

**DIOCESE OF DES MOINES**  
**Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations**

**STUDENT PERSONNEL**

**Brain Injuries**

It shall be the policy of the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that all schools which enroll students in grades 7 through 12 or fraction thereof shall annually provide to the parent or guardian of each student that participates in an interscholastic activity in which a concussion or brain injury could occur a Concussion and Brain Injury Information sheet, as provided by the Iowa High School Athletic Association and the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union. The student and the student's parent or guardian shall sign and return the Concussion and Brain Injury Information Sheet to the student's school prior to the student's participation in an interscholastic activity for grades seven through twelve.

If a student's coach or contest official observes signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion or brain injury in an extracurricular interscholastic activity, the student shall be immediately removed from participation.

A student who has been removed for participation shall not recommence such participation until the student has been evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and other brain injuries and the student has received written clearance to return to participation from the health care provider.

If a student that has been removed from a contest has been checked by a licensed health care provider and received written clearance from the licensed health care provider during the same contest, the student may return to participate in the activity.

A "licensed health care provider" means a physician, physician assistant, chiropractor, advanced registered nurse practitioner, nurse, physical therapist, or athletic trainer licensed by a board designated under section 147.13.

"Interscholastic activity" means any extracurricular interscholastic activity, contest or practice, including sports, dance or cheerleading.

Policy Adopted: May 16, 2011  
Policy Reviewed: January 30, 2020  
Policy Revised: July 30, 2021

**Brain Injuries – Concussion Management**  
**Regulation 577.1**

Concussions are a type of brain injury that can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally functions. Concussions can occur with or without loss of consciousness. Concussions are among the most commonly reported injuries to children and adolescents who participate in recreational activities. Continuing to engage in activities with a concussion or symptoms of a brain injury leaves a

young athlete vulnerable to greater injury. Concussions can impair how a student athlete thinks, acts, feels, and learns. A student who has sustained a concussion may need adjustments, modifications to curriculum, and monitoring by medical staff until the student is fully recovered.

Schools within the Diocese of Des Moines will follow the following protocols:

1. “Return-to-Play”: The Iowa Department of Public Health has created return-to-play protocol based upon peer-reviewed scientific evidence consistent with the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, for a student’s return to participation in any extracurricular interscholastic activity after showing signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion or brain injury.
2. “Return-to-Learn”:
  - A. Personnel at schools with enrolled students, in grades seven through twelve who participate in an extracurricular interscholastic activity which is a contest, shall develop a return-to-learn plan based on guidance developed by the Brain Injury Association of America. The school will work in cooperation with a student removed from participation in an extracurricular interscholastic activity and diagnosed with a concussion or brain injury, the student’s parent or guardian, and the student’s licensed health care provider to create the plan to accommodate the student as the student returns to the classroom.
  - B. Personnel shall develop a return-to-learn plan for any PK-12 student who has been diagnosed with a concussion by a medical professional, and requires accommodations for a safe return to learning. Parent(s) or guardian(s) shall provide documentation of diagnosis upon request of a return-to-learn plan.

Regulation required in policy by Iowa Code 280.13C, 1a,b,c,d

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