



The CEO/ Director of Education is committed to promoting awareness of safety in schools and recognizes that the health and safety of students are essential preconditions for effective learning. All partners in education, including the Ministry of Education, other Ontario ministries, school boards, administrators, educators, school staff, students, parents/ guardians, school volunteers, and community-based organizations have important roles to play in promoting student health and safety, and in fostering and maintaining healthy and safe environments in which students can learn.

The Limestone District School Board (the “Board”) recognizes that children and adolescents are among those at greatest risk for concussions and that while there is potential for concussion any time there is a body trauma, the risk is greatest during activities where collisions can occur, such as during school-based physical education classes, playground time or school-based sports. The school board is committed to taking steps to reduce the risk of injury.

Medical research indicates that a concussion can have a significant impact on a student cognitively, physically, emotionally, and socially. It is very important to students’ long-term health and academic success that individuals in schools have information on appropriate strategies to minimize risk of concussion, steps to follow if they suspect a student may have a concussion, and effective management procedures to guide students’ return to learning and physical activity after a diagnosed concussion. This administrative procedure will focus on the following key areas:

- i) Roles and responsibilities of school board, administrators, school staff, parents and students.
- ii) Strategies to develop awareness of the seriousness of concussions;
- iii) Strategies for the prevention and identification of concussions;
- iv) Tracking and management procedures for diagnosed concussions; and
- v) Training for board and school staff.



1. Definitions

1.1. A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that causes changes in how the brain functions, leading to visible clues (signs) and symptoms that can emerge immediately or in the hours or days after the injury. (Parachute, 2024)

1.2. A concussion:

- may be caused by a jarring impact to the head, face, neck or body, with an impulsive force transmitted to the head, that causes the brain to move rapidly within the skull (Parachute, 2024);
- can occur even if there has been no loss of consciousness (in fact most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness (Parachute, 2024);
- cannot normally be seen on X-rays, standard CT scans, or MRIs (Parachute, 2024); and is typically expected to result in symptoms lasting up to 4 weeks, but in some cases, symptoms may be prolonged (Parachute, 2024; Patricios et al., 2023).

Second Impact Syndrome

1.3. Research suggests that a person who suffers a second concussion before they are symptom-free from the first concussion is susceptible to a prolonged period of recovery, and possibly Second Impact Syndrome. This is a rare condition that causes rapid and severe brain swelling and often has catastrophic results.

Who Can Diagnose and/or Assist with the Management of a Concussion?

1.4. In Canada, medical doctors and nurse practitioners are the only licensed healthcare professionals whose scope of practice matches the requirements to provide comprehensive evaluation and diagnosis of a suspected concussion. In geographic regions of Canada with limited access to medical doctors and nurse practitioners (i.e., rural, remote, or northern communities), a licensed healthcare professional,



such as a nurse with pre-arranged access to a medical doctor or nurse practitioner, can fulfill this role. (Parachute, 2024)

- 1.5. Other licensed healthcare providers (e.g., nurses, physiotherapists, chiropractors, and athletic therapists) can assist in the management of a student's recovery; however, they may not diagnosis a concussion.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1. CEO/ Director of Education

It is the responsibility of the CEO/ Director of Education and/or designate to administer this procedure and consult with school staff, students, parents, teacher federations, education support staff unions, and other education partners.

2.2. Senior Administration will:

- regularly review concussion procedures and supporting documents to ensure they align with the current best practices set out by OPHEA Concussion Protocol and aligns with PPM158a;
- ensure concussion training is made available to all school staff and volunteers;
- ensure concussion awareness resources are made available to all students, parents of students under 18 years of age, coaches, team trainers and officials participating in board-sponsored interschool sports;
- partner with KFL&A Public Health and other local experts to ensure concussion awareness and education strategies are made available to students and parents;
- provide support to school administrators and staff to ensure enforcement of these concussion procedures, accurate tracking and the Concussion Return to



School Plan and Return to Physical Activity Plan;

- ensure that information on the Concussion Protocol is provided to community users of school facilities and licensed third-party care providers.

2.3. Principals and Vice Principals or designate will:

- ensure the Board's Concussion Protocol is followed by all staff, coaches and volunteers;
- ensure annual concussion training is completed by all staff;
- ensure annual concussion awareness resources have been reviewed by all students, parents/ guardians of students under 18 years of age, coaches, team trainers and officials participating in board-sponsored interschool sports;
- ensure annual Concussion Protocol has been reviewed by all staff, including coaches, team trainers and officials participating in board-sponsored interschool sports;
- ensure annual Code of Conduct for students and parents/ guardians of students under 18 years of age are completed and readily accessible;
- ensure that forms necessary to implement the protocol are available to all staff;
- communicate and share concussion information, concussion signs, symptoms and information to students and parents/guardians and ensure they know their responsibilities (e.g. curriculum, staff meetings, handouts, newsletters, websites);
- designate a lead within the school to administer the Concussion Management at Home and School (Return to Learn and Return to Physical Activity Protocol)



for a student with a diagnosed concussion and inform any staff who have contact with the student;

- the lead has the responsibility for ensuring the student progresses according to the RTL/RTPA stages, including obtaining medical clearance after completion of RTPA Stage 3 and before Stage 4.
- organize a Collaborative Team for students who need that level of support;
- request and ensure that additional support is available for a student with ongoing symptoms from a concussion and communicate concerns to Senior Administration;
- direct the school team or teacher(s) to develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for the student in cases where the symptoms are ongoing and long lasting; and
- strive to have parents/guardians/students report any non-school related concussions.

2.4. School Staff, Support Staff, Coaches and Volunteers:

- participate in required concussion training and concussion awareness review and understand their role in the Concussion Procedure;
- complete the Board's E-learning module on Concussion Awareness;
- read and follow the Concussion Protocol for Staff working with Students;
- follow the Board's Concussion Protocol – Concussion Management at Home and School (Return to Learn and Return to Physical Activity) including exclusion from athletics and physical education when a student is suspected of having a concussion;
- know what to do in the event of a suspected concussion and what



procedures to follow in the initial response;

- plan age-appropriate activities and follow Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education as a minimum standard;
 - check to see that all equipment is certified (if applicable) and in good working order and is worn appropriately for the activity;
 - provide students with appropriate safety/concussion information prior to participating in activity;
 - be aware of methods of preventing concussions and communicate these to students (e.g. appropriate tackling in football);
- use resources to make curriculum connections to support student learning related to the seriousness of concussions, prevention, identification and management;
- ensure annual concussion awareness resources have been reviewed by all students, parents/ guardians of students under 18 years of age, coaches, team trainers and officials participating in board-sponsored interschool sports;
- ensure annual Codes of Conduct have been reviewed by all students, parents/ guardians of students under 18 years of age, coaches, team trainers and officials participating in board-sponsored interschool sports;
- ensure that all students prior to participating in board-sponsored interschool sports have code of conduct signature verification for both student and parent/ guardian if under 18 (if over 18, only the student code of conduct is required).

2.5. Students will:

- participate in curriculum related to concussion education;



- wear required equipment properly;
- follow the rules and regulations of the activity and ensure fair play is being practiced;
- immediately report any concussion signs or symptoms to staff or coaches;
- immediately report to staff or coaches if they notice any concussion signs or symptoms among their peers;
- follow concussion management strategies of their medical doctor/nurse practitioner;
- review and understand the Concussion Management at Home and School (Return to Learn and Return to Physical Activity Protocol);
- review the concussion awareness resources provided annually and provide proof when participating in board-sponsored interschool sports; and
- review and sign off that they are in agreement with the Student Code of Conduct when participating in board-sponsored interschool sports.

2.6. Parents/Guardians will:

- review and understand the importance of proper concussion management and the Board's Concussion Management at Home and School (Return to Learn/Return to Physical Activity Protocol);
- have their child assessed by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner if there is a suspected concussion;
- return the results of medical examination to the school after medical exam;
- collaborate with the school and medical doctor or nurse practitioner to manage possible or diagnosed concussions;



- support their child with their recovery;
- cooperate with school staff and support their child with the Concussion Management at Home and School (Return to Learn and Return to Physical Activity Protocol); and
- report any non-school related concussion to the school principal so that Concussion Management at Home and School (Return to Learn and Return to Physical Activity Protocol) can be followed;
- Parents/guardians responsibility to communicate symptom changes and provide written medical clearance following RTPA Stage 3 before Stage 4.
- must review the concussion awareness resources provided annually and provide proof of the review, if their child is under 18 years of age and participating in board-sponsored interschool sports;
- must read and review the Concussion Code of Conduct – Parent and sign off electronically that they are in agreement.

2.7. Medical Doctor or Nurse Practitioner will:

- review the Concussion Management at Home and School Return to Learn and Return to Physical Activity Protocol for the Board;
- provide medical support for the student's full recovery; and
- Clearance is now obtained after successful completion of RTPA Stage 3 and before beginning Stage 4. If symptoms recur during Stages 4–6, the student returns to Stage 3 and requires reassessment.



Reference:

Policy/Program Memorandum 158 – Sept 2019
Bill 193, Rowan’s Law (Concussion Safety), 2018

Related Forms

Form 142 - 1	<u>Identification and Management of a Suspected Concussion</u>
Form 142 – 2	<u>Identification of a Suspected Concussion Flow Chart</u>
Form 142 – 3	<u>Concussion Prevention Strategies</u>
Form 142 – 4	<u>Documentation of Medical Examination</u>
Form 142 – 5	<u>Return to School Plan – Stages 1 to 6</u>
Form 142 – 6	<u>Return to Learn – Accommodations and Strategies for the Classroom Teacher</u>
Form 142 – 7	<u>Concussion Return to School Plan for Return to Learning</u>

Resources

Government of Ontario Concussion Awareness Resource e-booklet: Ages 10 and Under
Government of Ontario Concussion Awareness Resource e-booklet: Ages 11-14
Government of Ontario Concussion Awareness Resource e-booklet: Ages 15 and up