



## Student Concussion & Head Injury Policy

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to implement reasonable precautionary measures to protect students who show signs or symptoms of a concussion or head injury and to set forth procedures for all phases from training through response.

### II. POLICY

- A. Providence Hall Charter School (PHCS) recognizes that concussions and head injuries may occur to students who participate in PHCS student athletic activities, programs, tryouts, camps, practices, games, and competitions and physical education classes (hereafter referred to as *PHCS Athletics*). It shall be the policy of PHCS, in accordance with UCA 26-53-101 et seq., to require all coaches, assistant coaches, athletic program support staff, and physical education teachers (hereafter referred to as *Staff*) to complete training on the recognition and management of concussions or head injuries.
- B. Further, PHCS shall inform parents/guardians of this policy and obtain parent/guardian acknowledgement of this policy through signature (electronic is acceptable) before permitting a student to participate in *PHCS Athletics*.

### III. PROCEDURE

#### A. Training

- 1. Completion of concussion/head injury training is a condition of employment for *Staff* assigned to *PHCS Athletics*. Such *Staff* shall complete a course annually on the nature and risk of concussions and head injuries, including the risk of continuing to play after a concussion or head injury. An athletic head injury training program such as the National Federation of State High Schools Association (NFSHS) online *Concussion in Sports* training program or a comparable program will meet this requirement. Additional information about the NFSHS program is available online at <http://www.nfhslearn.com>.

#### B. Parent/Guardian Notification and Approval

- 1. Each school year, administration shall assign or delegate responsibility to the athletic director, teacher, coach, etc. to obtain parent/guardian acknowledgment of this policy through signature (electronic is acceptable) for all students participating in *PHCS Athletics*. A parent/guardian must acknowledge through signature (electronic is acceptable) that they fully understand the information in this policy.
- 2. Students may not participate in *PHCS Athletics*, until parent(s)/guardian(s) have acknowledged this policy through signature (electronic is acceptable).

#### C. Recognition of Concussion or Head Injury

A student shall be suspected of suffering a concussion or head injury if any of the following symptoms are observed arising from possible blunt trauma, acceleration of force, or deceleration of force.

- 1. transient confusion, disorientation, or impaired consciousness
- 2. dysfunction of memory
- 3. loss of consciousness
- 4. signs of other neurological or neuropsychological dysfunction, including
  - a. seizures
  - b. irritability
  - c. lethargy
  - d. vomiting
  - e. headache
  - f. dizziness



- g. fatigue
- 5. *Staff* has reason to believe above symptoms are manifested when a student
  - a. forgets plays or demonstrates short term memory difficulty.
  - b. exhibits difficulties with balance or coordination.
  - c. answers questions slowly or inaccurately.
  - d. exhibits balance problems or dizziness.
  - e. complains of double vision or changes in vision.
  - f. notices sensitivity to light or sound/noise.
  - g. feels sluggish or foggy.
  - h. has difficulty with concentration and short term memory.
  - i. demonstrates a vacant stare (befuddled facial expression).
  - j. exhibits delayed verbal and motor responses (slow to answer questions or follow instructions).
  - k. is confused or is unable to focus attention (easily distracted and unable to follow through with normal activities).
  - l. is disoriented (walking in the wrong direction; unaware of time, date and place).
  - m. has slurred or incoherent speech (making disjointed or incomprehensible statements).
  - n. exhibits emotions out of proportion to circumstances (distraught, crying for no apparent reason).
  - o. demonstrates memory deficits (exhibited by the athlete repeatedly asking the same question that has already been answered, or inability to memorize and recall a sequence).
  - p. has any period of loss of consciousness (paralytic coma, unresponsiveness to arousal).

#### D. **Emergency Management and Referral**

The following situations indicate a medical emergency and REQUIRE emergency medical assistance. The student must be transported immediately to the nearest emergency department via emergency vehicle:

- 1. Any student with a witnessed prolonged loss of consciousness who is not stable (e.g., condition is worsening).
- 2. Any student who exhibits any of the following symptoms
  - a. deterioration of neurological function
  - b. decreasing level of consciousness
  - c. decrease or irregularity in respirations
  - d. any signs or symptoms of associated injuries, spine or skull fracture, or bleeding
  - e. seizure activity

#### E. **Removal from Activity and Notification**

- 1. Any student who is symptomatic but stable, may be transported by his/her parent/guardian to an appropriate medical facility. The parent/guardian should be advised to contact the student's primary care provider, seek care at an appropriate medical facility, or coordinate with the licensed sports medicine staff assigned to PHCS on the day of the injury.
- 2. Any student participant in *PHCS Athletics* who is suspected of suffering a concussion or head injury will be immediately removed from all *PHCS Athletics* and will not be allowed to participate in any *PHCS Athletics* until cleared, in writing, by a Qualified Health Care Provider (refer to section F below).



3. *Staff* shall notify the school administration or designee if a student is suspected of suffering from a concussion or head injury.
4. PHCS administration or designee shall notify a parent/guardian and give parent/guardian a copy of the *Post Concussion Instructions and Return to Play Clearance Form*:  
<http://www.uhsaa.org/new/images/forms/ConcussionReleaseForm.pdf>
5. In the event that a student's parent/guardian cannot be reached, and the student is able to be sent home, then
  - a. the PHCS administrator or designee must not allow the student to drive himself/herself home.
  - b. the student must be with a responsible adult, who is capable of monitoring the student and understanding the home care instructions, before allowing the student to go home.
  - c. the PHCS administrator or designee should continue reasonable efforts to contact a parent/guardian.
  - d. if there is any question about the status of the student, or if the student cannot be monitored appropriately, the student should be referred to an appropriate medical facility for evaluation.

#### F. **Qualified Health Care Provider Management and Certification**

1. Pursuant to UCA § 26-53-301, the student must obtain the approval of a Qualified Health Care Provider before (s)he is allowed to return to participate in *PHCS Athletics* after sustaining a concussion or head injury.
2. "Qualified Health Care Provider" means a health care provider who is licensed under Title 58 of the Utah Code and may evaluate and manage a concussion within his/her scope of practice through successful certified completion of a continuing education course in the evaluation and management of concussions within the last three years. A Qualified Health Care Provider may include medical doctors, doctors of osteopathy, advanced registered nurse practitioners, physician's assistants, or licensed certified athletic trainers.
3. A Qualified Health Care Provider must certify in writing either
  - a. that the student did NOT sustain a concussion or head injury, which results in the student being cleared to participate in *PHCS Athletics*,
  - b. OR that the student DID sustain a head injury or concussion, which results in the student being required to progress through the RTPP (refer to section 3.7. below).

#### G. **The Return to Play Protocol (RTPP)**

1. ***UHSAA Concussion Return to Play Clearance Form*** outlines the RTPP. The student's return to participation in *PHCS Athletics* is a medical decision. The student must meet all steps in the RTPP as prescribed and supervised by a Qualified Health Care Provider.
2. Progression is individualized, and will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Factors that may affect the rate of progression include: previous history of concussion or head injury, duration and type of symptoms, age of the student, and sport/activity in which the student participates. A student with a prior history of concussion or head injury, one who has had an extended duration of symptoms, or one who is participating in a collision or contact sport may be progressed more slowly.
3. Progression for a student to return to participation in *PHCS Athletics* will not be allowed until a Qualified Health Care Provider authorizes it by signing a ***UHSAA***



***Concussion Return to Play Clearance Form.*** The form is available on line at:  
[www.uhsaa.org/forms/ConcussionReleaseForm.pdf](http://www.uhsaa.org/forms/ConcussionReleaseForm.pdf)

## H. **Possible Temporary Transitional Accommodations for a Student with Concussion or Head Injury**

1. Rest is the best “medicine” for healing concussions and head injuries after the initial emergent care is provided. The concussed or injured brain is affected in many functional aspects as a result of the injury. Memory, attention span, concentration, and speed of processing significantly impacts learning. Further, exposing the concussed or head injured student to the stimulating school environment may delay the resolution of symptoms needed for recovery. Accordingly, consideration of the cognitive effects in returning to the classroom is an important part of the treatment of concussions and head injuries.
2. A student who returns to school after a concussion or head injury may need to
  - a. take rest breaks as needed.
  - b. spend fewer hours at school.
  - c. be given more time to take tests or complete assignments (all course work should be considered).
  - d. receive appropriate assistance with school work.
  - e. have reduced time spent on a computer, reading, and writing.
  - f. be granted early dismissal to avoid crowded hallways.