

# **PEEL DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD POLICY**

## **CONCUSSION PREVENTION and INTERVENTION**

**POLICY ID:** TBD

**FUNCTIONAL CATEGORY:** TBD

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Associate Director of School Improvement & Equity, Curriculum & Instruction, Student & Community Engagement

**APPROVAL:** Board of Trustees

**APPROVAL DATE:** 3/29/2023

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** 3/30/2023

**PROJECTED REVIEW DATE:** September 30, 2023

**REVIEW SCHEDULE:** Annual review

### **1. Purpose**

The Peel District School Board (PDSB) recognizes the importance of the health, safety, and overall well-being of its students and staff and that these are essential preconditions for effective learning. PDSB is committed to promoting awareness of safety in schools and reducing the risk of injury and specifically awareness of the signs and symptoms of concussions and knowledge of how to properly manage a diagnosed concussion.

This policy complies with and is in accordance with the Education Act, Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety) and the Ministry Policy/Program Memorandum No 158. This policy is aligned with and supports the principles and expectations of PDSB's Human Rights Policy (Policy 51), the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy (Policy 54) and the Anti-Racism Policy. At all times, this policy is to be interpreted to be consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Accessibilities for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and relevant Board policies and procedures.

### **2. Application and Scope:**

This policy applies to all employees, students, parents/guardians, coaches, team trainers, officials, volunteers. This policy applies to all interschool activities, intramural

activities whether on school site or off school site, self-injurious behaviours, as well as any activities where collisions can occur such as during physical education classes, playground time or school-based sports activities.

### **3. Definitions**

#### **3.1 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 (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.

#### **3.2 PDSB is the Peel District School Board.**

### **4. Policy**

#### **4.1 Guiding Principles:**

- Research demonstrates that a concussion can have a significant impact on an individual; cognitively, physically, emotionally and/or socially.
- Children and adolescents are among those at greatest risk for concussions. While there is potential for a concussion any time there is body trauma, the risk is greatest during activities where collisions can occur, such as during

physical education classes, playground time, or school-based sports activities.

- Educators and school staff (employees) play a crucial role in the identification of a suspected concussion as well as the ongoing monitoring and management of a student with a concussion. Awareness of the signs and symptoms of concussion and knowledge of how to properly manage a diagnosed concussion is critical in a student's recovery and is essential in helping to prevent the student from returning to learning or physical activities too soon and risking further complications.
- It is a joint responsibility of parents, students, employees, and the community to promote student health and safety and to foster healthy and safe environments in which students can learn.
- A concussion can only be diagnosed by a medical professional.

4.2 It is expected that the concussion awareness resources developed for the government of Ontario by leading experts in injury prevention and available on the government's concussion website shall be used to ensure consistency in information. The concussion awareness resources shall be made available to students, parents, staff, volunteers, organizations that use PDSB school facilities, licensed childcare providers operating in the PDSB's schools and partners as deemed relevant by the Director of Education or their designate. Confirmation must be received from the below list of individuals that they have reviewed the concussion awareness resources every school year prior to participation in board sponsored interschool sports:

- Students participating in board sponsored interschool sports or intramural sports
- Parents of students under 18 years of age who are participating in board sponsored interschool sports or intramural sports
- Coaches participating in board sponsored interschool sports or intramural sports

- Team trainers or other staff participating in board interschool sports or intramural sports
  - Officials participating in board sponsored interschool sports or intramural sports
- 4.3 Concussion awareness should be included in the curriculum and annual staff training as relevant. This could include annual concussion awareness events, such as Rowan's Law Day, for students and staff. Concussion awareness should be ongoing throughout the school year.
- 4.4 There shall be annual concussion training for relevant staff around this policy and procedures arising from this policy as well as the concussion awareness resources. There shall be mechanisms for the new staff to obtain the training, where relevant, if they commence their employment after the annual training has taken place.
- 4.5 PDSB shall develop and implement strategies for preventing and minimizing the risk of students sustaining concussions at school as well as staff sustaining concussions while carrying out their duties.
- 4.6 For board sponsored interschool sports or intramural sports, there shall be a Concussion Code of Conduct applicable to students, parents, coaches, and team trainers. The Concussion Code of Conduct shall be made available to students, parents, staff, volunteers, organizations that use PDSB school facilities, licensed child care providers operating in the PDSB's schools and partners as deemed relevant by the Director of Education or their designate. There shall be confirmation every school year from the below individuals that the Concussion Code of Conduct was reviewed prior to participation in board sponsored interschool sports or intramural sports:
- Students participating in board sponsored interschool sports or intramural sports
  - Parents of students under 18 years of age who are participating in board sponsored interschool sports or intramural sports

- Coaches participating in board sponsored interschool sports or intramural sports
  - Team trainers or other staff participating in board sponsored interschool sports or intramural sports.
- 4.7 There shall be developed and implemented a procedure to establish processes for the identification of suspected concussions.
- 4.8 Parents/guardians are required to advise the school principal of any concussion that the student has regardless of where the concussion was incurred. For example, if the concussion occurred while playing minor sports through a municipal run program or whether the concussion occurred while playing interschool sports.
- 4.9 There shall be developed and implemented a procedure outlining a Return to School Plan for students who have been diagnosed with a concussion, regardless of whether the concussion was sustained at school or elsewhere. The Return to School Plan supports both the student's return to learning and their return to physical activity. PDSB is entitled to rely on the information provided by students and parents in carrying out the PDSB's responsibilities as part of the Return to School Plan. Ophea (Ontario Physical and Health Education Association) maintains a concussion protocol as part of the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education. It was developed in partnership with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, medical professionals, sport and recreation organizations, health organizations and educational organizations. The Return to School Plan shall refer to the Ophea concussion protocol.
- 4.10 A tracking system shall be developed and implemented to 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. The collection, use, access, and disclosure of personal and health information to which is reasonably necessary to carry out this policy and any resulting

procedures shall be collected, used, accessed, retained and disclosed in accordance with legislation and PDSB policies and procedures.

- 4.11 Report annually to the Board of Trustees on the activities to implement this policy and report to the Minister of Education upon request on the activities to achieve the requirements outlined in this policy and related procedures.

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

- 5.1 The Director of Education holds primary responsibility, through their designate(s) for implementation of this Policy. Responsibility for the coordination and day to day management of this Policy and related procedures is assigned to the Associate Director of School Improvement & Equity, Curriculum & Instruction, Student & Community Engagement.
- 5.2 Further roles and responsibilities will be outlined in related procedures.

## **6. Reference Documents**

Education Act

Policy/Program Memorandum 158

Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety) 2018

Concussion Awareness Resources

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education

Ophea (Ontario Physical and Health Education Association)

Ontario Public Health Standards: Requirements for Programs, Services and Accountability

Personal Health Information and Protection of Privacy Act

## **7. Revision History**

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Review Date	Approval Date	Description