

## FCAF – Concussion Management

The District shall comply with the concussion management program requirements contained in law (NDCC 15.1-18.2). For the purposes of compliance, the District has placed concussion signs and symptoms; removal from practice, training, and/or game requirements; return to play requirements, and staff, student, and parental training requirements in administrative regulations (FCAF-AR). These regulations shall be published in athletic handbooks.

For the purpose of implementing the concussion management program law, the Board has also established the following definitions and requirements.

### Definitions

Law requires that all school-sponsored and sanctioned athletic training, practices, and games be governed by a concussion management program. For purposes of determining what constitutes athletic sponsorship and sanctioning, the District has developed the following definitions:

- *School-sanctioned athletic activity* is a sport that:
  - a. Is not part of the district’s curricular or extracurricular program;
  - b. Is established by a sponsor to serve in the absence of a district program;
  - c. Receives district support in multiple ways (i.e., not school facility use alone);
  - d. Requires participating students to regularly practice or train and compete.
  - e. The District has officially recognized through board action as a school-sanctioned activity.

The Board shall make all sanctioning decisions on a case-by-case basis based on the criteria in this paragraph. As a condition of receiving school sanctioning, sponsors of the athletic activity shall agree to comply with this policy and the concussion management law. This includes agreeing to provide appropriate training as required by law and providing appropriate information to parents and students as required by law. The sponsor shall provide to the District documentation certifying that this training has occurred and students/parents have viewed required informational material on concussions prior to beginning the activity.

- *School-sponsored athletic activity* is a sport that the District has approved through policy or other board action for inclusion in the district’s extracurricular program, is controlled and funded primarily by the District, and requires participating students to regularly practice or train and compete.

### Removal Decisions

Under the concussion management law, the District is authorized to designate removal-from-play authority to individuals who have direct responsibility for student athletes during practice, training, and/or games if a student reports or exhibits a sign or symptom of a concussion. The Athletic Director shall make this determination, and the Athletic Director shall ensure that such designees are aware of this responsibility and have undergone appropriate training in accordance with law before commencing duties.

Law also authorizes licensed, registered, or certified healthcare providers whose scope of practice includes recognition of concussion signs and symptoms to make removal decisions. The Athletic Director should consult with community members, parents, and

staff to determine who has such credentials and who would be willing to assist in this regard. The District should compile a list of such individuals, which should be provided to all coaches. This measure in no way guarantees that a healthcare provider trained and credentialed in accordance with law shall be present at athletic training, practices, and/or events nor shall the voluntary creation of this safety precaution be construed to created or assume any potential liability under local, state, or federal law or regulation.

While law allows coaches and officials to make removal from play decisions when concussion signs or symptoms are reported or observed, the District prohibits any coach or official under the age of 18 or who is currently a high school student from making such removal decisions. High school students and minors who serve as coaches or officials are required to report any known sign, symptom, or report of a student's concussion as soon as possible to an adult who has removal-from-play authority for action. This restriction shall be a condition of allowing a minor/high school student to coach or officiate at district training, practices, and games.

If two or more parties with removal-from-play authority disagree on whether a student (who reports or exhibits signs or symptoms of a concussion) should be required to sit out, the District requires that the ruling be made in the interest of the student's safety, meaning that the student shall be required to sit out and comply with return-to-play requirements contained in law.

### **Return to Play**

The Board designates the Athletic Director to receive return-to-play documentation from a healthcare provider. This designee shall review the documentation, determine if the healthcare provider has placed any conditions on return to play, contact the healthcare provider for any necessary clarification on the authorization document, and communicate such information to applicable coach(es) and assistant coach(es). This designee shall also file return-to-play authorization documents in the student's educational record. This documentation must be retained for seven years after the student's enrollment or six years after a student turns 18, whichever is later.

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### Complementary Documents

- FCAF-AR, Concussion Management Program