expires during the extracurricular athletic activity season, s/he must have an updated physical examination to continue to participate in that activity. All physicals are to be turned into the school nurse.

Pre-participation Head Injury Reporting Forms

The Massachusetts concussion law requires students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) to inform coaches about prior head injuries at the beginning of each sports season. This reporting is done via the Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form and should be completed by the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student. It must be submitted to the Director of Student, Family and Community Life prior to the start of each extracurricular athletic activity a student plans to participate in. This form provides a comprehensive history with up-to-date information relative to concussion history. This form is designed to ensure that particular attention is paid to identifying athletes with a history of brain or spinal injuries. Until the pre-participation form is completed and signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) and student, and returned to the school prior to the start of every extracurricular athletic activity, the student cannot participate in the activity.

Collection/Distribution of pre-participation forms: GLCPS has the pre-participation forms available electronically at the school's website (www.glcps.org) under the heading "Student Services." Hard copies are also available with the Director of Student, Family and Community Life.

The parent/guardian can fax, mail, or hand-deliver the completed and signed pre-participation form to the Director of Student, Family and Community Life.

Medical/Nursing Review of Pre-Participation Forms

At the start of each extracurricular athletic activity, the Director of Student, Family and Community Life will review all pre-participation forms and forward to the school nurse only those forms indicating a history of head injury. The school nurse will be responsible for:

- Reviewing the completed pre-participation forms. The school nurse will consult with the school physician as needed
- Communicating with the coach/extra curricular activity facilitator regarding the student's concussion history and discussing concerns
- Following up with parent(s)/guardian(s) and students as needed prior to the student's participation in extracurricular athletic activities

History of multiple concussions on pre-participation form: The decision to allow a student who reported a history of multiple concussions on her/his pre-participation form should be made only after consultation with the student's physician or primary care provider; the sports medicine or concussion specialist, if involved; the neuropsychologist, if involved, and the appropriate school staff and the parent(s)/guardian(s). Current evidence indicates that youth who have suffered one or more concussions are more likely to suffer a subsequent one. Options may include switching positions, limiting contact in practices, or changing sports altogether to minimize the risk of re-injury. The focus of GLCPS will always be on protecting the health and safety of the student and avoiding long term consequences that can occur from repeated concussions.

Removal from Play

Medical Nursing Review of Reports of Head Injury during the Season.

The following procedures will be followed when a student receives a head injury:

- Student is removed from the play/practice
- Coach/extracurricular athletic activity facilitator informs parent(s)/guardian(s) and completes the "Report of Head Injury during Sports Season Form"
- Coach/extra curricular athletic activity facilitator will give the form to the Director of Student, Family and Community Life or designee
- Director of Student, Family and Community Life or designee will notify the school nurse who will review the Report of Head Injury form

Procedure for Evaluating Suspected Head Injuries/Concussions

At GLCPS, head injuries or suspected concussions (after a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body) sustained during an extracurricular athletic activity must be reported as soon as possible to the Director of Student, Family and Community Life and school nurse. This is the responsibility of the coach or the extracurricular athletic activity facilitator. Students who experience signs or symptoms of a concussion should not be allowed to return to play.

The Director of Student, Family or Community Life and/or school nurse will refer the student for medical assessment and for coordination of home instructions and follow-up care. The Director of Student, Family and Community Life and/or school nurse will be responsible for contacting the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).

If the student is injured at an away event, the coaching/facilitator is responsible for notifying the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the injury and, if warranted, calling for emergency care. Coaches/ facilitators should seek assistance from the host site Athletic Director, coach, or school nurse if at an away event.

If the student is able to be sent home (rather than directly to MD): the coach/facilitator will ensure that the student will be with a parent/guardian/responsible adult (who must be listed on the GLCPS emergency dismissal form) who is capable of monitoring the student and understanding the home care instructions, before allowing the student to go home.

If the parent/guardian is unable to be reached, the coach/facilitator will continue efforts to reach the parent(s)/guardian(s). If there is any question about the status of the student, or if the student is not able to be monitored appropriately, the student will be referred to the emergency department for evaluation. A coach/facilitator/GLCPS staff will accompany the student and remain with the student until the parent(s)/guardian(s) arrives. Students with suspected head injuries will not be permitted to drive home.

Return to Play

Medical Clearance for Return to Play

If it is determined that a student has a concussion or suspected concussion, s/he will be out of play/practice until s/he can be cleared for participation by a physician. No player shall go from being sidelined with a concussion to full play until s/he has followed the recommended stepwise process from the treating physician regarding return to activity. Each student will likely have his/her own course of recovery, which may depend upon prior medical history of concussion. Each student who is removed from play/practice shall have a written graduated reentry plan for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.

The reentry plan, developed by the treating physician, will be shared with the student's teachers, the student's guidance counselor, school nurse, parent(s)/guardian(s), members of the building-based student support team or individualized education program team as appropriate. The developed plan shall include instructions addressing physical and cognitive rest, graduated return to academics and extra curricular athletic activity, estimated time intervals for resuming activities, assessment frequencies (as appropriate) by the treating physician, until full return to academics and extra curricular activity is authorized. A plan for communication and coordination shall also be put into place with the above individuals who are managing the student's recovery. The student must be completely symptom-free at rest in order to begin graduated re-entry to activities. Final authority for return to play shall reside with the student's treating physician and/or primary care provider.

Development and Implementation of Post Concussion Graduated Reentry Plans

GLCPS requires that all students returning to school and extra curricular athletic activities after concussion have a written plan for reentry developed by the treating physician. Upon receipt of medical information relating to a concussion, a GLCPS Student Support Team member will collaborate with the student and family to determine a course of action that meets the student's needs. An individualized Student Support Plan will be developed with teachers and relevant staff (as previously listed). School staff, such as teachers, school nurses, counselors, administrators, coaches and others will be a part of the plan implementation with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) and the primary care provider. The student's progress will be monitored by the school personnel and treating physician.

Graduated return to academic plans are based on the stages of recovery framework that takes a student from rest to gradual return to full participation in academic activities. GLCPS recognizes that a student may need accommodations to help him/her with academic work and to be successful in the classroom. While GLCPS will not change the expectations of mastery for a course, all reasonable accommodations may be implemented to help the student access the curriculum and continue to learn.

The student diagnosed with a concussion must be completely symptom free at rest in order to begin graduated reentry to extracurricular athletic activities. The student must be symptom free at rest, symptom free during exertion, and symptom free with cognitive activity in order to complete the graduated re-entry plan.

Parent/Guardian Information and Communication

GLCPS will offer a yearly informational session which will provide information, and necessary forms and materials to parent(s)/guardian(s) and students which will address the following:

- Yearly Massachusetts Department of Public Health concussion training available via free on-line course
- Parent/guardian responsibilities to include completion of Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form and yearly physical
- Procedure for the school staff to notify parent(s)/guardian(s) when a student has been removed from play for a head injury or suspected concussion sustained during an extracurricular athletic activity
- Protocol on obtaining medical clearance for return to play following a diagnosed concussion; graduated reentry procedures will also be reviewed. No student will be allowed to return to participate in extracurricular athletic activity until the medical clearance form is signed by an authorized medical professional, submitted and reviewed by the school nurse.
- Education regarding prevention of prescription opioid misuse among students who participate in extracurricular athletic activities

GLCPS will provide this annual informational session and orient students and parent(s)/guardian(s) regarding policies. In addition, policies are located in the following locations:

- Extracurricular athletic activity student information packet
- On the GLCPS school website www.glcps.org under the section "Student Services"
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) may call the Director of Student, Family and Community Life or the Student Support Team to get further clarification or ask questions

Student Handbook

GLCPS has recently modified its student handbook (that is distributed at the beginning of each school year) and extracurricular athletic activity student packet to contain:

- Most recent concussion information fact sheet
- Links and information about annual training
- GLCPS policy and procedures on athletic activity-related head injuries
- Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Form for extracurricular athletic activities, "Report of Head Injury during Sports Form," and "Post Athletic Activity-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form"

GLCPS student handbooks, with updated information regarding extra-curricular athletic activity-related concussion information, are updated every other year and are also available on the school's website. Hard copies are available at the office of the Director of Student, Family and Community Life.

Due to limited English skills, parent(s)/guardian(s) at GLCPS may be unable to communicate with school personnel and may feel isolated from the school community. GLCPS makes every attempt to communicate effectively with parent(s)/guardian(s) with limited English proficiency. GLCPS has a Google translate function on the school's website which allows parent(s)/guardian(s) to translate website pages into their primary language. The function is located at the bottom of every website page. GLCPS will translate other materials as requested. In the event a student receives a concussion or is suspected of having a concussion, the Director of Student, Family and Community Life will notify the parent in the appropriate language. Interpreter services are available, and can be requested, through the office of the Director of Student, Family and Community Life.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Outreach:

Students at GLCPS will not be permitted to participate in any extracurricular athletic activity until both the parent(s)/guardian(s) and student have completed and returned the signed Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form before the start of the extracurricular athletic activity. In addition, students will not be allowed to practice or play until documentation of an annual physical examination and documentation of the annual training, have been submitted to the school. The student will not be allowed to try out, play or practice until the appropriate required signed and completed forms are returned to the Director of Student, Family and Community Life. GLCPS school staff will make two attempts to contact parent(s)/guardian(s) to secure the necessary documentation.

Student Right to Privacy

Generally speaking, a student's health information is confidential. There are multiple state and federal regulations governing sharing health information. GLCPS has developed policies and procedures to remain consistent with regulations and school personnel is cognizant of the confidentiality of health information.

Informal collaboration occurs on a temporary, as-needed basis for information exchange, as when the school nurse informs (while adhering to protocols for confidentiality) the physical education teacher that a particular student may not participate in athletic activities because of a recent injury. There may be circumstances in which there is a need to share information in the student health record with authorized school personnel, either to enhance the educational progress of the student or protect his/her safety or well-being. For example, staff may need to be alerted to signs or symptoms of a medical problem on a need to know basis and offered a course of action. This type of disclosure should be made only to those authorized school personnel who work directly with the student in an instructive (academic or athletic), administrative, or diagnostic capacity. Finally, authorized school personnel should be instructed not to re-disclose the information. If there is any question about the sensitivity of the information, the school nurse should seek the permission of the parent(s)/guardian(s) and student, if appropriate, prior to disclosure to authorized school personnel. Ultimately, however, federal regulations permit information in the student health record to be seen by authorized school personnel on a need to know basis, and the basis for such sharing seems even more compelling when necessary to protect the well-being of the student.

There may be times when a school nurse has the legal obligation to disclose health or related information to protect a student's health or safety. Public policy requires the protection of a patient's right to privacy by medical professionals, unless there is an immediate threat or serious harm to the student or others.

Training requirements for Coaches and Facilitators and Volunteers

Coaches/facilitators of GLCPS are expected to be current with best practices in their athletic activity that reduce the likelihood of head injury. In addition, coaches/facilitators are prohibited from teaching or promoting dangerous practices. It is expected that all coaches/facilitators teach techniques that minimize athletic injuries and/or concussion such as proper fitting and protective equipment.

Coaches/facilitators should enforce rules prohibiting dangerous moves. In addition, staff must ensure that students learn techniques that are safe and minimize the risk of head injury. Students will be encouraged to follow the rules of play and to practice good sportsmanship at all times.

GLCPS takes the safety of students seriously. All members of the extra curricular athletic activity are expected to follow these policies and procedures to support the health and safety of students. The underlying philosophy of these procedures is "when in doubt, sit them out." Failure to comply with the letter or spirit of these policies and procedures could result in progressive discipline for staff and/or forfeiture of games. If students or parent(s)/guardian(s) have concerns that the policies are being violated, they should contact the Director of Student, Families and Community Life and may also place a complaint in writing for a request for resolution.