



**Responsible Office:** Office of Strategies

## **BOARD POLICY 5345**

### **PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF SPORT RELATED INJURIES**

#### **PURPOSE**

The Board of Trustees (Board) recognizes the importance of athletics and other activities as a component of a student's educational and physical development, and the maintenance of the health and safety of student participants. The Washoe County School District (District) shall partner with employees, coaches, and the community to ensure student-athletes follow appropriate safety protocols, to include those related to concussion/head injury, cardiac care, and heat acclimatization. This Board Policy and any associated documents shall provide guidance related to the prevention and treatment of sport related injuries.

#### **DEFINITIONS**

1. "Coach" refers to individuals employed by the District for the purpose of supervising a student team or organization. The term may extend to an individual approved by District as a volunteer coach.
2. "Concussion" is a traumatic brain injury that alters the brain functions.
3. "District athletic activities" are categorized as follows:
  - a. Sanctioned high school athletic activities that are governed by the Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association (NIAA);
  - b. Recognized high school athletic activities that are not sanctioned by the NIAA but are recognized by the District;
  - c. Middle school competitive athletic teams that are organized and sponsored by the District; and
  - d. Elementary school competitive athletic teams that are organized and sponsored by the District.
4. "Second-impact syndrome" (SIS) occurs when a person suffers a second concussion before symptoms from an earlier one has subsided. The second impact may occur minutes, days or weeks after an initial concussion and may lead to severe swelling of the brain.

## **POLICY**

1. The health and safety of student-athletes shall be given the highest consideration in planning and conducting athletic activities. This includes regard for known student health conditions and the prevention and/or care of injuries and other health concerns.
2. The District shall implement and utilize universal precautions for the prevention and treatment of injuries and other health concerns by ensuring appropriate safety precautions are in place during practices and competitions. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - a. Head Injury and Concussion Management protocols to reduce the risk of injury to a student due to a concussion or head injury, including second-impact syndrome. The District's head injury and concussion management protocols shall include procedures to help ensure a student is able to safely participate in practice and/or competition following an injury;
    - i. In accordance with state law, the District and student-athletes participating on an NIAA sanctioned athletic team shall comply with the adopted policies and regulations of the Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association (NIAA) related to head injuries and concussion management and "return to play" protocols;
    - ii. Information regarding the District's Concussion Management Program shall be provided to each student-athlete and his/her parent/guardian as part of the athletic participation packet, generally during the online athletic registration process;
  - b. Sudden Cardiac Arrest. All paid and volunteer athletic coaches and athletic trainers in the District shall be trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED);
  - c. Controlled Substances. The District recognizes that the use of controlled substances, to include anabolic steroids or performance enhancing substances, presents a serious health hazard to students. Teachers, coaches, and administrative employees shall make every effort to ensure that students do not begin or continue the use of controlled substances, anabolic steroids, or performance enhancing substances;
  - d. Severe/Inclement Weather and Air Quality Concerns;
    - i. Student-athletes may be exposed to adverse weather conditions or air quality during times of practice or competition. As such conditions may impact playing conditions and potentially lead to student health concerns, the District shall utilize the protocols and best practices developed by such organizations as the Center for Disease Control,

the National Weather Service, and local agencies such as the Washoe County Health Department in determining if conditions are safe; and

- ii. The District recognizes that conditions may vary from school to school due to the size of the county and varied elevations and will communicate with school sites in determining the proper course of action when adverse conditions arise.
3. The principal or designated site administrator is responsible for the supervision, well-being, and safety of all participants in school-sanctioned activities. All athletic teams shall be supervised by coaches to ensure that student-athletes receive appropriate instruction and guidance related to safety, health, training, and preparation for competition. NIAA sanctioned-athletic events shall be officiated by qualified personnel.
4. The role of the coach is to assist student-athletes in developing athletic potential. This includes analyzing student performances, instructing relevant skills, and providing encouragement.
5. No student participant should be encouraged or permitted by the coach, athletic trainer, or other employees to engage in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that unnecessarily endangers the health of the student, including using a helmet or any other sports equipment as a weapon.
6. Each student participating in an extracurricular athletic activity must complete the District's athletic clearance process, to include a medical examination.
7. The District shall, to the extent possible and practicable, provide information and/or training to coaches/advisors, student-athletes, and their parents/guardians related to:
  - a. The nature and risk of injuries to the head which may occur during a student-athlete's participation in competitive sports, including, but not limited to, the risks associated with continuing to participate in competitive sports after sustaining such an injury;
  - b. Recognizing the symptoms of potentially catastrophic injuries, including head and neck injuries, concussions, injuries related to second impact syndrome, asthma attacks, heatstroke, cardiac arrest, and injuries requiring use of a defibrillator; and
  - c. The risks of using dietary supplements designed to enhance or marketed as enhancing athletic performance.
8. The Board hereby directs the Superintendent to adopt an Administrative Regulation to implement and maintain the purpose of this Board Policy. The Superintendent shall include in the Administrative Regulation the following provisions:

- a. Head injury and concussion management including "return to play" protocols;
- b. Procedures for ensuring appropriate school employees are notified when a student-athlete has been injured or other health concern has occurred. This may include the school nurse, school administrator, and teachers of certain subjects such as PE or career/technical education where risk of further injury may exist;
- c. The manner in which a student-athlete must be medically cleared to participate on an athletic team, to include both practice and games and following an injury or other medical concern; and
- d. Regarding additional concussion management and "return to play" protocols.

### **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

1. This Board Policy reflects the goals of the District's Strategic Plan and aligns/complies with the governing documents of the District, to include:
  - a. Board Policy 5300, Student Activities;
  - b. Board Policy 5325, District-Recognized Athletics;
  - c. Board Policy 5340, District-Sanctioned Interscholastic Activities; and
  - d. Board Policy 5625, Student Health and Welfare.
2. This Board Policy complies with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC), to include:
  - a. Chapter 385B, Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association;
  - b. Chapter 391, Personnel, and specifically:
    - i. NRS 391.092, Certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation: Establishment and submission of plan for training; requirements of plan; certain educational personnel required to establish and maintain certification; agreement to provide training; and
  - c. Chapter 392, Pupils, and specifically:
    - i. NRS 392.452, Adoption of policy by school district for prevention and treatment of injuries to the head which may occur during participation in competitive sports; requirements of policy; annual acknowledgment of policy by parent and pupil.
3. This Board Policy complies with federal laws and regulations, to include:
  - a. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681

et seq., and the implementing regulations, 34 C.F.R. Part 106.

**REVISION HISTORY**

Date	Revision	Modification
2/27/2018	1.0	Adopted: Removed from Board Policy 5305
10/29/2019	2.0	Revised:
03/08/2022	3.0	Revised: Update formatting, clarify language to reflect current practice.