

Salem School

Athletic Handbook



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SALEM SCHOOL ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

The Mission Statement of the Interscholastic Athletic Program at Salem School

The goal of the athletic program at Salem School is to foster the athletic and personal growth of the middle school students as well as teach and positively reinforce important values that will serve to help students become productive, responsible and successful citizens. A competitive athletic program provides an environment for young men and women to learn values and social skills that will help them to lead a happy and fulfilling life, while, at the same time, providing a healthy and challenging experience with their peers.

Purpose

The Connecticut Association of Schools and the Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors have created guidelines to assist school districts in developing philosophy and regulations designed to provide positive athletic experiences for all middle level students. The associations are not regulatory agencies for middle level athletics; rather they should be viewed as resources to guide local districts in the development of regulations and policies that are in the best interest of student athletes and member schools. The Guidelines for Middle School Athletics (hereafter referred to as Guidelines) are heavily influenced by *This We Believe.*, National Middle School Association 2003, *Sports in the Middle School*, Swaim, J.H., & McEwin, C.K., 2005 and Connecticut Association of Schools' Guidelines for Connecticut Middle Level School Interscholastic Athletics (1988 & 2009).

Belief Statements & Recommendations

All middle level students should be afforded opportunities to participate in interscholastic or intramural sports programs.

- *Offer sports programs that include a continuum from informal to formal participation;*
- *Provide adequate and equitably balanced human and financial resources for all middle level sports programs.*

Primary goals of athletic programs at this level are: enjoyment, sportsmanship, skill development and the teaching of fundamentals. Winning is secondary.

- *Operate sports programs in ways that maximize enjoyment for participants;*
- *Provide student athletes with successful experience as well as enjoyment;*
- *Promote life skills, such as teamwork, respect, leadership commitment and decision making;*
- *Promote the highest level of involvement possible;*
- *Organize and administer programs in ways that encourage young adolescents to explore multiple sports rather than specialize in one sport at the exclusion of others. Middle school is exploratory in nature and a training ground for future choices.*

Clear guidelines for eligibility participation in athletics should be established to articulate expectations for academics, citizenship and sportsmanship and be congruent with expectations for all students at the school.

- *Reinforce that playing sports at school is a privilege not a right;*
- *Establish policies that are developmentally appropriate with flexibility, support and incentives rather than hard and fast rules;*
- *Create consequences for disciplinary infractions that are age appropriate;*

- *Establish policies for gender equality in offerings and cross gender participation*

Assign a top priority to assuring that middle level sports programs are as safe as possible.

- *Require appropriate evaluations for all student -athletes to determine that they are physically fit to play;*
- *Establish policies regarding practice, length of athletic contests, age, weight and physical maturity;*
- *Ensure safe,well-maintained equipment and playing fields for all athletic competitions.*

Coaches, parents and other adults associated with middle level athletics should be positive role models for student athletes.

- *Employ middle level coaches who are fully certified;*
- *Employ coaches who are knowledgeable about the nature of developmentally responsive middle level sports programs and committed to implementing them;*
- *Make extensive efforts to help parents understand productive and appropriate ways they can be involved in supporting their children in middle level sports programs.*

Code of Sportsmanship for Salem Athletics

It is the responsibility of all student athletes at Salem School to show respect to all players, coaches and officials at all times. ALL Salem student athletes are EXPECTED to:

1. Conduct themselves appropriately at all practices and athletic contests with other schools.
2. Refrain from making derogatory remarks, cheers, signs or gestures directed toward opposing players, coaches, spectators or cheerleaders regardless of how well or how poorly the opposing team or their fans may be conducting themselves.
3. Maintain self-control at all times. The desire to win should never outweigh responsible and appropriate behavior.
4. Encourage and support teammates at practices and games (especially during difficult or unfortunate moments). Team unity is a critical component of any successful program.
5. Respect the coach's authority at all times. Never attempt to undermine his/her authority or be disrespectful in any way.
6. Be a team player and have fun.

Eligibility Requirements for Participation in Interscholastic Athletics at Salem School

All students in grades 5, 6, 7 and 8 are eligible to sign-up and participate in Cross Country, Cheerleading and Track. Grades 6, 7, and 8 are eligible to try-out and participate in Varsity Soccer and Varsity Basketball. Grade 5 students are eligible to try-out and participate in Junior Varsity Soccer and Junior Varsity Basketball.

1. Student- athletes must meet the scholastic requirements of their own school in order to participate in interscholastic athletics.
2. Student-athletes must meet the school's requirement for good citizenship.
3. Student-athletes may play on outside teams while playing on a school team; however, consideration should be given in order to preserve time for academics and prevent injuries from overuse.
4. Girls are permitted to participate on either a girls' team or a boys' team in a given sport, but not both, in the same school year. Schools may exclude girls from boys teams when they can demonstrate that there are comparable opportunities for girls.

5. Boys are prohibited from playing on girls' teams.
6. The student-athlete shall not have reached his/her sixteenth (16th) birthday, except that a player, who reaches his /her sixteenth (16th) birthday on or after July 1, shall be eligible to compete during the ensuing school year if he/she is otherwise eligible.
7. Any Salem student athlete who participates in an athletic program that is not under the umbrella of the Salem School Athletic Program (such as Premier Soccer, AAU, etc.) will always be expected to attend the practice or game/meet sponsored by Salem School.

Physicals

ALL student athletes must have a current physical (valid for 13 months) on file at the school in order to participate in the interscholastic athletic program. Physicals are mandatory for participation in tryouts, practices and games. Parents are **STRONGLY ENCOURAGED** to review their child's physical and plan accordingly to maintain its validity. If your child's physical expires during an athletic season, they must complete a new physical with a certified physician and turn in the documentation to the school during the 13th month in order to remain eligible to participate. Physical documentation should be turned in to the school nurse.

Permission to Play

Permission to play forms must be completed and turned in to the athletic director **BEFORE** tryouts/the beginning of the season. Submission deadlines will be publicized on the school website .

School Attendance

A student must be in school the day of a game/meet or practice in order to participate. In the event that circumstances cause a student to sign into school late, he/she must be signed in by 11:00 AM in order to participate in a practice session or game/meet that day. The **ONLY** exceptions to this rule are family emergencies, religious commitments, or, circumstances beyond control of the student.

School Discipline

Students that receive disciplinary actions (office detention/in-school suspension) will not be eligible to participate in any interscholastic or after school activities on the date of their discipline.

Away Contests

All team members are required to travel on the team bus to and from games/meets at other schools. In the event a parent wishes to transport **THEIR CHILD** (and their child only) **HOME** from an **AWAY** game/meet, their parent **MUST** fill out a **TRAVEL RELEASE FOR STUDENT FORM** and send it into school that day to the **ATHLETIC DIRECTOR** (some of our coaches do not work at this school) stating their intention to do so. A parent may **NOT** **TRANSPORT PLAYER(S) OF OTHER FAMILIES ON THE TEAM FROM AWAY GAMES.**

Home Contests/Practices

In accordance with school policy, parents/guardians must indicate (see permission to play form) who has permission to transport their child home after home games and practices. In the event that someone OTHER than a designated person is transporting your child, a note from that player's parent or guardian must be given to the athletic director or coach. All players are to be picked up from the designated field/gym for that sport after practices and home games. Students will not be dismissed to the parking lot and MUST remain with their coach(s) until a designated adult is present to transport them home.

Terminating Team Membership

If a student no longer wishes to remain on the team, a signed note with regard to this intention from their parent or guardian is required. If a "pay to play" policy has been implemented, refunds will NOT be granted.

Coach's Rules

Each coach will clearly review their set of team policies in a thorough manner and communicate them to their players once final rosters have been selected at the beginning of the season. Rules regarding attendance at practices, practice schedules, punctuality, what to do if a student knows he/she is going to miss or be late to practice, etc. are the type of issues that should be clearly defined to student athletes in the beginning of the season.

Team Selection/Playing Time

Team selection and playing time for team members are decisions that rest with the coaching staff based on their own set of criteria. Although making team cuts is something we will always try to avoid, at times it may be necessary in order to reduce the number of players so that the coaching staff can provide a safe, manageable and efficient program for those athletes that are selected. Coaches will make every attempt to get all athletes involved in games/meets. However, this decision will be a coaching decision as well.

Conflict Resolution

If, during the course of the season, a problem should arise between a coach and a player, the following protocol to resolve any issue should be honored:

1. A meeting between the coach and student at the request of either party. In the event that there is no resolution, proceed to step 2.
2. A meeting between the coach, the student, and the AD. If the issue is still not resolved, proceed to step 3.
3. A meeting between the coach, the student, the AD and the parent(s).
4. A resolution to the problem is reached.

Appeal Procedures

When there is a question by the coach or administration of possible permanent suspension of a student athlete from a team. The coach shall inform the athlete of "indefinite suspension" until such time when a hearing can be set with all parties involved (athlete, coach, director of athletics, building principal, and parents when appropriate) before a final decision is rendered. Our main purpose is not to take the "normal, everyday"

discipline problems out of the hands of our coaches, but to provide for proper legal procedures involving coaches when necessary.

SUSPENSION - DISMISSAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE:

In the event there are conflicts or problems arising out of athletic disciplines, regulations or policies, the following steps should be taken:

1. Parents or Guardian should discuss and try to resolve the issue with the Head Coach of the sport.
2. Issues that cannot be resolved at the Head Coach level should then be forwarded to the Director of Athletics for further consideration and investigation.
3. Unresolved complaints and grievances at this level may be discussed with the Middle School Principal. A meeting with the Coach, Director of Athletics, Principal and the grieved Parent to discuss established policies as it pertains to the grieved student - athlete.
4. When it is evident that the grieved student, parent, or guardian does not want to contact the Head Coach because of personal circumstances, the Director of Athletics should be informed and the nature of the grievance detailed. All concerned parties will be notified and appropriate action taken to discuss or resolve such grievances.

Hazing

Hazing will not be tolerated at Salem School. Hazing is defined as "Any activity that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers a person's physical or emotional health for the purpose of initiation or membership in or affiliation with any organization, regardless of the person's willingness to participate." Name calling, bullying, or the belittling of someone with the intention of causing any kind of emotional or mental distress is hazing. Attempting to cause physical harm to someone for the purpose stated in the definition above is hazing.

Medical Guidelines

Injuries

If a player has suffered an injury in the sport they are presently enrolled, or, has suffered an injury that is unrelated or outside of the Salem School sponsored sport (skiing, skateboarding, AAU basketball, etc.), he/she may NOT resume participation in any Salem School Athletic Program until the licensed physician for that student has provided documentation to Salem School allowing the student to be active in their sport once again.

Asthma Pumps/EPI Pens

It is the responsibility of the athletes and the coaches to make sure that the asthma pumps and EPI Pens for those athletes that require them are present for practices and games. These items should be kept in the first aid kit.

Intramural Athletics

Intramural refers to a formally organized program of activities, games, and sports designed to meet the needs of the entire student body. Intramural programs normally provide opportunities for voluntary participation and/or competition among members of the same school, and also for occasional competition between intramural groups at other schools. Because participation is voluntary and open to all, intramural activities allow all students

to experience the positive outcomes normally reserved for interscholastic athletics.

There are many varied benefits, which have led to the goal of providing educational experiences through physical activity. Several objectives related to this goal are as follows:

- Physical development - personal fitness programs can help produce happier, healthier individuals.
- Mental development - many sports provide stress relief and require and enhance quick decision-making, interpretation, and concentration.
- Social development - being part of a team requires and fosters teamwork, cooperation, and sportsmanship.
- Skill development - intramural activities provide an opportunity to refine specific physical skills, an opportunity that may not have been available previously.
- Leisure-time development - these activities encourage a positive choice for filling free time, which may carry over to healthful life decisions. *

* paraphrased from <http://www.answers.com/topic/college-athletics-intramural-athletics-in-u-s-colleges-and-universities>

Unified Sports

All middle schools are encouraged to offer Unified sports programs for students with intellectual and physical disabilities. Schools with insufficient numbers of special athletes may join together with one or more neighboring schools in order to field Unified Sports teams.

Unified Sports® is a registered program of Special Olympics that combines approximately equal numbers of athletes with and without intellectual disability on sports teams for training and competition. All Unified Sports® athletes, both players and special partners, are of similar age and ability level. Unified Sports® teams are placed in competitive divisions based on their skill abilities, and range from training divisions (with a skill- learning focus) to high level competition.

The CIAC/Special Olympics Unified Sports® Program helps to foster an inclusive school community where the values of tolerance, patience and sensitivity are cornerstones.

The CIAC/Special Olympics Unified Sports® Program provides a forum for positive social interaction between mentally disabled and non-disabled students. As Special Athletes and Special Partners train and compete together, they foster ties that develop into friendships both on and off the athletic field.

Participation in Unified Sports® leads to new friendships, improved self-esteem and positive changes in attitude, behavior, and performance.

Sportsmanship Standards

Introduction

The love of sports is so deeply rooted in our national consciousness that the values of millions of people, participants and spectators, are directly and dramatically affected by the values conveyed by organized sports at all levels of competition. This places significant responsibility on those who influence sports- school administrators, coaches, athletes, officials - to ensure that athletic competition helps build the character and ethics of participants and spectators and to promote the value of school based athletics. The CIAC Sportsmanship Committee believes that athletic excellence and sportsmanship are achieved through respect, honor and fair play. To that end, the committee has developed the following set of standards for sportsmanship for all Connecticut middle and high schools with the expectation that all schools will promote and implement these standards at their events. The effective implementation of these standards and the promotion of good sportsmanship is everyone's responsibility!

- Be positive and courteous
- Lead by example
- Maintain self-control
- Display ethical behavior
- Know, understand, appreciate, and observe the rules of the game
- Display modesty in winning and graciousness in defeat
- Show respect for all
- Always play fair

Athletes

- Demonstrate respect for your opponents, their fans and the game officials
- Accept the responsibility and privilege the student-athlete has in representing your school
- Work for the good of your team at all times
- Be gracious in victory and accept defeat with dignity
- Refrain from the use of illegal substances to gain an unfair advantage
- Abide by all the rules of the game

Coaches

- Always set a good example for your team and fans to follow
- Maintain dignity and self-control and pursue victory with honor
- Abide by the rules of the game and CIAC in letter and spirit
- Respect the integrity and judgment of the game officials
- Teach and model good sportsmanship
- Treat opposing coaches, teams, and their fans with respect
- Develop and enforce penalties for participants who do not display good sportsmanship

Parents/Fans

- Help develop a community reputation for good sportsmanship
- Show respect for all players, coaches, game officials and visiting team spectators
- Be a positive role model for other spectators and your child
- Cheer for your team and not against your opponent
- Respect the judgment and strategy of the coach
- Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team

Administrators

- Insure that Salem's Code of Conduct is a primary focus of responsibility for all
- Provide appropriate supervision for each activity event
- Be sure that parents and student-athletes thoroughly understand the school's expectations for sportsmanship
- Recognize and celebrate good sportsmanship and address inappropriate behavior
- Develop a positive sportsmanship plan for all activities, coaches and spectators to follow

Officials

- Be fair and impartial at all times
- Keep calm and poised and do not argue with players or coaches
- Encourage and enforce good sportsmanship
- Accept your role in an unassuming manner
- Do not tolerate unsportsmanlike behavior from players or coaches

Announcers

- Never show favoritism
- Always use proper language
- Never criticize an official's decision
- Be enthusiastic but keep calm
- Be aware of the influence you have over the tone of the contest

Cheerleaders

- Cheer for your team and not against your opponent
- Show respect for opposing cheerleaders/bands
- Show respect for the game officials, opponents and spectators
- Model exemplary behavior and sportsmanship as a representative of your school
- Lead positive cheers which praise your team without antagonizing your opponent
- Physical Examinations for Student Athletes

CONCUSSIONS - BOE Policy #5141.7

The Board of Education recognizes that concussions and head injuries are commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and other recreational activities. The Board acknowledges the risk of catastrophic injuries or deaths are significant when a concussion or head injury is not properly evaluated and managed.

Commencing July 1, 2010, and each school year thereafter, any coach of intramural or interscholastic athletics employed by the District shall complete an initial training course, approved by the State Board of Education, regarding concussions, which are a type of brain injury, prior to commencing the coaching assignment for the season. Such training course shall include, but not be limited to (1) the recognition of the signs and symptoms of a concussion; (2) the means of obtaining proper medical treatment for a person suspected of having a concussion; (3) the nature and risk of concussions, including the danger of continuing to engage in athletic activity after sustaining a concussion; and (4) the proper method of allowing a student athlete who has sustained a concussion to return to athletic activity.

Each school year any coach who has completed the initial training course regarding concussions shall annually review current and relevant information, developed or approved by the State Board of Education, regarding concussions prior to the start of the coaching assignment. This annual review is not required in any year the coach is required to complete a refresher course. Beginning July 15, 2015, and each school year thereafter, a coach must complete an approved refresher course not later than five years after the initial training course in order to maintain his/her coaching permit and to coach in the District.

Such refresher course shall include, but not be limited to: an overview of key recognition and safety practices; an update on medical developments and current best practices in the field of concussion research, prevention and treatment and an update on new relevant federal, state and local laws and regulations.

Commencing July 1, 2015, and each year thereafter, the District shall prohibit a student athlete from participating in any intramural or interscholastic activity unless the student athlete and a parent or guardian of such student athlete (1) reads written materials, (2) views online training or videos or (3) attends in-person training regarding the concussion education plan developed or approved by the State of Connecticut.

In addition, commencing July 1, 2015, and each school year thereafter, the District shall provide each participating student athlete's parent or guardian with a copy of the informed consent form developed or approved by the State Board of Education. Such informed consent form shall include, at a minimum, (A) a summary of the concussion education plan and (B) a summary of the District's policies regarding concussions. The District must obtain the parent or legal guardian's signature, attesting to the fact that such parent or legal guardian has received a copy of such form and authorizes the student athlete to participate in the athletic activity.

The coach of any intramural or interscholastic athletics shall immediately remove a student athlete from participating in any intramural or interscholastic athletic activity who (A) is observed to exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion following an observed or suspected blow to the head or body or (B) is diagnosed with a concussion, regardless of when such concussion may have occurred. Upon such removal, the coach or another qualified school employee (principal, teacher, licensed athletic trainer, licensed physical or occupational therapist employed by the District, or school paraprofessional), shall notify the student athlete's parent or legal guardian that the student athlete has exhibited such signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion or has been diagnosed with a concussion. Such qualified school employee shall provide such notification not later than 24 hours after such removal and shall make a reasonable effort to provide such notification immediately after such removal.

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.

Following clearance outlined 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 (A) no longer exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion at rest or with exertion and (B) 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.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes:

PA 10-62 An Act Concerning Student Athletes and Concussions. PA-1466 An Act Concerning Youth Athletics and Concussions. "Concussion Education Plan and Guidelines for Connecticut Schools" adopted by the State Board of Education, January 7, 2015.

Policy 1st Reading: August 18, 2014

Policy Adopted: September 8, 2014

Revised Policy 1st Reading: June 1, 2015

Revised Policy Adopted: July 20, 2015

Duties of the Administrator in Charge of Athletics:

1. Annually, each spring, review with the School Medical Advisor and Athletic Coordinator any changes that have been made regarding the management of concussion and head injuries.
2. By the conclusion of the school year, identify the competitive sport activities in the District for which compliance with the concussion policy is required. A list of competitive sports activities and the District's policy and procedures will be distributed to all members of the coaching staff.
3. Responsible for determining that all coaches have fulfilled the required initial training and subsequent follow-up regarding concussions prior to the coach's appointment.

Training of Coaches

All coaches shall undergo training (including follow-up and refresher courses) in head injuries and concussion management as required by state statute in a program approved by the State Board of Education. The Connecticut State Board of Education's "*Concussion Education Plan and Guidelines for Connecticut Schools*" provides guidance on this topic. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has made available a tool kit, "*Heads Up Concussion in High School Sports*", which can provide additional information for coaches, athletes and parents.

Parent/Student Information Sheet

Annually, a concussion consent (Appendix C)(**page 28 of this document**) and information sheet (Form 1)(**page 31 of this document**) shall be signed and returned by the student athlete and the parent/guardian prior to the student athlete's participation in practice or competition. This information sheet will be incorporated into the parent permission sheet which permits students to participate in extracurricular activities. Beginning with the school year commencing July 1, 2015, the District will utilize the informed consent form developed or approved and made available by the State Board of Education.

Coaches Responsibility

1. Based on mechanism of injury, observation, history, and unusual behavior and reactions of the athlete, even without loss of consciousness, assume a concussion has occurred if the head was hit and even the mildest of symptoms occur. The student athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion in a practice or game shall be immediately removed from play. (Appendix D) (**page 17 of this document**)

2. If confusion, unusual behavior or responsiveness, deteriorating condition, loss of consciousness, or concern about neck and spine injury exists, the athlete should be referred at once for emergency care.
3. If no emergency is apparent, the athlete should be monitored every 5 to 10 minutes regarding mental status, attention, balance, behavior, speech, and memory until stable over a few hours. If appropriate medical care is not available, an athlete even with mild symptoms should be sent for medical evaluation.
4. Upon removal from the athletic activity, the coach or other qualified school employee (principal, teacher, licensed athletic trainer, licensed physical or occupational therapist employed by the District, or school paraprofessional), shall notify the athlete's parent/guardian that the student athlete has exhibited signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion or has been diagnosed with a concussion. Such qualified school employee shall provide such notification not later than 24 hours after such removal and shall make a reasonable effort to provide such notification immediately after such removal.
5. No athlete suspected of having a concussion should return to the same practice or contest, even if symptoms clear in 15 minutes, no sooner than 24 hours after removal, the athlete receives written clearance from a licensed health care professional trained in evaluation and management of concussions and after the athlete and his/her parent/guardian complete the State Board of Education concussion education plan.

Return to Play After Concussion

1. A student athlete who has been removed from play may not participate in any supervised team activities involving physical exertion, including, but not limited to practices, games, or competitions, until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and receives a written clearance to return to play from that health care provider. (Appendix E)(**page 19 of this document**)
2. After medical clearance, the return to play by the athlete should follow a step-wise protocol with provisions for delayed return to play based on return of any sign or symptoms.
3. The medical clearance return to play protocol is as follows:
 - a. No exertional activity until asymptomatic.
 - b. When the athlete appears clear, begin low-impact activity such as walking, stationary bike, etc.
 - c. Initiate aerobic activity fundamental to the specific sport such as skating, or running and may also begin progressive strength training activities.
 - d. Begin non-contact skill drills specific to sport such as dribbling, fielding, batting, etc.
 - e. Full contact in practice setting.
 - f. If athlete remains asymptomatic, and 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, he/she may return to game/play.

Best Practices

Refer to Appendix F, (**page 21 of this document**) "Current Best Practices in the Prevention and Treatment of a Concussion" for information pertaining to current best practices to consider and utilize.

Procedures 1st Reading: August 18, 2014
Procedures Adopted: September 8, 2014
Revised Procedures 1st Reading: June 1, 2015
Revised Procedures Adopted: July 20, 2015

HEADS UP: CONCUSSION IN YOUTH SPORTS
A Fact Sheet for COACHES

To download the coaches fact sheet in Spanish, please visit:
<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/youth.html>

THE FACTS

- A concussion is a brain injury.
- All concussions are serious.
- Concussions can occur without loss of consciousness.
- Concussions can occur in any sport.
- Recognition and proper management of concussions when they first occur can help prevent further injury or even death.

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is an injury that changes how the cells in the brain normally work. A concussion is caused by a blow to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. Even a ding, getting your bell rung, or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. Concussions can also result from a fall or from players colliding with each other or with obstacles, such as a goalpost.

The potential for concussions is greatest in athletic environments where collisions are common.¹ Concussions can occur, however, in *any* organized or unorganized sport or recreational activity. As many as 3.8 million sports- and recreation-related concussions occur in the United States each year.²

RECOGNIZING A POSSIBLE CONCUSSION

To help recognize a concussion, you should watch for the following two things among your athletes:

1. A forceful blow to the head or body that results in rapid movement of the head.
-and-
2. Any change in the athlete's behavior, thinking, or physical functioning. (See the signs and symptoms of concussion.)

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

SIGNS OBSERVED BY COACHING STAFF

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets sports plays
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly

- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can't recall events after hit or fall

SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE

- Headache or pressure in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not feel right

Adapted from Lovell et al. 2004

Athletes who experience any of these signs or symptoms after a bump or blow to the head should be kept from play until given permission to return to play by a health care professional with experience in evaluating for concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can last from several minutes to days, weeks, months, or even longer in some cases.

Remember, you can't see a concussion and some athletes may not experience and/or report symptoms until hours or days after the injury. If you have any suspicion that your athlete has a concussion, you should keep the athlete out of the game or practice.

PREVENTION AND PREPARATION

As a coach, you can play a key role in preventing concussions and responding to them properly when they occur. Here are some steps you can take to ensure the best outcome for your athletes and the team:

- Educate athletes and parents about concussion. Talk with athletes and their parents about the dangers and potential long-term consequences of concussion. For more information on long-term effects of concussion, view the following online video clip: http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/Coaches_Tool_Kit.htm#Video. Explain your concerns about concussion and your expectations of safe play to athletes, parents, and assistant coaches. Pass out the concussion fact sheets for athletes and for parents at the beginning of the season and again if a concussion occurs.
- Insist that safety comes first.
 - Teach athletes safe playing techniques and encourage them to follow the rules of play.
 - Encourage athletes to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
 - Make sure athletes wear the right protective equipment for their activity (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). Protective equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.
 - Review the athlete fact sheet with your team to help them recognize the signs and symptoms of a concussion.

Check with your administrator about concussion policies. Concussion policy statements can be developed to include the commitment to safety, a brief description of concussion, and information on when athletes can safely return to play following a concussion (i.e., an athlete with known or suspected concussion should be kept from play until evaluated and given permission to return by a health care professional). Parents and athletes should sign the concussion policy statement at the beginning of the sports season.

- Teach athletes and parents that it's not smart to play with a concussion. Sometimes players and parents wrongly believe that it shows strength and courage to play injured. Discourage others from pressuring injured athletes to play. Don't let athletes persuade you that they're just fine after they have sustained any bump or blow to the head. Ask if players have ever had a concussion.
- Prevent long-term problems. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first usually within a short period of time (hours, days, or weeks) can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems. In rare cases, repeat concussions can result in brain swelling, permanent brain damage, and even death. This more serious condition is called *second impact syndrome*.^{4,5} Keep athletes with known or suspected concussion from play until they have been evaluated and given permission to

return to play by a health care professional with experience in evaluating for concussion. Remind your athletes: It's better to miss one game than the whole season.

ACTION PLAN

WHAT SHOULD A COACH DO WHEN A CONCUSSION IS SUSPECTED?

1. Remove the athlete from play. Look for the signs and symptoms of a concussion if your athlete has experienced a bump or blow to the head. Athletes who experience signs or symptoms of concussion should not be allowed to return to play. When in doubt, keep the athlete out of play.
2. Ensure that the athlete is evaluated right away by an appropriate health care professional. Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Health care professionals have a number of methods that they can use to assess the severity of concussions. As a coach, recording the following information can help health care professionals in assessing the athlete after the injury:
 - Cause of the injury and force of the hit or blow to the head
 - Any loss of consciousness (passed out/knocked out) and if so, for how long
 - Any memory loss immediately following the injury
 - Any seizures immediately following the injury
 - Number of previous concussions (if any)
3. Inform the athlete's parents or guardians about the possible concussion and give them the fact sheet on concussion. Make sure they know that the athlete should be seen by a health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion.
4. Allow the athlete to return to play only with permission from a health care professional with experience in evaluating for concussion. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems. Prevent common long-term problems and the rare second impact syndrome by delaying the athletes return to the activity until the player receives appropriate medical evaluation and approval for return to play.

If you think your athlete has sustained a concussion take him/her out of play, and seek the advice of a health care

professional experienced in evaluating for concussion.

For more information and to order additional materials free-of-charge, visit:
<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/youth.html>

For more detailed information on concussion and traumatic brain injury, visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/TBI.htm>

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Content Source: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Injury Response

Page Located on the Web at <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/index.html>

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION
SAFER • HEALTHIER • PEOPLE™

Fact Sheet for Student Athletes

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury that:

- Is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head.
- Can change the way your brain normally works.
- Can range from mild to severe.
- Can occur during practices or games in any sport.
- Can happen even if you haven't been knocked out.
- Can be serious even if you've just been "dinged" or had your "bell rung."

How can I prevent a concussion?

It's different for every sport. But there are steps you can take to protect yourself from concussion.

- Follow your coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Use the proper sports equipment, including personal protective equipment (such as helmets)
- In order for equipment to protect you, it must be:
 - Appropriate for the game, position, and activity
 - Well maintained
 - Properly fitted
 - Used every time you play

How do I know if I've had a concussion?

You can't see a concussion, but you might notice some of the symptoms right away. Other symptoms can show up days or weeks after the injury. It's best to see a health care professional if you think you might have a concussion. An undiagnosed concussion can affect your ability to do schoolwork and other everyday activities. It also raises your risk for additional serious injury.

What are the symptoms of a concussion?

- Nausea (feeling that you might vomit)
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Headache
- Feeling sluggish
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays)
- Confusion

What should I do if I think I have a concussion?

- Tell your coaches and your parents. Never ignore a bump, blow, or jolt to the head. Also tell your coach if one of your teammates might have a concussion.
- Get a medical checkup. A health care professional can tell you if you have had a concussion and when you are OK to return to play.
- Give yourself time to recover. If you have had a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to suffer another concussion.

Concussion Symptoms

Common symptoms in concussions are generally divided into physical/somatic, cognitive/thinking/remembering, sleep and emotional/mood disruption categories.

1. **Physical**
 - Headache
 - Nausea
 - Vomiting
 - Imbalance
 - Slowed reaction time
 - Dizziness
 - Sensitivity to light
 - Sensitivity to sound
 - Fuzzy or blurred vision

2. **Sleep**
 - Sleeping more or less than usual
 - Drowsiness
 - Trouble falling asleep
 - Trouble maintaining sleep

3. **Cognitive (Thinking/Remembering)**
 - Difficulty thinking or concentrating
 - Difficulty remembering
 - Confusion
 - Feeling mentally foggy
 - Feeling slowed down
 - Decreased attention
 - Decreased retention
 - Distractibility
 - Amnesia

4. **Mood Disruption**
 - More emotional
 - Irritable
 - Sad
 - Nervous
 - Depressed

Source: Adapted from Pardini et al 2004.

Concussion Symptoms (continued)

Athletes who experience any of the signs and symptoms listed below after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body should be kept out of play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating concussions, provides written clearance that they are symptom-free and can return to play. It is important to note that some athletes may not experience and/or report symptoms until hours or days after the injury. Most people with a concussion will recover quickly and fully. For some people, however, signs and symptoms of concussion can last for days, weeks, or longer.

Potential Signs Observed by Coaches, Athletic Trainers, Parents or Others:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can't recall events after hit or fall

Potential Symptoms Reported by Athlete:

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not "feel right" or is "feeling down"

Source: CDC, How Can I Recognize a Possible Concussion?

Athletes who experience any of the signs and symptoms listed above after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body should be kept out of play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating concussions, provides written clearance that they are symptom-free and can return to play. It is important to note that some athletes may not experience and/or report symptoms until hours or days after the injury. Most people with a concussion will recover quickly and fully. For some people, however, signs and symptoms of concussion can last for days, weeks, or longer.

The Proper Procedures for Allowing a Student Athlete Who Has Sustained a Concussion to Return to Athletic Activity

When managing an athlete with a concussion, the management plan should cover both returning to school and to play, and should:

- include monitoring both physical and cognitive activities;
- consider concussion history; and
- be individualized to the athlete.

An athlete should be referred for follow-up care from a health care professional who can help him or her gradually return to school and to play when fully recovered. An athlete who has been diagnosed with a concussion should not return to practice or play the same day. In addition, *Public Act No. 14-66, An Act Concerning Youth Athletics and Concussions* requires that:

...coaches 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. Following clearance, 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 no longer exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion at rest or with exertion, and 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.

There are five gradual steps to help safely return an athlete to play, adapted from the International Concussion Consensus Guidelines located at:

http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/headsup/return_to_play.html

Suggested Return-to-Play Progression

Baseline (Step 0): As the baseline step of the *Return-to-Play Progression*, the athlete needs to have completed physical and cognitive rest and not be experiencing concussion symptoms for a minimum of 24 hours. Keep in mind, the younger the athlete, the more conservative the treatment. There should be a minimum of 24 hours before progressing to the next step.

Step 1: Light Aerobic Exercise

Goal: only to increase an athlete's heart rate

Time: 5 to 10 minutes

Activities: exercise bike, walking, or light jogging

No weight lifting or resistance training, jumping, or hard running

Step 2: Moderate Exercise

Goal: limited body and head movement

Time: reduced from typical routine

Activities: moderate jogging, brief running, moderate-intensity stationary biking, and moderate-intensity weightlifting and resistance training

No head impact activities

Step 3: Non-contact Exercise

Goal: more intense, but non-contact movement

Time: close to typical routine

Activities: running, high-intensity stationary biking, the player's regular weightlifting routine, and non-contact sport-specific drills

This stage may add some cognitive component to practice in addition to the aerobic and movement components introduced in Steps 1 and 2.

Step 4: Practice

Goal: reintegrate in full contact practice with vigilant observation by the coach and/or athletic trainer

Step 5: Return to Play

Goal: return to competition

It is important to monitor symptoms and cognitive function carefully during each increase of exertion. Athletes should only progress to the next level of exertion if they are not experiencing symptoms at the current level. If symptoms return at any step an athlete should stop these activities as this may be a sign that the athlete is pushing too hard. Only after additional rest, when the athlete is once again not experiencing symptoms for a minimum of 24 hours, should he or she start again at the step during which symptoms were experienced.

The *Return-to-Play Progression* process is best conducted through a team approach and by a health care professional who knows the athlete's physical abilities and endurance, such as the school's athletic trainer in collaboration with the school nurse. By gauging the athlete's performance on each individual step, a health care professional will be able to determine how far to progress the athlete on a given day. In some cases, the athlete may be able to work through one step in a single day, while in other cases it may take several days to work through an individual step. It may take several weeks to months to work through the entire 5-step progression.

While most athletes will recover quickly and fully following a concussion, some will have symptoms for weeks or longer. Athletes should be referred to a concussion specialist if:

1. Symptoms worsen at any time.
2. Symptoms have not gone away after 10-14 days.
3. The athlete has a history of multiple concussions or risk factors for prolonged recovery. This may include a history of migraines, depression, mood disorders, or anxiety, as well as developmental disorders such as learning disabilities and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (CDC, A "Heads Up" on Managing Return to Play).

Current Best Practices in the Prevention and Treatment of a Concussion

Prevention

There are many ways to reduce the chances of sustaining a concussion during participation in athletic activities. Schools should ensure that during athletic contests and practices, athletes:

- use the correct protective equipment (should be fitted and maintained properly in order to provide the expected protection);
- follow all safety rules and the rules of the sport;
- practice good sportsmanship; and
- do not return to play with a known or suspected concussion until they have been evaluated and given written permission by an appropriate health care professional.

Treatment

Education and recognition are the best tools for improving the care of the athlete with a concussion. Students who have been diagnosed with a concussion require both physical and cognitive rest. Delay in instituting health care provider orders for such rest may prolong recovery from a concussion. The health care provider's orders for avoidance of cognitive and physical activity and graduated return to activity should be followed and monitored both at home and at school. Districts should consult their school medical director if further discussion and/or clarification is needed regarding a private medical provider's orders, or in the absence of a private medical provider's orders. Additionally, children and adolescents are at increased risk of protracted recovery and severe, potentially permanent disability (e.g. early dementia, also known as chronic traumatic encephalopathy), or even death if they sustain another concussion before fully recovering from the first concussion. Therefore, it is imperative that a student is fully recovered before resuming activities that may result in another concussion. Best practice warrants that, whenever there is a question of safety, a health care professional errs on the side of caution and holds the athlete out for a game, the remainder of the season, or even a full year.

Cognitive Rest

Cognitive rest requires that the student avoid participation in, or exposure to, activities that require concentration or mental stimulation including, but not limited to:

- computers and video games;
- television viewing;
- texting;
- cell phone use;
- reading or writing;
- studying or homework;
- taking a test or completing significant projects;
- loud music; or
- bright lights.

Parents/guardians, teachers, and other school staff should watch for signs of concussion symptoms such as fatigue, irritability, headaches, blurred vision, or dizziness reappearing with any type of mental activity or stimulation. If any of these signs and symptoms occur, the student should cease the activity. Return of symptoms should guide whether the student should participate in an activity. Initially a student with a concussion may only be able to attend school for a few hours per day and/or need rest periods during the day, Students may exhibit increased difficulties with focusing,

memory, learning new information, and/or an increase in irritability or impulsivity. (Districts should have policies and procedures in place related to transitioning students back to school and for making accommodations for missed tests and assignments.) An Individual Health Care Plan with academic accommodations is an example of a guideline that may be used. If the student's symptoms last longer than 7 to 14 days, a medical provider should consider referring the student for an evaluation by a neuropsychologist, neurologist, physiatrist, or other medical specialist in traumatic brain injury.

Note: increased cognitive activity, as well as too little cognitive activity, is associated with longer recovery from concussion. Thus, it is desirable to pace a student's academic load below symptom threshold. (Pediatrics 2014; 133:1-6)

Schools are permitted to authorize certain testing accommodations for students who incur an injury within a certain timeframe prior to the test administration. In some situations, a 504 plan may be appropriate for students whose concussion symptoms are significant or whose symptoms last 6 months or longer. Section 504 is part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and is designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. Section 504 requires a school district to provide a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) to each qualified student with a disability who is in the school district's jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. Under Section 504, FAPE consists of the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet the student's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met.

(More information is available on Section 504 law at:
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>)

Questions and Answers on Section 504 including information on addressing temporary impairments such as concussions is available at:

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html>

Physical Rest

Physical rest includes getting adequate sleep, taking frequent rest periods or naps, and avoiding physical activity that requires exertion. Some activities that should be avoided include, but are not limited to:

- activities that result in contact and collision and are high risk for re-injury;
- high speed and/or intense exercise and/or sports;
- any activity that results in an increased heart rate or increased head pressure (such as straining or strength training).

Students may experience frustration or stress about having to limit activities or having difficulties keeping up in school. They should be supported and reassured that they will be able to resume activities as soon as it is safe, and that it is important to avoid activities which will delay their recovery. Students should be informed that the concussion will resolve more quickly when they follow their medical provider's orders. Students will need encouragement and support at home and school until symptoms fully resolve (CDC, *Heads Up: Preventing Concussion Heads Up*).

Recommendations for Specific Middle Level Interscholastic Sports

Schools should use NFHS accepted game rules as a basic model for various sports. Suggested developmentally appropriate modifications to these rules are included in the following paragraphs. Any rule modifications should be agreed upon by coaches and officials prior to games. There shall be no rule modifications regarding safety equipment.

Basketball

Season, Practices and Games.

1. Organized practice sessions may not start prior to the winter sports season (November 30).
2. At least ten (10) practice sessions must be conducted before interscholastic competition begins.
3. No more than two (2) games may be played per week.
4. The maximum number of games recommended is twelve (12).

Suggested Modifications in Game Rules

1. The length of the quarters shall be 7 minutes with an additional supplemental period of 15 minutes running time to insure participation by all athletes.
2. In the case of a tie score at the end of regulation play, the first overtime period shall be three (3) minutes in length. If the score remains tied, a "sudden victory" period will be played.

Cross Country

Season, Practices and Meets

1. Organized practice sessions may not start prior to the fall sports season (September 1)
2. At least ten (10) practice sessions must be conducted before interscholastic competition begins.
3. Meets should not be scheduled for more than two (2) per week.
4. The maximum number of meets recommended is twelve (12).

Suggested Modifications in Meet Rules

1. As many participants as can safely compete should be encouraged to enter.
2. Only the first five (5) finishers for each team will count toward the score.
3. Streets should be avoided for meets and practice. When this is not possible, vests should be required for all runners.
4. Distance: Course distance should not exceed two (2) miles.

Soccer

Season, Practice and Games.

1. Organized practice sessions may not start prior to the first day of the fall sports season (September 1) and shall be confined to the fall sports season.
2. At least ten (10) practice sessions must be conducted before interscholastic competition begins.
3. The maximum number of games recommended is twelve (12)
4. No more than two (2) games per week should be scheduled.

Equipment

1. All players must wear shin guards that meet NOCSAE standards and the NOCSAE logo must appear on the outside of the shin guard.
2. Mouth guards are mandatory.

Suggested Modifications in Game Rules

1. Games may be played in four (4) quarters of fifteen (15) minutes each or in halves not to exceed thirty (30) minutes each followed by a supplemental period of 15 minutes running time to allow more athletes to participate.
2. Field size should be adjusted to the players of this age group. A suggested minimum size is 100x 60 yards and could range up to regulation size.

Softball (if developed)

Season, Practice and Games

1. Organized practice sessions may not start prior to the spring season (April 1).
2. At least ten (10) practice sessions must be conducted before interscholastic competition begins.
3. The maximum number of games recommended is twelve (12).
4. No more than two (2) games per week should be scheduled.

Equipment

1. Catcher shall wear full protective equipment including throat protector.
2. If team uniforms include shorts, catcher should wear long pants.
3. Batters and runners must wear protective headgear.
4. Mouth guards are required.

Suggested Modifications in Game Rules

1. Length of games shall be seven (7) innings.
2. Free substitution is encouraged.
3. A batting order of up to 12 players is permitted.
When a team bats through the entire lineup, the inning is over.

Track and Field

Season, Practice and Meets

1. Organized practice sessions may not start prior to the first day of the spring sports season (April 1).
2. At least ten (10) practice sessions must be conducted before interscholastic competition begins.
3. The maximum number of meets recommended is twelve (12).
4. No more than two (2) meets per week should be

scheduled. Suggested Modifications in Meet Rules

1. In dual meets a participant shall be permitted to enter no more than two (2) track events or two (2) or field events for a total of three (3) events.
2. In larger meets a participant may enter only one (1) field event and one (1) track event.

		TRACK EVENTS	FIELD EVENTS		
Season Fall		100 Meter Sprint / 100 Yard Sprint	High Jump	and Games Limitations Season September 1	
		200 Meter Sprint / 220 Yard Sprint	Long Jump		
		400 Meter Sprint / 440 Yard Sprint	Shot Put (8lbs. boys/6lbs. girls)		
		800 Meter Run / 880 Yard Run	Discus (1Kilo boys & girls)		
		1600 Meter Run / 1 Mile Run			
		100 Meter Relay			

Sport	Practice Days Before Meet/Game	Games Per Season	Limitations Games Per Week	Other
Soccer	10	12	2 per week	60 minutes plus 15 minutes running time
Basketball	10	12	2 per week	7 minute quarters plus 15 minute running time
Cross Country	10	12	2 per week	
Softball	10	12	2 per week	7 innings

**Salem School
Salem, Connecticut**

Salem School Athletic Program Information (gr.5-8)

Please read carefully. Sign and return the attached permission slip/release form to school BEFORE the first practice. A schedule of practices is also attached.

BEFORE participating in any practice or contest in interscholastic athletics, students are REQUIRED to have the following:

- 1. Concussion training and two release forms signed by parent and athlete (NEW FOR 2015/16 SY)**
- 2. Signed permission slip/release form**
- 3. Current physical on file at school**
- 4. Appropriate practice clothing (sneakers, cleats, shorts, sweats, etc)**

As part of our on-going safety efforts, the following procedures have been put in place regarding sports (practices and games).

- Use the BACK lot when picking up students from practices and games –the gates will be opened at 3:30 PM.
- For indoor sports, you must pick up your child in the building (gym) –students will NOT be dismissed to the parking lot. For outdoor sports, you must pick up your child on the designated field.
- Please indicate on the attached form, who has your permission to transport your child home from practices and/or HOME games. In the event that someone NOT on the list must pick up your child, you MUST send a note to that effect to the coach. Please be aware that coaches will ask anyone other than yourself picking up the student, for a form of identification.
- Parents will be required to sign out their child IF event they are transporting is after AWAY games.

PERMISSION SLIP/RELEASE FORM FOR PARTICIPATING IN SPORTS

Parent/Guardian Statement:

I approve of my child participating in interscholastic athletics. I will not hold Salem Public School or the Salem Board of Education or its employees responsible for any injury sustained while engaging in any practice or game or while traveling to or from practices or contests.

I give permission for _____, grade _____, to participate in all TEAM practices and events held during the _____ school year in the sport of _____.

I recognize that such activity involves the potential for injury, which is inherent in all sports. I acknowledge that even with the best coaching, use of appropriate protective equipment and strict observance of rules, injuries are still a possibility. Having been so warned, it is still my desire that my child participate in this sport.

Parent / Guardian signature Date

Athlete signature Date

Parent/Guardian E-mail: _____
(optional)

RELEASE FORM

STUDENT NAME: _____

Parent/Guardian Name	Home Number	Work Number	Cell Number

Please list individuals authorized to pick up your child from practices/HOME games.

NAME	Relationship to Child	Address	Telephone	Alternate #
1.				
2.				
3.				

Parent/Guardian Name:	Signature:
Date:	

Salem Board of Education
Student & Parent – Concussion Education Plan & Consent Form

NOTE: This document was developed to provide coaches, students, and their parents/guardians with an annual review of current and relevant information regarding concussions and head injuries. A new form is required to be read, signed, dated and kept on file by their associated school district annually to comply with Public Act No. 14-66 AN ACT CONCERNING STUDENT ATHLETES AND CONCUSSIONS.

A concussion is the immediate and transient alteration of neurological function in the brain caused by mechanical acceleration and deceleration forces.

Part I – SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION

– A concussion should be suspected if any one or more of the following signs or symptoms are present, OR if the coach/evaluator is unsure.

1. Signs of a concussion may include (what the athlete looks like):

- Confusion/disorientation/irritability
- Trouble resting/getting comfortable
- Lack of concentration
- Slow response/drowsiness
- Incoherent/ slurred speech
- Slow/clumsy movements
- Loss of consciousness
- Amnesia/memory problems
- Act silly/combatative/aggressive
- Repeatedly ask same questions
- Dazed appearance
- Restless/irritable
- Constant attempts to return to play
- Constant motion
- Disproportionate/inappropriate reactions
- Balance problems

6. Symptoms of a concussion may include (what the athlete reports):

- Headache or dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Blurred or double vision
- Oversensitivity to sound/light/touch
- Ringing in ears
- Feeling foggy or groggy

Note: Public Act No. 14-66 requires that a coach MUST immediately remove a student- athlete from participating in any intramural or interscholastic athletic activity who (A) is observed to exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion following a suspected blow to the head or body, or (B) is diagnosed with a concussion, regardless of when such concussion or head injury may have occurred. Upon removal of the athlete a qualified school employee must notify the parent or legal guardian within 24 hours that the student athletes has exhibited the signs and symptoms of a concussion.

Part II – RETURN TO PARTICIPATION (RTP)

Currently, it is impossible to accurately predict how long concussions will last. There must be full recovery before someone is allowed to return to participation. Connecticut Law now requires that no athlete may resume participation until they have received written medical clearance from a licensed health care professional (Physician, Physician Assistant, Advanced Practice Registered Nurse, Athletic Trainer) trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

Concussion Management Requirements:

1. No athlete SHALL return to participation (RTP) on the same day of concussion.
2. Any loss of consciousness, vomiting or seizures the athlete MUST be immediately transported to the hospital.
3. Close observation of an athlete MUST continue following a concussion. This should be monitored for an appropriate amount of time following the injury to ensure that there is no escalation of symptoms.
4. Any athlete with signs or symptoms related to a concussion MUST be evaluated from a licensed health care professional (Physician, Physicians' Assistant, Advanced Practice Registered Nurse, Athletic Trainer) trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.
5. The athlete MUST obtain an initial written clearance from one of the licensed health care professionals mentioned above directing them into a well-defined RTP stepped protocol similar to one outlined below. If at any time signs or symptoms should return during the RTP progression the athlete should cease activity* .

6. After the RTP protocol has been successfully administered (no longer exhibits any signs or symptoms or behaviors consistent with concussions), final written medical clearance is required by one of the licensed health care professionals mentioned above for them to fully return to unrestricted participation in practices and competitions.

Medical Clearance RTP protocol (Recommended one full day between steps)²

Rehabilitation stage	Functional exercise at each stage of rehabilitation	Objective of each stage
1. No activity	Complete physical and cognitive rest until asymptomatic. School may need to be modified.	Recovery
2. Light aerobic activity	Walking, swimming or stationary cycling keeping intensity, <70% of maximal exertion; no resistance training.	Increase Heart Rate
3. Sport Specific Exercise	Skating drills in ice hockey, running drills in soccer; no head impact activities.	Add Movement
4. Non-contact Training drills	Progression to more complex training drills, i.e., passing drills in football and ice hockey; may start progressive resistance training.	Exercise, coordination and cognitive load
5. Full Contact Practice	Following final medical clearance, participate in normal training activities.	Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff

If at any time signs or symptoms should worsen during the RTP progression the athlete should stop activity that day. If the athlete’s symptoms are gone the next day, she/he may resume the RTP progression at the last step completed in which no symptoms were present. If symptoms return and don’t resolve, the athlete should be referred back to their medical provider.

Part III – HEAD INJURIES

– Injuries to the head includes:

- Concussions: (See above information). There are several head injuries associated with concussions which can be severe in nature including:
 - a) Second impact Syndrome – Athletes who sustain a concussion, and return to play prior to being recovered from the concussion, are also at risk for Second Impact Syndrome (SIS), a rare but life-altering condition that can result in rapid brain swelling, permanent brain damage or death; and
 - b) Post-Concussion Syndrome – A group of physical, cognitive, and emotional problems that can persist for weeks, months, or indefinitely after a concussion.
- Scalp Injury: Most head injuries only damage the scalp (a cut, scrape, bruise or swelling)... Big lumps (bruises) can occur with minor injuries because there is a large blood supply to the scalp. For the same reason, small cuts on the head may bleed a lot. Bruises on the forehead sometimes cause black eyes 1 to 3 days later because the blood spreads downward by gravity;
- Skull Fracture: Only 1% to 2% of children with head injuries will get a skull fracture. Usually there are no other symptoms except for a headache at the site where the head was hit. Most skull fractures occur without any injury to the brain and they heal easily;
- Brain Injuries are rare but are recognized by the presence of the following symptoms:
 - (1) difficult to awaken, or keep awake or (2) confused thinking and talking, or (3) slurred speech, or (4) weakness of arms or legs or (5) unsteady walking (American Academy of Pediatrics – Healthy Children, 2010).

Part IV – STUDENT, PARENT/GUARDIAN REQUIREMENT

Starting with the 2015-2016 school year, and each school year thereafter, P.A. 14-66 prohibits a student athlete to participate in any intramural or interscholastic athletic activity unless the student and his/her parent/guardian (1) reads written materials, (2) views online training or videos, or (3) attends in-person training regarding the concussion education plan.

Part V – APPLICABLE SCHOOL BOARD CONCUSSION POLICIES

Board Policy #5141.7, "Student Sports – Concussions," and its accompanying procedures, appendices and forms constitute the Board of Education's School Concussion Policy. They contain information on the following topics:

- the recognition of signs and symptoms of concussion,
- the means of obtaining proper medical treatment for a person suspected of sustaining a concussion,
- the nature and risks of a concussion, including the danger in continuing to engage in athletic activity after sustaining a concussion,
- the proper procedures for allowing a student who has sustained a concussion to return to athletic activity, and
- current best practices in the prevention and treatment of concussion.

I have read and understand this document the "Student/Parent – Concussion Education Plan & Consent Form" and understand the severities associated with concussions and the need for immediate treatment of such injuries. I further understand my responsibilities to be informed and participate in the concussion education plan as described in Part IV above.

Student name: _____ Date _____ Signature _____
(Print Name)

Parent name: _____ Date _____ Signature _____
(Print Name)

References:

1. NFHS. Concussions. 2008 NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook (Third Edition). 2008: 77-82.
<http://www.nfhs.org>.
2. McCrory, Paul MBBS, PhD; Meeuwisse, Willem MD, PhD; Johnston, Karen MD, PhD; Dvorak, Jiri MD; Aubry, Mark MD; Molloy, Mick MB; Cantu, Robert MA, MD. Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport 3rd International Conference on Concussion in Sport Held in Zurich, November 2008. Clinical Journal of Sport Medicine: May 2009 – Volume 19 – Issue 3 – pp 185-200
http://journals.lww.com/cjsportsmed/Fulltext/2009/05000/Consensus_Statement_on_Concussion_in_Sport_3rd.1.aspx.
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports*.
http://www.cdc.gov/NCIPC/tbi/Coaches_Tool_Kit.htm.
4. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers For Disease Control and Prevention. *A Fact Sheet for Coaches*. (2009). Retrieved on June 16, 2010. http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/coaches_Engl.pdf
5. American Academy of Pediatrics – Healthy Children. *Symptom check: Head Injury*. Retrieved on June 16, 2010. <http://www.healthychildren.org/english/tips-tools/symptom-checker/pages/Head-Injury.aspx>

Resources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Injury Prevention & Control: Traumatic Brain Injury*. Retrieved on June 16, 2010.
<http://www.cdc.gov/TraumaticBrainInjury/index.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports Guide for Coaches*. Retrieved on June 16, 2010.

HEADS UP: CONCUSSION IN YOUTH SPORTS

A Fact Sheet (Information Sheet) for Parents and Athletes
(Requirement to Read and Must Be Signed by Parents and Athletes)
Return This Form to Team Coach

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury (TBI) that is caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head. It can change the way your brain normally works. Concussions can also occur from a fall or blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. It can occur during practices or games in any sport. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. A concussion can happen even if you haven’t been knocked out. You can’t see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of a concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Parents and Guardians

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion observed by Parents/Guardians?

If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can’t recall events prior to being hit or falling
- Can’t recall events after being hit or falling

How can a Parent/Guardian help their child prevent a concussion?

Every sport is different, but there are steps your children can take to protect themselves from concussion.

- Ensure that they follow their coach’s rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). Protective equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.
- Learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion.

What should a parent/guardian do if they think their child has a concussion?

1. Seek medical attention right away. A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports. Notify your child’s coach if you think your child has a concussion.
2. Keep your child out of play. Concussions take time to heal. Don’t let your child return to play until a health care professional says it’s OK. Children who return to play too soon while the brain is still healing risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Second or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.

3. Tell your child’s coach about any recent concussion in ANY sport or activity. Your child’s coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

Athletes

What are the symptoms of a concussion?

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Bothered by light
- Bothered by noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Difficulty paying attention
- Memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not “feel right”

What should an athlete do if they think they have a concussion?

- Tell your coaches and your parents. Never ignore a bump or blow to the head even if you feel fine. Also, tell your coach if one of your teammates might have a concussion.
- Get a medical checkup. A doctor or health care professional can tell you if you have a concussion and when you are OK to return to play.
- Give yourself time to get better. If you have had a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have a second concussion. Second or later concussions can cause damage to your brain. It is important to rest until you get approval from a doctor or health care professional to return to play.
- It is better to miss one game than the whole season.

How can athletes prevent a concussion?

Every sport is different, but there are steps you can take to protect yourself.

- Follow your coach’s rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Use the proper sports equipment, including personal protective equipment (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). In order for equipment to protect you, it must be:
 - The right equipment for the game, position, or activity
 - Worn correctly and fit well
 - Used every time you play
 - Repaired and maintained

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

For more detailed information on concussion and traumatic brain injury, visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/injury> or <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/youth.html>

COACHES EVALUATION FORM

NAME: _____

SPORTS ASSIGNMENT: _____

DATE: _____

The coaching responsibilities listed are rated on the following scale.

A-Acceptable performance

U-Unacceptable performance

I-Improvement needed

X-No basis for judgment

I. COACHING PERFORMANCE

1. Is knowledgeable in the sport. _____
2. Prepares for the total program or assists in this preparation _____
3. Prepares for daily practices so that maximum instruction is presented _____
4. Uses a variety of coaching techniques for individual and group instruction _____
5. Provides an environment that attempts to prevent injuries _____
6. Properly cares for injuries when they occur. _____
7. Communicates with athletes in a positive constructive manner. _____
8. Is understanding and sensitive in dealing with the players _____
9. Encourages enthusiasm and dedication in the players _____
10. Creates positive interpersonal relationships with the players. _____
11. Is punctual in attending and ending team practices and meetings _____
12. Demonstrates self-control and poise in all areas relating to coaching responsibilities. _____
13. Attempts to improve self as a coach by attending clinics, workshops and other professional development activities. _____
14. Effectively communicates team roles to players. _____
15. Helps athletes develop good character traits _____

II. TEAM MANAGEMENT and SUPERVISION

1. Decides the personnel in an objective and consistent manner. _____
2. Has full control of the team in all matters pertaining to coaching and athletic discipline. _____
3. Informs athletes of all rules and regulations pertaining to discipline that have been established for the team, being sure these rules are consistent with athletic policy. _____
4. Provides adequate supervision at each practice session and at all contests of the sport. _____
(This includes supervision of the locker and shower rooms, practice fields and buses)
5. Properly manages school equipment. _____
6. Emphasizes appropriate academic achievement for all athletes. _____

III. PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES

1. Submits all requested information accurately and promptly. _____
2. Works cooperatively with the Athletic Director and/or Head Coach. _____
3. Assists with budget preparation. _____
4. Understands and complies with all rules and regulations outlined in the Athletic Handbook and CIAC regulations. _____
5. Keeps the Athletic Director and/or Head Coach informed of unusual events within the sport activity. _____
6. Is cooperative in sharing and safeguarding facilities _____
7. Works professionally with all members of high school staff, parents, and community organizations. _____
8. Adheres to the ethical guidelines established by the Connecticut High School Coaches Association. _____

- 9. Maintains all required coaching certifications _____
- 10. Attends and actively participates in awards programs, league and staff meetings _____
- 11. Is a positive role model for athletes. _____
- 12. Uses good judgment when making decisions _____

IV. Identify a minimum of three coaching accomplishments that were made during the season.

V. *List a minimum of three personal goals for coaching improvement to be pursued next season.*

Commendations/Recommendations

SIGNATURE OF COACH - DATE

The signature of the coach does not necessarily mean agreement with the evaluation, only that the coach has read and understands the evaluation. The coach has the right to attach a statement to this form expressing his/her opinion.

SIGNATURE OF HEAD COACH (if applicable) - DATE

The signature of the head coach does not supersede the authority of the Athletic Director who makes the final recommendation for employment.

SIGNATURE OF THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR - DATE

Employment recommendation

- Recommend for continued employment.
- Recommend for continued employment with the understanding of areas to be improved.
- Not recommended for continued employment.

TRAVEL RELEASE FOR STUDENT

In consideration for granting permissions for _____
student's name

To travel independently from a Salem School Event, I agree to indemnify and hold the Salem School District, its officers, agents and employees harmless from any and all claims or loss for bodily injury or property damage arising out of such independent travel.

It is understood that I will **personally** transport my son/daughter **only**, and assume **full responsibility** for his/her **health** and **safety**.

At no time will my son/daughter drive themselves or any other individual to any event.

_____ _____
Event Date

Reason for Request: _____

_____ _____
Parent/Guardian's Signature Date

_____ _____
Administrator's Signature Date

_____ _____
Teacher/Coach's Signature* Date

***TEACHER/COACH:** Return this form to the Main Office