

SIJHSAA Concussion Protocol

On August 3rd, 2015, Governor Rauner signed into law SB 07 (Public Act 99-245). The legislation focuses primarily on concussion management at the middle school/junior high school and high school levels. The legislation amends the School Code and is a requirement for all schools.

Highlights of the Youth Sports Safety Act:

- Each school board in the state of Illinois shall adopt a policy regarding student athlete concussions and head injuries that is in compliance with the protocols policies, and by laws developed by the Illinois High School Association. Please see the Play Hard, Play Smart link on the IHSA Website. (www.ihsa.org)
- Information on the school board's concussion and head injury policy must be a part of any agreement, contract, code, or other written instrument that a school district requires a student-athlete and his/her parents or guardian to sign before participating in practice or interscholastic competition. The SIJHSAA has provided a Concussion Information Sheet and Sign-Off Form that schools may use to notify athletes and their parents/guardian about the dangers of concussions and head injuries. Each school may produce its own form if it wishes or modify the provided generic version for their school.
- Each school district shall use education materials provided by the Illinois High School Association to educate coaches, student-athletes, and parents/guardians of student-athletes about the nature and risk of concussions and head injuries, including continuing play after a concussion or head injury.
- The formation of Concussion Oversight Teams (COT) at all public, private, or charter schools. The COT's primary function will be to develop return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols for students believed to have experienced a concussion. The protocols should be based on peer-reviewed scientific evidence consistent with guidelines from the Center of Disease Control and Prevention. These teams can contain a range of individuals based on the resources available to the school in their community or neighborhood but must include one person who is responsible for implementing and complying with the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols.
- No later than September 1, 2016, all interscholastic coaches and licensed officials will need to complete a training program of at least two hours on concussions. Coaches, nurses, and game officials must provide the school or district with proof of successful completion of the training. Training must be completed every two years. Head coaches and assistant coaches must complete the required training. Once available, SIJHSAA member schools will receive concussion education materials from the SIJHSAA office that have been provided by the IHSA.
- Public, Private and Charter schools must also develop a school-specific emergency action plan for interscholastic athletic activities to address the serious injuries and acute medical conditions in which the condition of the student may deteriorate rapidly. There are certain provisions the plan must include and it must be reviewed by the COT before being approved by the school. The plan must be distributed to appropriate personnel, posted at the school, and reviewed annually. Links to sample information may be found on the IHSA Website. (www.ihsa.org)
- Student and parent signatures on concussion information is good for the length of the school year in which they were signed. This document is good for all sports that they participate in that school year.