

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Hartford

**TO BE PROPOSED:**  
July 1, 2015

**RESOLVED**, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Subsections (b) and (e) of Section 10-149b of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.): *Concussions: Training courses for coaches. Education plan. Informed consent form. Development or approval by the State Board of Education. Revocation of coaching permit*, approves the coaches' concussion courses, the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) training module for football coaches, the coaches' concussion annual review materials, and parent/legal guardian informed consent form regarding concussions, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Approved by a vote of \_\_\_\_\_, this first day of July, Two Thousand Fifteen.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dianna R. Wentzell, Secretary  
State Board of Education

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Hartford**

**TO:** State Board of Education

**FROM:** Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner of Education

**DATE:** July 1, 2015

**SUBJECT:** Approval of the Coaches' Concussion Courses, Annual Review Materials and Informed Consent Form

**Executive Summary**

**Introduction**

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way the brain normally works. Concussions can also occur from a fall or a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. Each year, emergency departments in the United States treat an estimated 173,285 sports- and recreation-related traumatic brain injuries, including concussions, among children and adolescents, from birth to 19 years.

The severity of a traumatic brain injury or concussion may range from "mild," (such as a brief change in mental status or consciousness), to "severe," (such as an extended period of unconsciousness or amnesia after the injury). Concussions can cause a wide range of functional short- or long-term changes affecting thinking, sensation, language, or emotions. Repeated mild TBIs occurring over an extended period of time (months, years) can result in cumulative neurological and cognitive deficits. Repeated mild TBIs occurring within a short period of time (hours, days, or weeks) can be catastrophic or fatal.

**Background**

Subsection (b) of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-149b: *Concussions: Training courses for coaches. Education plan. Informed consent form. Development or approval by the State Board of Education. Revocation of coaching permit*, requires that any person who holds or is issued a coaching permit by the State Board of Education and is a coach of intramural or interscholastic athletics, complete an initial training course regarding concussions developed or approved by the State Board of Education, in consultation with the Commissioner of Public Health, the governing authority for intramural and interscholastic athletics, an appropriate organization representing licensed athletic trainers, and an organization representing county medical associations.

Such training course must include information about the recognition of the symptoms of a concussion, the means of obtaining proper medical treatment for a person suspected of having a concussion, and the nature and risk of concussions, including the danger of continuing to engage

in athletic activity after sustaining a concussion and the proper method of allowing a student-athlete who has sustained a concussion to return to athletic activity.

Subsection (a)(2) of Section 10-149b also requires that any coach who has completed the initial training course must annually review current and relevant information regarding concussions. The statute further requires (in Subsection (b)(2)) that the State Board of Education develop or approve such annual review materials. The State Board of Education, in consultation with the organizations described above, must also develop or approve a refresher course regarding concussions, which coaches must, as a condition of the reissuance of a coaching permit by the State Board of Education, successfully complete every five years. Such refresher course must include: an overview of key recognition and safety practices; an update on medical developments and current best practices in the field of concussion research, prevention and treatment; an update on new relevant federal, state and local laws and regulations; and, for football coaches, best practices regarding coaching the sport of football including the frequency of games and full contact practices as identified by the governing authority for intramural and interscholastic athletics (i.e., Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference - CIAC).

The concussion materials presented to the Board were developed by the CIAC and reviewed and updated by the Youth Concussion Advisory Group in response to C.G.S. Section 149b. The Youth Concussion Advisory Group was convened by the State Department of Education (CSDE) and comprised of representatives from the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH), the CIAC, the Connecticut Athletic Trainers Association (CATA), and the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS). Comments and feedback have also been received from stakeholder groups.

### **Recommendation and Justification**

I recommend that the State Board of Education approve: 1) the coaches' concussion course to serve as both the initial course and the five-year refresher course, 2) the CIAC training module for football coaches, 3) the annual review materials, and 4) the informed consent form.

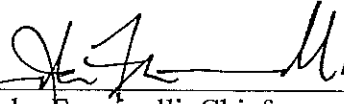
### **Policy Implications**

The combination of the coaches' concussion education materials and the detailed concussion information contained in the informed consent for parents and guardians, helps to ensure that the adults in the school community who have responsibility for students' health and safety, understand the legal requirements and best practices in the prevention, recognition and treatment of concussions to keep student-athletes healthy and safe.

### **Follow-up Activities**

Following approval, the CIAC will utilize the courses to provide training to coaches in coordination with the Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors (CAAD). The CSDE verifies with the CIAC the names of individuals who have successfully completed the courses necessary to receive or maintain a coaching permit prior to issuing such permit. The CIAC works with the CAAD to ensure that coaches complete the annual review under the supervision of athletic directors and that consent forms are received from parents and legal guardians of student-athletes.

Prepared by:



John Frassinelli, Chief  
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and  
Adult Education

Approved by:



Charlene Russell-Tucker, Chief Operating Officer

**Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)  
and the  
Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC)  
Concussion and Head Injury  
Annual Review 2015-16  
Required for all School Coaches in Connecticut**

This document was developed to provide coaches with an annual review of current and relevant information regarding concussions and head injuries. In addition to reviewing this form, the annual review must include one of the following prescribed resources: Connecticut Concussion Task Force video, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports training course, or the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) concussion training course. Links to these resources can be found at: <http://concussioncentral.ciacsports.com/>. A new form is required to be read, signed, dated and kept on file by coaches' associated school districts annually to comply with Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Chapter 163, Section 149b: *Concussions: Training courses for coaches. Education plan. Informed consent form. Development or approval by State Board of Education. Revocation of coaching permit.*

**What is a Concussion?**

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** - *"A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury, or TBI, caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. This sudden movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, stretching and damaging the brain cells and creating chemical changes in the brain."* -CDC, Heads Up: Concussion. [http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/basics/concussion\\_what.html](http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/basics/concussion_what.html)

*Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be mild bump or blow to the head can be serious."* -CDC, Heads Up: Concussion Fact Sheet for Coaches [http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/pdfs/custom/headsupconcussion\\_fact\\_sheet\\_coaches.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/pdfs/custom/headsupconcussion_fact_sheet_coaches.pdf)

**Section 1. Concussion Education Plan Summary**

The **Concussion Education Plan and Guidelines for Connecticut Schools** was approved by the Connecticut State Board of Education in January 2015. Below is an outline of the requirements of the Plan. The complete document is accessible on the CSDE Web site: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2663&q=335572>

State law requires that each local and regional board of education must approve and then implement a concussion education plan by using written materials, online training or videos, or in-person training that addresses, at a minimum, the following:

1. The recognition of signs or symptoms of a concussion.
2. The means of obtaining proper medical treatment for a person suspected of sustaining a concussion.
3. The nature and risks of concussions, including the danger of continuing to engage in athletic activity after sustaining a concussion.
4. The proper procedures for allowing a student-athlete who has sustained a concussion to return to athletic activity.
5. Current best practices in the prevention and treatment of a concussion.

**Section 2. Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion: Overview**

A concussion should be suspected if any one or more of the following signs or symptoms are present, or if the coach/evaluator is unsure, following an impact or suspected impact as described in the CDC definition above.

Signs of a concussion may include (i.e. what the athlete displays/looks like to an observer):

- Confusion/disorientation/irritability
- Trouble resting/getting comfortable
- Lack of concentration
- Slow response/drowsiness
- Incoherent/slurred speech
- Slow/clumsy movements
- Loss of consciousness
- Amnesia/memory problems
- Acts silly, combative or aggressive
- Repeatedly asks the same questions
- Dazed appearance
- Restless/irritable
- Constant attempts to return to play
- Constant motion
- Disproportionate/inappropriate reactions
- Balance problems

Symptoms of a concussion may include (i.e. what the athlete reports):

- Headache or dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Blurred or double vision
- Oversensitivity to sound/light/touch
- Ringing in ears
- Feeling foggy or groggy

State law requires that a coach MUST immediately remove a student-athlete from participating in any intramural or interscholastic athletic activity who: a) is observed to exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion following a suspected blow to the head or body, or b) is diagnosed with a concussion, regardless of when such concussion or head injury may have occurred. **Upon removal of the athlete, a qualified school employee must notify the parent or legal guardian within 24 hours that the student-athlete has exhibited signs and symptoms of a concussion.**

**Section 3. Return to Play (RTP) Protocol Overview**

It is impossible to accurately predict how long an individual's concussion will last. There must be full recovery before a student-athlete is allowed to resume participating in athletic activity. Connecticut law now requires that no athlete may resume participation until she/he has received written medical clearance from a licensed health care professional (physician, physician assistant, advanced practice registered nurse (APRN), athletic trainer) trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

**Concussion Management Requirements:**

1. No athlete shall return to participation in the athletic activity on the same day of concussion.
2. If there is any loss of consciousness, vomiting or seizures, the athlete MUST be transported immediately to the hospital.
3. Close observation of an athlete MUST continue following a concussion. The athlete should be monitored following the injury to ensure that there is no worsening/escalation of symptoms.
4. Any athlete with signs or symptoms related to a concussion MUST be evaluated by a licensed health care professional (physician, physician assistant, advanced practice registered nurse (APRN), athletic trainer) trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.
5. The athlete MUST obtain an initial written clearance from one of the licensed health care professionals identified above directing her/him into a well-defined RTP stepped protocol similar to the one outlined below. If at any time signs or symptoms return during the RTP progression, the athlete should cease activity.
6. After the RTP protocol has been successfully administered (no longer exhibits any signs or symptoms or behaviors consistent with concussions), final written medical clearance is required by one of the licensed health care professionals identified above for the athlete to fully return to unrestricted participation in practices and competitions.

**Medical Clearance RTP protocol (Recommended one full day between steps)\***

Rehabilitation stage	Functional exercise at each stage of rehabilitation	Objective of each stage
1. No activity	Complete physical and cognitive rest until asymptomatic; School activities may need to be modified	Recovery
2. Light aerobic exercise	Walking, swimming or stationary cycling maintaining intensity at less than 70% of maximal exertion; no resistance training	Increase heart rate
3. Sport-specific exercise No contact	Skating drills in ice hockey, running drills in soccer; no head impact activities	Add movement
4. Non-contact sport drills	Progression to more complex training drills, such as passing drills in football and ice hockey; may start progressive resistance training	Exercise, coordination and cognitive load
5. Full contact sport drills	Following final medical clearance, participate in normal training activities	Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff
6. Full activity	No restrictions	Return to full athletic participation

\* If at any time signs or symptoms should worsen during the RTP progression, the athlete should stop activity that day. If the athlete's symptoms are gone the next day, she/he may resume the RTP progression at the last step completed in which no symptoms were present. If symptoms return and do not resolve, the athlete should be referred back to her/his medical provider.

**Section 4. Local/Regional Board of Education Policies Regarding Concussions**

\*\*\*\*\* Attach local or regional board of education concussion policies \*\*\*\*\*

I have read and understand this document and have viewed the prescribed resource material. I understand that state law requires me to immediately remove any player suspected of having a concussion and to not allow her/him to return to participation until she/he has received written medical clearance by a licensed health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

Coach: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

(Print Name)

Coach's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**References:**

1. NFHS. Concussions. 2008 NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook (Third Edition). 2008: 77-82. <http://www.nfhs.org>. [http://journals.iww.com/cjsportsmed/Fulltext/2009/05000/Consensus\\_Statement\\_on\\_Concussion\\_in\\_Sport\\_3rd.1.aspx](http://journals.iww.com/cjsportsmed/Fulltext/2009/05000/Consensus_Statement_on_Concussion_in_Sport_3rd.1.aspx).
2. CDC. *Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports*. [http://www.cdc.gov/NCIPC/tbi/Coaches\\_Tool\\_Kit.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/NCIPC/tbi/Coaches_Tool_Kit.htm).
3. CIAC Concussion Central - <http://concussioncentral.ciacsports.com/>

**Resources:**

- CDC. *Injury Prevention & Control: Traumatic Brain Injury*. Retrieved on June 1, 2015. <http://www.cdc.gov/TraumaticBrainInjury/index.html>
- CDC. *Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports Guide for Coaches*. Retrieved on June 1, 2015. <http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/highschoolsports/coach.html>
- CDC. *Heads Up: Concussion materials, fact sheets and online courses*. Retrieved on June 6, 2015. <http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/>

**Student and Parent Concussion Informed Consent Form  
2015-16**

This consent form was developed to provide students, parents and legal guardians with current and relevant information regarding concussions and to comply with Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Chapter 163, Section 149b: *Concussions: Training courses for coaches. Education plan. Informed consent form. Development or approval by State Board of Education. Revocation of coaching permit;* and Section 10-149c: *Student athletes and concussions. Removal from athletic activities. Notification of parent or legal guardian. Revocation of coaching permit.*

**What is a Concussion?**

**National Athletic Trainers Association (NATA)** - *A concussion is a "trauma induced alteration in mental status that may or may not involve loss of consciousness."*

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** - *"A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury, or TBI, caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. This sudden movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, stretching and damaging the brain cells and creating chemical changes in the brain."*-CDC, Heads Up: Concussion. [http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/basics/concussion\\_what\\_is.html](http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/basics/concussion_what_is.html)

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- Nausea or vomiting
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- Oversensitivity to sound/light/touch
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**Section 3. Return to Play (RTP) Protocol Overview**

Currently, it is impossible to accurately predict how long an individual’s concussion will last. There must be full recovery before a student-athlete is allowed to resume participating in athletic activity. Connecticut law now requires that no athlete may resume participation until she/he has received written medical clearance from a licensed health care professional (physician, physician assistant, advanced practice registered nurse (APRN), athletic trainer) trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

**Concussion Management Requirements:**

1. No athlete shall return to participation in the athletic activity on the same day of a concussion.
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3. Close observation of an athlete MUST continue following a concussion. The athlete should be monitored following the injury to ensure that there is no worsening/escalation of symptoms.
4. Any athlete with signs or symptoms related to a concussion MUST be evaluated by a licensed health care professional (physician, physician assistant, advanced practice registered nurse (APRN), athletic trainer) trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.
5. The athlete MUST obtain an initial written clearance from one of the licensed health care professionals identified above directing her/him into a well-defined RTP stepped protocol similar to the one outlined below. If at any time signs or symptoms return during the RTP progression, the athlete should cease activity.
6. After the RTP protocol has been successfully administered (no longer exhibits any signs or symptoms or behaviors consistent with concussions), final written medical clearance is required by one of the licensed health care professionals identified above for the athlete to fully return to unrestricted participation in practices and competitions.

**Medical Clearance RTP protocol (at least one full day between steps recommended)**

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**Section 4. Local/Regional Board of Education Policies Regarding Concussions**

***** Attach local or regional board of education concussion policies *****
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I have read and understand the Student and Parent Concussion Informed Consent Form and the attached board of education policies regarding concussions and understand the severities associated with concussions and the need for immediate treatment of such injuries.

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Print Name)

I authorize my child to participate in \_\_\_\_\_ for school year \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Sport/Activity)

Parent/Guardian name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Print Name)

**References:**

1. NFHS. Concussions. 2008 NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook (Third Edition). 2008: 77-82. <http://www.nfhs.org>. [http://journals.lww.com/cisportsmed/Fulltext/2009/05000/Consensus\\_Statement\\_on\\_Concussion\\_in\\_Sport\\_3rd.1.aspx](http://journals.lww.com/cisportsmed/Fulltext/2009/05000/Consensus_Statement_on_Concussion_in_Sport_3rd.1.aspx).
2. CDC. Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports. [http://www.cdc.gov/NCIPC/tbi/Coaches\\_Tool\\_Kit.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/NCIPC/tbi/Coaches_Tool_Kit.htm).
3. CIAC Concussion Central - <http://concussioncentral.ciacsports.com/>

**Resources:**

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- CDC. Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports Guide for Coaches. Retrieved on June 1, 2015. <http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/highschoolsports/coach.html>
- CDC. Heads Up: Concussion materials, fact sheets and online courses. Retrieved on June 6, 2015. <http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/>