

## **Policy Statement**

It is the policy of the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board to develop and implement policies and procedures that create awareness of the seriousness of concussions, along with strategies for the prevention of concussions, the identification and management of diagnosed concussions, and training for school board staff and school volunteers. It is also the policy of the Keewatin-Patricia School Board to work with community partners to promote awareness and prevention of concussions.

## **Rationale**

Recent research has made it clear that a concussion can have a significant impact on a student's cognitive and physical abilities. In fact, research shows that activities that require concentration can actually cause a student's concussion symptoms to reoccur or worsen. It is equally important to help students as they "return to learn" in the classroom as it is to help them "return to physical activity".

## **Definitions**

Concussion is the term for a clinical diagnosis that is made by a medical doctor or a nurse practitioner.

A concussion:

1. 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);
2. 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;

3. Can occur even if there has been no loss of consciousness (in fact most concussions occur without loss of consciousness); and
4. 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.

### **Guidelines**

We recognize that educators and school staff 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 concussions 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. Ultimately, this awareness and knowledge could help contribute to the student's long term health and academic success. As part of the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board's Policy on Concussions, the procedures document will reflect the following components:

1. Development of Awareness of Concussions
2. Prevention of Concussions
3. Identification of Concussions
4. Management of Procedures for a Diagnosed Concussion
5. Regular and Ongoing Training on Concussions