

Wayne Community Schools  
**2020-21 Concussion Policy**  
See WCS District Policy 6283

In compliance with the Nebraska Concussion Awareness Law LB 260 (7-1-2012) and LB 923 Return to Learn Amendment (4-22-2014), Wayne Community Schools has entered into official policy the directives and responsibilities as identified in such laws.

The Nebraska Concussion Awareness Law LB260 was enacted to provide a means for schools to improve their athletic health care; improve their methods for managing sports-related concussions and the progression for concussed athletes return to play in a more consistent, objective, and safe manner; educate schools, coaches, athletes, and parents to recognize the signs, symptoms, and inherent risk of sports-related concussions.

LB 923 The Return to Learn Amendment is a revision of LB 260 and established a return to learn protocol for students that have sustained a concussion. The return to learn protocol shall recognize that students who have sustained a concussion and returned to school may need informal or formal accommodations, modification of curriculum, and monitoring by medical or academic staff until the student is fully recovered.

In compliance with LB 260 & LB 923, the following step by step policy will be followed when an athlete is *“reasonably suspected”* of having received a concussion or anytime an athlete is removed from a game, practice or sports activity due to a suspected concussion prior to “return to play”, sports’ participation or any school sponsored physical activity.

***Step 1: The athlete will immediately be removed from play, sports participation and all physical activity. No athlete suspected of having sustained a concussion will return to athletic activity until the succeeding steps are fully completed.***

*“When in doubt, sit them out!”* The concussed brain is most vulnerable to a repeat injury (2<sup>nd</sup> Impact Syndrome) following the initial concussion. The 2<sup>nd</sup> injury is very critical to guard against. Previously, athletes were allowed to return to play during the same day, game or practice in which the injury occurred if their symptoms resolved during the course of that activity. Studies have now shown us that the young brain does not recover quickly enough for an athlete to return to activity in the same day of injury. Once a concussion occurs, the brain is most vulnerable to further injury and very sensitive to any increased stress until it fully recovers. If an athlete returns to activity before being fully healed from a concussion, the athlete is at increased risk for a repeat concussion. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain has a chance to recover from the first can slow recovery or increase the chance for long-term potentially life threatening complications.

***Step 2: The athlete’s parents or guardians will be contacted about the suspected concussion.***

Parents or Guardians will be notified immediately after the injury and will be provided information on Wayne Community School’s Concussion Policy and will review the subsequent concussion management protocol.

***Step 3: All athletes suspected of having a concussion must be medically evaluated by a licensed health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of traumatic brain injury among a pediatric population before they are eligible to return to play.***

If the injured athlete is formally medically diagnosed with having sustained a concussion, Steps 4 thru 6 will be followed accordingly and the injured athlete will be disqualified to return to play until all steps are satisfactorily completed.

If the injured athlete is formally and medically determined to “NOT” have sustained a concussion, the injured athlete may then return to play upon having provided a satisfactorily completed Return to Play (RTP) form which requires clearance and signatures from both the examining medical provider and parent/guardian.

***Step 4: The Wayne Community Schools Concussion Management Team (CMT) will be notified of the injured athlete.***

A successful Return to Learn is necessary before Return to Play may be activated. In compliance with Nebraska LB 923, the Wayne Community Schools CMT will design an individual plan to review the student’s concussion recovery and make the necessary academic accommodations until that student no longer needs them as a result of the concussion. After the CMT certifies that no further academic concerns or accommodations are needed, the student may be released to begin the progressive return to play program.

***Step 5: ImPACT Test - Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing.***

ImPACT is an on-line computer-based testing program specifically designed for the management of sports-related concussion. It is a research-based software tool developed at the University of Pittsburg Medical Center that evaluates multiple aspects of neurocognitive function.

ImPACT is the industry leader in neurocognitive post-concussion testing. Current ImPACT clients include the NFL, NBA, NHL, MLB, numerous NCAA Division I Football programs and multiple high schools throughout the United States & Nebraska.

Testing involves a pre-activity baseline test and post-injury test for comparison. When a concussion has occurred, the post-injury test is compared to the baseline report to assess potential changes caused by a concussion. The injured athlete must present satisfactory computer-evaluated post-concussion test scores that indicate neurocognitive function has returned to pre-injury baseline testing levels

ImPACT measures multiple aspects of neurocognitive functioning in athletes, including

- Player symptoms
- Verbal and visual memory, processing speed, and reaction time
- Reaction time measured to a 1/100th of second
- Attention span
- Working memory
- Sustained and selective attention time
- Response variability
- Non-verbal problem solving

***Step 6: Written clearance/consent to return to play by a licensed health care professional, trained in the medical evaluation and management of traumatic brain injury among a pediatric population.***

Before initiating Step 7 Progressive Return to Play, the injured athlete must;

1. Have provided written clearance/consent from the examining medical provider;
2. Have provided written clearance/consent from parents/guardians;

3. Has been certified by the school's Concussion Management Team to Return to Learn;
4. Has satisfactorily completed the ImPACT Post-Concussion Test;
5. Is symptom-free at rest, remains symptom-free or no longer presents signs or symptoms of a concussion in an effort to allow the brain to continue to heal and to re-adjust to physical exertion, the injured athlete may proceed with activity in a gradual step-wise Progressive Return to Play (RTP) Program.

### **Step 7: Progressive Return to Play (RTP) Program.**

**24 hours will be required between each step before advancing to the next step as monitored and directed by the Wayne HS Athletic Trainer. The concussed athlete must remain symptom-free before proceeding to the next step. The concussed athlete will be re-evaluated daily prior to the start of each new step.**

**This process will be repeated until the athlete can complete all steps and remain symptom free. The injured athlete will NOT be allowed to begin the gradual progression for return to sport activity until the program has been satisfactorily completed.**

If concussion symptoms, signs or behaviors recur or are observed, the athlete must stop all activity and be re-evaluated by a licensed health care professional. The athlete may not resume the Progressive Return to Play Program until being symptom free. Once the concussed athlete is symptom free, they may resume the Progressive Return to Play Program starting over with Step 1.

**The return to play schedule will proceed as follows:**

**Step 1:** Symptom-free at rest. No physical or mentally taxing activity.

**Step 2:** Light aerobic exercise. Low level activity. No weight lifting or resistance training.

**Step 3:** Moderate aerobic exercise. Running at moderate intensity without equipment.

**Step 4:** Sport specific drills. Non-contact drills. May begin weight lifting or resistance training.

**Step 5:** Full contact practice, scrimmage or training drills.

**Step 6:** Full game or competition play.

All injuries and/or illnesses preventing an athlete from sports participation must be reported to the Wayne HS Sport Head Coach and/or Wayne HS Athletic Trainer. Athletic injury return to play progression is monitored by the Wayne HS Athletic Trainer under the direction of and approval by the examining medical provider.

**All athletes requiring medical evaluation for injuries or illnesses that subsequently prevent the athlete from sport participation (whether or not the result of athletic participation), are required to provide a satisfactorily completed "Return to Play" clearance form signed by parent(s) or guardian(s) and the examining medical provider.**

Questions or concerns regarding this policy may be directed to;

**Tim Ellis, MS, ATC**

**Wayne HS Athletic Trainer**

**Providence Physical Therapy / Providence Medical Center**

**(402)640-7777**

