



*Helen Y. Davis Leadership Academy
Charter Public School*

23 Leonard Street Boston, MA 02122
Telephone: (617) 474-7950; Fax (617) 474-7957



Davis Leadership Academy Concussion Policy

Section 17. HEAD INJURIES AND CONCUSSIONS IN EXTRACURRICULAR ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES:

Davis Leadership Academy strictly adheres to all regulations pursuant of Massachusetts General Law 105 CMR 201.000: Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Athletic Activities. Davis Leadership Academy implements the following policy:

17.1. Concussion Awareness:

A concussion is a brain injury. It is caused by a bump or blow to the head or even a non-contact “jarring” of the head. They can occur in any sport and with a seemingly small impact, even a “ding” or “getting your bell rung” can be severe. All concussions should be considered serious and be evaluated by a health care professional. You cannot see a concussion, but there are common signs and symptoms that can help us to diagnose one. These may appear immediately following impact, or may take hours or days to fully present themselves. Some student-athletes may show a number of these and some show just one, they may last hours or weeks.

17.2. Signs and Symptoms:

Common Observable Signs

- Appearing dazed or confused, vacant expression
- Confusion about position or assignment
- Forgetting instructions just given
- Unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moving clumsily/unbalanced/uncoordinated
- Answering questions slowly, slurred speech/difficulty following a conversation
- Loss of consciousness (even briefly)
- Showing behavior or personality changes
- Inability to recall events happening prior to or after impact

Common Symptoms Reported By Athletes

- Headache or “pressure” in head, thumping/pounding in head
- Nausea/vomiting
- Balance problems
- Dizziness
- Double or blurred vision
- Sensitivity to lights or sounds
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy/feeling fatigued or lacking normal energy
- Concentration or memory problems/shortened attention span
- Confusion
- Just does not “feel right”
- Increase in emotions — sad, irritable, nervous, anxious, etc
- Repeatedly making the same comment, asking the same question

When a student-athlete shows any signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion, the student-athlete shall be immediately removed from practice or competition and evaluated by the athletic trainer and/or the student’s healthcare provider. It is recommended the student be evaluated by a health care specialist with experience in the evaluation and management of concussion.

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- A student-athlete diagnosed with a concussion shall be withheld from the competition or practice and not return to activity for the remainder of that day.
- Parents/Guardians should be notified at once.
- The student-athlete should be monitored for signs of deterioration.
- The student-athlete should be evaluated by a concussion specialist or if at school, by the Davis Leadership Academy coaching staff.
- Return to play will follow a medically supervised stepwise process which should be initiated by the concussion specialist in communication with the athletic director.

17.3. Management and Procedures:

Concussion management begins with all parents/guardians and student-athletes taking the online concussion course prior to the start of each school year. Visit http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/high_school.html for more information. Each parent/guardian will complete a Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form For Extracurricular Activities.

If a student-athlete sustains a sports-related head injury, including a suspected concussion, the Athletic Director or school nurse must be notified immediately so that concussion assessment can be administered. If a student-athlete sustains a concussion, the athletic director, school nurse, or coach will notify parents/guardians and appropriate school staff and follow the protocol established for concussion management.

At away events, when there is no qualified medical professional/licensed athletic trainer available, all coaching staff will abide by, "When in doubt, sit them out," put forth by the Center for Disease Control.

If any danger signs are exhibited as described in the "signs and symptoms" section, a parent/guardian must be contacted immediately and the student-athlete must be brought to an Emergency Room by Emergency Medical Service. The athletic director should be notified as soon as possible.

Student-athletes returning from injury:

If it is determined that a student-athlete has a concussion he/she will be out of competition until that student-athlete is cleared for participation by a physician. No student-athlete shall go from being sidelined with a concussion to activity until he/she has followed the recommended stepwise process to return to activity from the treating physician. Each student-athlete will likely have an individual course of recovery which may depend upon prior medical history of concussion. Each student-athlete who is removed from practice or competition shall have a written graduated re-entry plan for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities. The plan, put forth by the treating physician, shall be communicated with the student's teachers, adviser, school nurse, athletic director, parents/guardians, and other support personnel as appropriate and in consultation with the student's primary care provider or the treating physician. This written plan shall include instructions for a student-athlete, parents/guardians, and school personnel addressing physical and cognitive rest, graduated return to academics and athletics, assessment frequencies, as appropriate, by the school nurse, physician, or athletic director until full return to academics and athletics is authorized. A plan for communication and coordination shall also be put into place with the above individuals who are managing the student-athletes recovery. The student-athlete must be completely symptom free and medically cleared in order to begin graduated re-entry (stepwise program) to activities.

Final authority for return-to-play shall reside with the treating physician and athletic director at Davis Leadership Academy in conjunction with the school nurse.

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17.4. Davis Leadership Academy Return-To-Play (RTP) Protocol and Procedures Following a Concussion:

A student-athlete who exhibits signs or symptoms of concussion, or has abnormal cognitive testing, will not be permitted to return to play on the day of the injury. Any student-athlete who denies symptoms but has abnormal cognitive testing should be held out of activity. Coaches are to follow the CDC standard, “When in doubt, hold them out.”

Return to Play After Concussion

The student-athlete must meet ALL of the following criteria in order to progress to activity:

- Asymptomatic at rest and with exertion (including mental exertion in school, and a minimum of 30 minutes of non-contact physical exertion).
- Student-athlete must be symptom free without medications for 5–7 consecutive days.
- Have written clearance from Primary Care Physician or specialist (student must be cleared for progression to activity by a physician other than an emergency room physician). If treating physician does not have concussion training and experience or if the concussed student-athletes treatment plan varies from the schools concussion protocol, the school nurse will be consulted.
- The Athletic Director in conjunction with the school nurse will have the final say with regards to a student-athletes ability to return to any sport activity.

Once the above criteria are met, the student-athlete will be progressed back to full activity following a stepwise process, (as recommended by both the Prague and NATA Statements), under the supervision of the Athletic Director.

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, duration and type of symptoms, age of the student-athlete, and sport/activity in which the student-athlete participates. A student-athlete with a prior history of concussion, one who has had an extended duration of symptoms, or one who is participating in a collision or contact sport should be progressed more slowly.

Stepwise progression as described in the Prague Statement: Each step of this process should take 24–48 hours.

Progression of return to play should follow:

- No activity — complete rest; no unnecessary exercise, normal activity, no exertion
- Do not progress to step 2 until asymptomatic
- Light aerobic exercise — (e.g., walking, stationary bike)
- Sport-specific training (e.g., skating in hockey, running in soccer)
- Non-contact training drills
- Full-contact training after medical clearance
- Game play

Progression to the next phase will require the Student-Athlete to be symptom free.

Clearance will be required prior to returning to any activity. Additional medical clearance may be required for full contact. The Coach will be notified via email, when full contact has been approved.

Davis Leadership Academy, in consultation with the Treating Physician, reserve the right to continue to withhold the student-athlete from participation until the staff deems fit. A clearance note from an outside Physician will read: John Doe is fully recovered from their head injury sustained on XX/XX/20XX.

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Note: If the Student-Athlete experiences post-concussion symptoms during any phase, the Student-Athlete should STOP exercise and rest. When symptoms resolve, the student will drop back to the previous asymptomatic level and resume the progression after a minimum of 24 hours.

The Athletic Director and student-athlete will discuss appropriate activities for the day. The student-athlete and coach will be given instructions regarding permitted activities.

The Student-Athlete should see the Athletic Director daily for re-assessment and instructions until he/she has progressed to unrestricted activity.

Lingering symptoms may require additional Physician follow-up.

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Parent/Guardian Concussion Policy Acknowledgment Form

I am the parent or legal guardian of those participating in Davis Leadership Academy athletics. I certify that I completed a current Department-approved training regarding head injuries and concussions in extracurricular athletic activities. I sign this acknowledgment that I have read and understand Department-approved written materials, and/or attended a school-sponsored training at which attendance was recorded or satisfied other means specified in school policies, including providing the school with a certificate of completion for any Department-approved online course, I understand, and accept the content of the DLA Concussion Policy, and the terms above and give permission for my child or other(s) for which I am a legal guardian to be enrolled and participate.

Student-Athlete Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Relationship to Minor: _____

Student-Athlete Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

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