



Policy Manual – Students

S.M.17 Concussions

The mission of Catholic Education in Hamilton-Wentworth, in union with our Bishop, is to enable all learners to realize the fullness of humanity of which Our Lord Jesus Christ is the model.

Policy Statement

The Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board (HWCDSD) has the responsibility, under the Education Act, to provide a safe and secure working and learning environment for students and employees. The HWCDSD is committed to reduce and address concussions that occur at all schools and all Board offices and to support students and staff who are medically diagnosed with a concussion.

In order to comply with the HWCDSD's Concussion Policy and Protocols, the HWCDSD provides training to staff, students, volunteers and coaches as required. School staff will take every precaution in order to prevent concussions in the workplace and school environment. School personnel will ensure that the Ontario Physical and Health Education Association (OPHEA) Safety Guidelines are adhered to prior to engaging in any athletic endeavor.

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to maintain a safe learning environment for students within the HWCDSD by bringing awareness to the dangers of a concussion. Moreover, it will also ensure that students with a medically diagnosed concussion are provided with sufficient support to return to school in a safe, progressive manner. A concussion can have a significant impact on a student's cognitive and physical abilities; this policy provides school personnel with the requirements of care for students with concussions as per Policy/Program Memorandum 158 and Bill 193 'Rowan's Law' (Concussion Safety), 2018. Rowan's Law requires that school boards establish a concussion protocol.

Definitions

A concussion:

- is a brain injury that causes changes in the way in which the brain functions and that can lead to symptoms that can be physical (e.g., headache, dizziness), cognitive (e.g., difficulty in concentrating or remembering), emotional/behavioural (e.g., depression, irritability), and/or related to sleep (e.g., drowsiness, difficulty in falling asleep);
- can only be diagnosed by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner;
- may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face, or neck or by a blow to the body that transmits a force to the head that causes the brain to move rapidly within the skull;
- can occur even if there has been no loss of consciousness (in fact most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness);
- cannot normally be seen by means of medical imaging tests, such as X-rays, standard computed tomography (CT) scans, or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans; and,
- injury may lead to "second impact syndrome." This is a rare condition that causes rapid and severe brain swelling and often catastrophic results, when an individual suffers a second concussion before he or she is free from symptoms sustained from the first concussion.

Responsibility

The Principal of each school will ensure that any student with a medically diagnosed concussion will work collaboratively with their school, parents and physician to ensure a progressive return to school is completed using the [HWCDSB's Concussion Protocols](#).

Regulations

[Bill 193 - Rowan's Law \(Concussion Safety\), 2018](#)

[Policy/Program Memorandum 158](#)

Related Policies - N/A**Related Board Committee**

Committee of the Whole

Policy Review Date:

BM Original Policy Approved April 7, 2015 Revisions:

20 June 2017, 06 October 2020, 7 November 2023

To be reviewed every five years.