

BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE	
Administrative Procedure	Administrative Procedure Number
Concussion Protocol, Awareness & Training	(324) (825-001)
Directional Policy	
Student Achievement and Well Being	

**TITLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE:**

Concussion Protocol, Awareness & Training

**DATE APPROVED:**

November 17, 2020

**PROJECTED REVIEW DATE:**

November 17, 2025

**DIRECTIONAL POLICY ALIGNMENT:**

This Administrative Procedure aligns with the [Student Achievement and Well-Being Directional Policy – 300](#) by ensuring that the Board maximizes, to the extent possible, the achievement and well-being of all students.

**ALIGNMENT WITH MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:**

This administrative procedure aligns with the Board’s multi-year strategic plan, specifically as an expression of its mission “to educate students in faith-filled, safe, inclusive Catholic learning communities by nurturing the mind, body, and spirit of all”.



## Strategic Priorities 2017-2020

### Vision

Achieving Excellence in Catholic Education  
LEARN • LEAD • SERVE

### Mission

To educate students in faith-filled, safe, inclusive Catholic learning communities by nurturing the mind, body and spirit of all.

### LEARN

Achieve excellence in instruction and assessment to enable all students to become reflective, self-directed, lifelong learners.

### LEAD

Foster critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication, to enable all students to realize their God-given potential.

### SERVE

Inspire engagement and commitment to stewardship for creation to enable all students to become caring and responsible citizens.

### BACKGROUND:

On March 7, 2018, the Ontario government enacted Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018, and amended the Education Act, to protect amateur athletes, including students, by improving concussion safety on the field and at school. The amendments to the Education Act came into force on July 1, 2019, and gave the Minister of Education the authority to require school boards to comply with policy and guidelines on concussions, consistent with Rowan's Law.

With the authority under the Education Act, the Minister requires all school boards in Ontario to have a policy on concussion safety for students. The updates to Policy/Program Memorandum 158 - School Board Policies on Concussion now requires all school boards to protect amateur athletes, including students, by improving concussion safety on the field and at school by ensuring that students, parents, coaches and officials are aware, trained and review concussion protocols annually.

PVNCCDSB is committed to helping all students succeed and lead safe, healthy, and active lives. As part of its commitment to student safety, injury prevention, and well-being, PVNCCDSB supports concussion awareness, prevention, identification, management, tracking, and training in schools through legislation, policy, and resources.

The implementation of this administrative procedure in all schools in our Board is another important step in creating safe and healthy learning environments. It also

reinforces the knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding injury prevention that are developed through expectations in various subjects and disciplines in the Ontario curriculum.

**ACTION REQUIRED:**

1. The Board will ensure that information on concussion awareness, prevention, identification, and management is made available to all students, staff, parents/guardians, and volunteers working within the Board. Ongoing communication will be maintained through a variety of communication strategies such as, the Board website and/or other appropriate channels.
2. The Board will ensure that relevant school board staff participate in annual concussion training which includes information on concussion awareness, prevention, and management.
3. All staff are required to implement the protocols and strategies for preventing concussions.
4. The Board will monitor the OPHEA Concussion Protocol, as part of OPASSE, and make recommendations for updates, as needed, to any Board documents related to concussions.

In addition, the updated PPM 158 (2019) requires all school board policies to include the following:

1. the receipt of confirmation of an annual review of an approved Concussion Awareness Resource by individuals participating in board-sponsored interschool sports;
2. the establishment of Concussion Codes of Conduct for individuals participating in board-sponsored interschool sports, and the receipt of confirmation of annual review of the relevant Code of Conduct by those individuals;
3. annual concussion training for school staff;
4. the establishment of a process for the removal of students with a suspected concussion from physical activity and, for those diagnosed with a concussion, a Return to School Plan, which includes their return to learning and to physical activity;
5. the establishment of a process to document and track a student's progress, from removal from an activity due to a suspected concussion, to the return, through graduated steps, to learning and to physical activity.

**Concussion Awareness and Prevention Strategies**

All students, staff, and parents/guardians within the Board will receive information on concussion awareness and prevention and Codes of Conduct through an appropriate communication tool such as, the Board website and/or other appropriate channels;

1. All students will be taught about the risks of concussions (e.g. through the Ontario Curriculum expectations, Rowan's Law Day).
2. For extra-curricular sports and intramurals, the teacher/coach/trainer will meet with the students at the beginning of the season to discuss the following:
  - a) the rules of the game and the importance of practicing fair play and wearing properly fitted protective equipment;
  - b) the risks for concussion associated with the sport and how to minimize those risks; and
  - c) the student's responsibility to immediately inform the teacher and parent/guardian of any signs or symptoms of a concussion, and to remove him or herself from the activity.

### **Concussion Code of Conduct**

1. With respect to interschool sports, all students/athletes, teachers/coaches/trainers, volunteers, and parents/guardians of students under the age of 18 will review, sign, and submit the appropriate Code of Conduct Form which includes information on signs and symptoms and the prevention of concussions.
2. Students under the age of 18 and their parents, will submit their signed forms to the school at the beginning of the school year and prior to participation in Board-sponsored interschool sports. These forms will be kept on file for the school year.
3. Coaches will submit their signed form to their principal/designate at the beginning of the school year and prior to participation in Board-sponsored interschool sports. These forms will be kept on file for the school year.

### **Concussion Training**

Annual training on concussion awareness, prevention, identification, and management will be provided to school staff, Board employees, and school volunteers.

1. School staff, Board employees, and school volunteers will review the Board's Concussion Policy and Administrative Procedures annually.
2. New school staff, who are hired throughout the school year, will have access to concussion training through the appropriate channel (ie. NTIP program or the Human Resources Department).

### **Concussion Identification**

1. In cases where a stakeholder suspects a concussion or a concussion event has occurred due to the nature of the impact, but there are no observable signs present, nor are there any symptoms reported, the stakeholder must report the

incident to school administration and parents/guardians for 24 hour monitoring (as outlined in [PVNC Concussion Protocol Resource Document](#)).

2. School staff, Board employees and/or school volunteers who have identified a student as having a concussion/suspected concussion will follow the concussion protocol as outlined in [PVNC Concussion Protocol Resource Document](#).
3. School staff, Board staff, or volunteers cannot make a concussion diagnosis, but must advise students who are suspected of having sustained a concussion and their parents to seek medical assessment by a physician or a nurse practitioner.
4. Medical doctors or nurse practitioners are the only professionals who can diagnose a concussion and provide medical clearance for a student to Return to Learn (RTL) or Return to Physical Activity (RTPA).
5. A student who is suspected of having sustained a concussion, or the student's parent, if the student is under 18 years of age:
  - a) are encouraged to provide confirmation that the student who is suspected of having sustained a concussion has undergone a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner to support the student's return to learning; and
  - b) must provide confirmation that the student who is suspected of having sustained a concussion has undergone a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner that the student has been medically cleared, before the student can return to full participation in physical activity.

### **Concussion Management**

1. When a student has been diagnosed with a concussion by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner, the principal/designate and school staff will follow the concussion protocol as outlined in [PVNC Concussion Protocol Resource Document](#).
2. School staff will implement any recommended educational accommodations, as deemed appropriate by the medical doctor or nurse practitioner, for the student suffering from a diagnosed concussion;
3. The School Concussion Management Team will work with the student and his or her parents/guardians to follow and implement the Return to School Plan which includes the Return to Learn (RTL) and Return to Physical Activity (RTPA) Plan as outlined in [PVNC Concussion Protocol Resource Document](#).

### **Concussion Tracking**

1. Principal, designate or school staff will:
  - a) document and track the number of suspected and diagnosed concussion-related injuries using an appropriate recording system; and

b) track a student's progress, from removal from an activity due to a suspected concussion, to the return, through graduated steps, to learning and to physical activity.

### **Rowan's Law Day**

1. The last Wednesday in September (or as declared by the provincial government) is established as Rowan's Law Day as indicated in Bill 193. This day will be used to promote concussion awareness and prevention.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

#### **The Board of Trustees is responsible for:**

- ensuring alignment with the Student Achievement and Well Being Directional Policy;
- reviewing the Concussion Administrative Procedure as part of its regular policy and procedures review cycle.

#### **The Director of Education is responsible for:**

- designating resources for ensuring the implementation of, and compliance with this Administrative Procedure.

#### **Superintendent with responsibility for Healthy Schools is responsible for:**

- developing strategies for the prevention and identification of concussions and procedures for diagnosed concussions;
- providing awareness training for all staff and ensure that they align with current best practices, and at a minimum, with the OPHEA Concussion guidelines and OSBIE requirements;
- ensuring that concussion awareness and education strategies are made available to students and parents (websites, hand-outs, newsletters, Twitter, team meetings, curriculum, etc.); and
- ensuring that information on concussion protocols is provided to Community Users of school facilities and licensed third-party care providers not operating Extended Day programs.

#### **Superintendents of Learning and System Portfolios are responsible for:**

- supporting the implementation of this Administrative Procedure.

**Manager of Communications is responsible for:**

- creating a variety of communication strategies to ensure implementation of the Concussion Administrative Procedures; and
- creating a variety of materials to support concussion prevention, awareness and management (i.e., pamphlets, website banners, posters, social media feeds).

**Managers and Supervisors are responsible for:**

- ensuring all individuals whom they supervise, whether directly or indirectly, are aware of this Administrative Procedure.

**Principals and Vice-Principals are responsible for:**

- leading the school community in communicating, understanding and implementing the Concussion Administrative Procedures;
- ensuring that the concussion protocol and procedures, as outlined in [PVNC Concussion Protocol Resource Document](#), will be adhered to when a student suffers a potential concussion and/or has concussion-like symptoms;
- ensuring that forms are available to all staff ([PVNC Concussion Protocol Resource Document](#));
- ensuring that all staff have completed mandatory online training annually;
- in the event of a diagnosed concussion, informing the appropriate school staff, leading the school team, using a collaborative approach, to develop a Return to Learn/Return to Physical Activity Plan (Appendix C), and ensure that the Return to Learn/Return to Physical Activity Plan (Appendix C) process meets the individual needs of the student;
- documenting and tracking the number of suspected and diagnosed concussion-related injuries using an appropriate recording system; and tracking a student's progress, from removal from an activity due to a suspected concussion, to the return, through graduated steps, to learning and to physical activity.
- supporting parents in understanding and following the protocols/strategies;
- ensuring forms and training are provided to those staff/volunteers that are coaching or officiating sports events/activities or offsite activities, as required;
- ensuring forms and training are available to students and parents/guardians involved in inter school sports, as required;
- communicating the importance of reporting any non-school related concussions; and
- ensuring that the school works closely with parents/guardians to support students with a concussion with their recovery and academic success.

**Teachers are responsible for:**

- annually review the Board's Policy and Administrative Procedure on Concussions, the [PVNC Concussion Protocol Resource Document](#), OPHEA Concussion Protocols and participate in Board Concussion Training;
- being informed about what to do in the event of a concussion ([PVNC Concussion Protocol Resource Document](#)) ;
- participating in the required training and understand and follow Concussion Administrative Procedures, as appropriate to their roles;
- ensuring all equipment is certified (if applicable), in good condition, worn properly and is appropriate for the activity;
- planning age-appropriate activities and supervising students at all times;
- providing students with appropriate safety/concussion training prior to participating in activities ([PVNC Concussion Protocol Resource Document](#)) ;
- being aware of the methods of preventing concussion applicable to a specific activity and communicating these to students ([PVNC Concussion Protocol Resource Document](#)) ; and
- being aware of the management protocol in the event of a concussion, including Return to Learn/Return to Physical Activity Plan (Appendix C).

In addition to the above, teachers acting in a coaching/training capacity are responsible for:

- discussing safe play, rules of play, and concussion prevention and management with students prior to engaging in physical activity;
- completing a coach's Code of Conduct Form if he or she is coaching and supervising an interschool sport;
- verifying that signed student or parental/guardian (of students under 18 years of age) permission is on file prior to the student participating in an interschool sport, which acknowledges that they have reviewed the Board's student/athlete Code of Conduct.

**Parents/Guardians are responsible for:**

- learning the signs/symptoms of concussion with students;
- having the student assessed by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner, as soon as possible, in the event that a concussion is suspected;
- collaborating with the school and medical doctor or nurse practitioner to manage possible or diagnosed concussions appropriately;
- supporting concussed students with their recovery;



- cooperating with school staff and supporting a student on the Return to Learn/Return to Physical Activity Plan (Appendix C); and
- reporting any non-school related concussion to the school principal so that the Return to Learn/Return to Physical Activity Plan (Appendix C) can be implemented.

In addition to the above, parents/guardians of students under the age of 18 involved in Board-sponsored Interschool Sports are responsible for:

- reviewing a board-approved concussion awareness resource annually (beginning of school year).
- providing confirmation of review of a board-approved concussion awareness resource annually (beginning of school year).
- reviewing the Concussion Code of Conduct annually (beginning of school year).
- providing confirmation of review of Concussion Code of Conduct annually (beginning of school year).
- submitting confirmation of review of a board-approved concussion awareness resource and Concussion Code of Conduct to each coach of new sport being played in school year.

**Students are responsible for:**

- participating in all safety training to learn to recognize the signs/symptoms of concussions;
- wearing any required equipment in the correct manner;
- following all rules and regulations of an activity;
- immediately reporting any concussion symptoms to staff/coaches;
- informing staff/coaches if they notice/observe concussion signs in any of their peers;
- following concussion management strategies of their medical practitioner; and
- understanding and following the Return to Learn/Return to Physical Activity Plan (Appendix C) as directed by school staff.

In addition to the above, students involved in Board-sponsored Interschool Sports are responsible for:

- reviewing a board-approved concussion awareness resource annually (beginning of school year).
- providing confirmation of review of a board-approved concussion awareness resource annually (beginning of school year).
- reviewing the Concussion Code of Conduct annually (beginning of school year).
- providing confirmation of review of Concussion Code of Conduct annually (beginning of school year).

- submitting confirmation of review of a board-approved concussion awareness resource and Concussion Code of Conduct to each coach of new sport being played in school year.

**The role of Medical Doctors and Nurse Practitioners include the following:**

- reviewing the concussion forms completed by the school;
- providing support and medical assistance (where necessary) for the student's recovery process; and
- participating with the school in the recovery process and in the development or review of the Return to Learn/Return to Physical Activity Plan (Appendix C).

## **Board-sponsored Interschool Sports**

Prior to participating in board-sponsored interschool sports:

**Team trainers are responsible for:**

- reviewing a board-approved concussion awareness resource annually (beginning of school year).
- providing confirmation of review of a board-approved concussion awareness resource annually (beginning of school year).
- reviewing the Concussion Code of Conduct annually (beginning of school year).
- providing confirmation of review of Concussion Code of Conduct annually (beginning of school year).

**Coaches are responsible for:**

- reviewing a board-approved concussion awareness resource annually (beginning of school year).
- providing confirmation of review of a board-approved concussion awareness resource annually (beginning of school year).
- reviewing the Concussion Code of Conduct annually (beginning of school year).
- providing confirmation of review of Concussion Code of Conduct annually (beginning of school year).
- tracking completion of Concussion Code of Conduct and approved concussion resources, from students, parents (for students under age of 18) and officials and submitting to principal/designate.

**Officials are responsible for:**

- reviewing a board-approved concussion awareness resource annually (beginning of school year).
- providing confirmation of review of a board-approved concussion awareness resource annually.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Concussion** – the term for a clinical diagnosis that is communicated by a physician or a nurse practitioner. School staff, board staff, or volunteers cannot make a concussion diagnosis, but must advise students who are suspected of having sustained a concussion and their parents to seek a medical assessment by a physician or a nurse practitioner. The definition of concussion given below is adapted from the definition provided in the concussion protocol in the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education.

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);
- 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.

**Concussion Code of Conduct** – sets out rules of behaviour to minimize concussions while playing sport.

**Concussion Awareness Resources** – information for amateur athletes, parents, coaches, team trainers and officials to improve concussion safety in amateur competitive sport. These resources are to be reviewed annually. Annually, confirmation must be provided by athletes, parents, coaches, team trainers and officials that he/she has reviewed the resources.

**Interschool Sports** – a competition or cooperation between schools. Carried on outside the bounds of an institution or community.

**OPHEA** – a not-for-profit organization that champions healthy, active living in schools and communities through quality programs and services, partnerships and advocacy, and is led by the vision that all children and youth value and enjoy the lifelong benefits of healthy, active living.

### **Prevention Strategies**

**Primary** – information/actions that prevent concussions from happening (e.g., rules and regulations, minimizing slips and falls by checking that classroom floor and activity environments provide for safe traction and are obstacle free).

**Secondary** – expert management of a concussion that has occurred (e.g., identification and Management- Return to Learn and Return to Physical Activity) that is designed to prevent the worsening of a concussion.

**Tertiary** – strategies that help prevent long-term complications of a concussion by advising the participating to permanently discontinue a physical activity/sport based on evidence-based guidelines.

**School Team** – led by the school principal, the school team should include:

- the concussed student;
- the student's parents/guardians;
- school staff and volunteers who work with the concussed student; and,
- the medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

### **PROGRESS INDICATORS:**

1. Evidence that staff have implemented the protocols and strategies for preventing concussions.
2. Evidence that all staff have participated in concussion training (based on OPHEA suggested protocols and strategies for preventing concussions).
3. Successful implementation of communication strategies to promote concussion awareness and training.
4. Evidence that students, coaches, trainers, officials and parents/guardians have participated in concussion awareness training and have signed a Concussion Code of Conduct.
5. Evidence of connections made to the curriculum, particularly in Health and Physical Education.

**APPENDICES:**

[Appendix A: Tool to Identify a Suspected Concussion Form](#)

[Appendix B: Medical Assessment Form- Concussion Signs/Symptoms Present](#)

[Appendix C: Return to Learn/Return to Physical Activity Plan](#)

[Appendix D: Informed Consent for Student Participation and Acknowledgment of Risks](#)

[Appendix E: Player Code of Conduct & Concussion Resource Review for Interschool Sports](#)

[Appendix F: Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct & Concussion Resource Review for Interschool Sports](#)

[Appendix G: Coaches/Supervisor/Other Team Officials Code of Conduct \(Concussion Safety\) for Interschool Sports](#)

[Appendix H: Receipt of Review of Concussion Awareness Resources for Coaches/Supervisor/Other Team Officials](#)

[Appendix I: Return to Learn/Return to Activity Tracking Sheet](#)

**REFERENCES:**

[Policy/Program Memorandum 158](#)

[PVNC Concussion Protocol Resource Document](#)

[OPHEA Concussion Protocol](#)

[Rowan's Law](#)

[Ontario Concussion E Module](#)

[Concussions Ontario](#)

[Parachute Canada - Concussions](#)

[OSBIE](#)