



Policy

Title: Concussion Management and Prevention		Policy #: PO614
Policy Area:	Student Conduct and Safety	
Source:	Superintendent of Education – Policy Development	
Date Approved:	January 26, 2015 (Interim); February 9, 2015	
Dates of Amendment:		
Dates of Annual Review:		

1.0 Introduction

The Durham Catholic District School Board recognizes the importance of the health, safety and overall physical and spiritual well-being of its students, staff and parents and is committed to taking steps to reduce the risk of injury.

The Board recognizes that children and adolescents are among those at greatest risk for concussions and that while there is potential for a concussion any time there is body trauma, the risk is greatest during activities where collisions can occur, such as during physical education classes, playground time, or school-based sports activities.

Increasing awareness of conditions to prevent and identify symptoms related to concussions will support the proper management of concussions, reducing increased risk.

This Policy authorizes the creation of administrative procedures for implementation, which might include requirements described in Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memoranda, as matters of policy, and any such administrative procedures shall be considered guidelines pursuant to the *Education Act* and other relevant and/or Ministry of Education materials all of which will be sufficient for the purposes of implementing the requirements of Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memoranda.

2.0 Definitions

Concussion is the term for a clinical diagnosis that is made by a medical doctor or a nurse practitioner. The definition of *concussion* below is adapted from the definition provided in the **concussion protocol** in the Ontario Physical Education Safety Guidelines.

A **concussion**:

- is 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);

2.0 **Definitions** (Cont'd)

A **concussion:** (Cont'd)

- 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-rays, standard computed tomography (CT) scans, or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans.

3.0 **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for an attendant administrative procedure that will raise awareness about the seriousness of concussions by educating and empowering students, staff and parents to manage and prevent these brain injuries.

4.0 **Application/Scope**

This policy applies to all students, staff, parents and school approved volunteers at all school sites and all sites off school property that are used for activities connected to the school. These include, but are not limited to, athletic fields, ice rinks, ski hills, swimming pools, gymnasiums, hiking trails, high ropes courses, park and recreation facilities etc.

5.0 **Principles**

- 5.1 The Board recognizes that student, staff and parent conduct and safety should be in accordance with the Gospel values of Jesus Christ, the Board's Mission statement, the Curriculum expectations, and the requirements set forth by the Education Act and the applicable regulations.
- 5.2 The Board recognizes that the safety of its students, staff and parents/guardians is paramount.
- 5.3 The Board recognizes the seriousness of head injuries and that a concussion is a brain injury.
- 5.4 The Board recognizes current research related to concussion management and prevention.
- 5.5 The Board recognizes its responsibility to provide safety information to students, staff and parents about the management and prevention of concussions in a timely manner and at a minimum once per school year.
- 5.6 The Board recognizes that all staff, students and parent/guardians have a role in managing and preventing concussions.

6.0 **Requirements**

The Durham Catholic District School Board policy on Concussion management and prevention will be promoted and implemented through the attendant Administrative Procedure.

6.1 The Board shall:

6.1.1 Add this policy and attendant administrative procedure to the annual online policy and administrative procedure sign off list to be completed by all staff.

Develop an Administrative procedure to:

6.1.2 Determine the roles and responsibilities of all members of the school community as they relate to managing and preventing concussions.

6.1.3 Instruct superintendents, principals and managers to make all staff under their supervision to become familiar with the seriousness of concussions, the management and prevention of them and tools and resources to identify them.

6.1.4 Make parents/guardians aware of the seriousness of concussions and establishing partnerships with them to manage and prevent these brain injuries.

6.1.5 Conduct an annual review of the concussion policy and administrative procedure for alignment with current medical research as it becomes available.

7.0 **References**

- *Education Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2.
- Ministry of Education, Policy/Program Memorandum 158, School Board Policies on Concussion
- OPHEA Guidelines
- Parachute Canada