

STUDENT SPORTS – CONCUSSIONS AND SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST

For the purposes of this policy, “intramural or interscholastic athletics” shall include any activity sponsored by Ledyard Public Schools that involves any athletic contest, practice, scrimmage, competition, demonstration, display, or club activity.

Concussions

The Ledyard Board of Education recognizes that concussions, which are a type of brain injury, are commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and other recreational activities. Catastrophic injuries or even death can occur when a concussion is not properly evaluated and managed. Therefore, the following requirements are enacted in an effort to minimize the risk of further injury when a concussion is suspected or has been diagnosed.

The coach of any intramural or interscholastic athletics shall immediately remove a student athlete from participating in any intramural or interscholastic athletic activity who either (1) is observed to exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion following an observed or suspected blow to the head or body or (2) is diagnosed with a concussion, regardless of when the concussion may have occurred.

Upon removal of a student athlete for a possible or diagnosed concussion, a qualified school employee (i.e., a principal, teacher, licensed athletic trainer, licensed physical or occupational therapist employed by the District, coach or school paraprofessional) shall notify the student athlete’s parent or legal guardian that the student athlete has exhibited the signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion or has been diagnosed with a concussion. The qualified school employee shall make a reasonable effort to provide the notification immediately after the student athlete has been removed for a possible or diagnosed concussion. In any case, the notification shall be provided not later than twenty-four (24) hours after the removal of the student athlete.

The coach shall not permit such student athlete to participate in any supervised team activities involving physical exertion, including, but not limited to, practices, games or competitions, until such student athlete receives written clearance to participate in such supervised team activities involving physical exertion from a licensed health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

After a student athlete has been cleared by a licensed health care professional as specified above, the coach shall not permit such student athlete to participate in any full, unrestricted supervised team activities without limitations on contact or physical exertion, including, but not limited to, practices, games or competitions, until such student athlete (1) no longer exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion at rest or with exertion and (2) receives written clearance to participate in such full, unrestricted supervised team activities from a licensed health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

For the purposes of this policy, a "licensed health care professional" means either a physician, a physician assistant, an advanced practice registered nurse, or an athletic trainer licensed pursuant to the requirements of the Connecticut General Statutes.

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Training Requirements

For the school year commencing July 1, 2015, and each school year thereafter, each student athlete and her/his parent or legal guardian shall, prior to participation in intramural or interscholastic athletics, receive training on:

- Concussion education, which shall address, at a minimum, the following: (1) the recognition of signs or symptoms of 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; and (5) current best practices in the prevention and treatment of a concussion.
- Sudden cardiac arrest awareness education, which shall include, at a minimum, the following: (1) the warning signs and symptoms associated with a sudden cardiac arrest, including, but not limited to, fainting, difficulty breathing, chest pain, dizziness and abnormal racing heart rate; (2) the risks associated with continuing to engage in intramural or interscholastic athletics after exhibiting such warning signs and symptoms; (3) the means of obtaining proper medical treatment for a person suspected of experiencing a sudden cardiac arrest; and (4) the proper method of allowing a student who has experienced a sudden cardiac arrest to return to intramural or interscholastic athletics.

Student athletes and their parents or legal guardians must receive the training on concussions and sudden cardiac arrest awareness prior to the start of each sport season in which the student athlete participates. Student athletes shall not be allowed to participate in intramural or interscholastic athletics until both the student athlete and a parent/legal guardian have received the training on concussion and sudden cardiac arrest awareness and signed the informed consent form.

Informed Consent Forms

For the school year commencing July 1, 2015, and each school year thereafter, each student athlete and his/her parent or legal guardian, after receiving the required training on concussions and sudden cardiac awareness prior to the start of each sport season in which the student athlete participates, shall sign an informed consent form prior to allowing the student athlete to participate in intramural or interscholastic athletics for that sport season.

The informed consent form shall conform to the requirements approved by the State Board of Education and shall include, at a minimum, (1) a summary of the concussion education training, (2) a summary of the sudden cardiac arrest awareness education training, and (3) a summary of the District's policies and requirements regarding concussions and sudden cardiac arrests.

Each student athlete and her/his parent or legal guardian shall be provided with a copy of the informed consent form, and the coach shall retain a copy of the informed consent form signed by both the student athlete and her/his parent or legal guardian attesting to the fact that they have received the required training on concussions and sudden cardiac arrests, the fact that they have received a copy of the form, and that the student athlete is authorized to participate in the athletic activity.

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Responsibilities

The Superintendent shall implement the necessary regulations to carry out the requirements of this policy. The concussion and sudden cardiac arrest awareness education plan and the informed consent forms to be used in Ledyard Public Schools require the approval of the Superintendent.

The LHS Athletic Director shall: (1) develop and keep up-to-date the concussion and sudden cardiac arrest awareness education plan using the information approved by the State Board of Education; (2) develop and keep up-to-date the informed consent form, ensuring that it meets the minimum requirements approved by the State Board of Education; (3) verify that all LHS student athletes and their parents/guardians have received the required training prior to participating in a sport season; and (4) retain a copy of the signed informed consent forms for LHS student athletes.

The LMS Principal shall: (1) verify that all LMS student athletes and their parents/guardians have received the required training prior to participating in a sport season; and (2) retain a copy of the signed informed consent forms for LMS student athletes.

Prior to the start of each sport season, each intramural or interscholastic athletics coach shall: (1) provide student athletes and their parents/guardians with training on concussions and sudden cardiac arrest awareness using the education plan approved for use in Ledyard Public Schools; (2) provide each student athlete and her/his parent or legal guardian with a copy of the informed consent form; and (3) retain a copy of the informed consent form signed by both the student athlete and her/his parent or legal guardian.

Legal References:

Connecticut General Statutes

10-149b. Training courses for coaches re concussions and head injuries. Development or approval by State Board of Education. Revocation of coaching permit. (as amended by Public Act 14-66)

10-149c. Student athletes and concussions. Removal from athletic activities. Revocation of coaching permit. (as amended by Public Act 14-66)

Public Act 14-66 – *An Act Concerning Youth Athletics and Concussions*

Public Act 14-93 – *An Act Concerning Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention*

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