

## RETURN TO LEARN AND RETURN TO PLAY PARENT/GUARDIAN/TEACHER INFORMATION

### **CRCSD Board Regulation 410:**

*In accordance with Iowa Code 280.13C and Iowa Administrative Code 641-54, the Cedar Rapids Community School District implements and mandates both the Return To Learn and Return To Play policies for all students who participate in an extracurricular interscholastic activity in grades seven through twelve.*

In addition, Return to Learn and Return to Play guidelines will be implemented when school staff become aware of any student, PK through 12, who has been diagnosed with a concussion by a health care provider or shows signs/symptoms of concussion. This includes concussions resulting from home/non-school sponsored activities/injuries/accidents.

### **Returning to School After Diagnosis of Concussion:**

For the best possible outcomes, concussion management requires a team of individuals working together to ensure students return to normal cognitive functioning. The team should include parents/guardians, healthcare providers, teachers, counselors, coaches, athletic trainers, the student when age appropriate, and others who are involved with the student. Research supports that 70% of concussions will resolve successfully if managed well within the first four weeks post-injury.

### **Return to School:**

- Research supports that **most students only require 2 to 3 days of absence from school** due to a concussion. If more than 3 days are missed, the school nurse/school counselor will contact parents/guardians.
- When the student is beginning to tolerate 30 to 45 minutes of light mental activity (sitting up, watching TV, light reading) at home, without symptoms worsening, parents/guardians should contact the school nurse/school counselor for a plan to return to school.

### **Return to Learn:**

- The school team, with input from parent/guardian, will determine if any academic adjustments are needed depending upon:
  - ✓ The severity of the symptoms present
  - ✓ The type of symptoms present
  - ✓ The times of day when the student feels better or worse
- If academic adjustments are needed, the school team will determine which adjustments/accommodations the student requires.
- Teachers are encouraged to apply and remove academic adjustments according to the student's symptoms and performance in their class.
- Return to Learn directions provided by healthcare providers will be considered by the school team as suggestions, to be implemented only if the team feels the suggestions are educationally sound, feasible and in alignment with the school's policies and protocols.
- The student will be excluded from all physical activity, athletics and other sanctioned activities, including gym/PE, highly physically active classes like weight training and physically active recess until cleared by a licensed healthcare professional.

### **Return to Play:**

- **In order to return to play, which includes athletics, sanctioned activities, PE and recess, the student must be 100% symptom free at school and at home. Once the parent, school and medical team agree that the student is 100% symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours, as indicated by symptom checklists, the licensed medical provider** (physician, physician assistant, chiropractor, advanced registered nurse practitioner, nurse, physical therapist or licensed athletic trainer) **will approve starting Return to Play.**
  - ✓ The student should be acting the same way as before the concussion, doing regular activities and interacting normally with friends and family.

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- ✓ Symptoms should not return when the student is exposed to loud, busy environments at home, school or in the community.
- ✓ At school, the student should be handling school work at the same level as before the concussion.
- ✓ The student should be able to complete homework as efficiently as before the concussion.
- ✓ School workload should be back to where it was pre-concussion.
- ✓ The student should be off all medications used to treat concussion symptoms, including ibuprofen and acetaminophen.
- ✓ The student should have a steady decrease in symptoms while noticing a steady increase in the ability to handle more rigorous home, social and school demands.

*If concussion symptoms reappear at any time during return to learn and/or play, the student will cease activity and be re-evaluated by a licensed healthcare professional.*

**Graduated Return to Play steps for student athletes, grades 7-12, which includes dance, cheerleading, or sport governed by the IAHSAA** (baseball, basketball, bowling, cross country, football, golf, soccer, swimming/diving, tennis, track and field, wrestling); **IGHSAU** (volleyball, softball, basketball, bowling, cross country, golf, soccer, swimming/diving, tennis, track and field):

**Step 1:** Athlete has received written medical clearance from a licensed healthcare provider to begin the return to play process, AND the athlete is back to regular activities, including school, without experiencing any concussion signs, symptoms, or behaviors for a minimum of 24 hours.

**Step 2:** Low impact, light aerobic exercise. Walking or stationary cycling at slow to medium pace. No resistance/weight training.

**Step 3:** Basic exercise, such as running in the gym or on the field. No helmet or other equipment.

**Step 4:** Non-contact, sport-specific training drills (dribbling, ball handling, batting, fielding, running drills) in full equipment. Resistance/weight training may begin.

**Step 5:** Full contact practice and participation in normal training activities.

**Step 6:** Contest participation.

### Links:

Iowa Department of Public Health concussion information: <https://idph.iowa.gov/brain-injuries/concussion>

Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union: <https://www.ighsau.org/>

Iowa High School Athletic Association: <https://www.iahsaa.org/>

Brain Injury Alliance of Iowa: <https://biaia.org/>

References: Iowa Code 280.13C; IAC 641-54, REAP, Iowa Version 2.0, Iowa Department of Public Health, IAHSAA, IGHSAU, Iowa Department of Education