



## Concussion Protocol Agreement



To compete at any Cheer U Events & Entertainment competition or tournament, each player/athlete is required to read the following information as provided by the State of New Jersey Department of Education. Following, you will need to acknowledge by signing the last page of the agreement.

Below you will find two documents:

1. Updated Concussion Protocols and Guidance
2. Sports-Related Concussion and Head Injury Fact Sheet and Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement Form

Each player/athlete must read and acknowledge all the documents found within this packet. Each player/athlete must then sign the last page and provide it to Cheer U Events & Entertainment prior to stepping into the competition site or playing field.

If any player/athlete fails to sign this agreement, they will not be allowed to compete at any event hosted by Cheer U Events & Entertainment until the agreement is signed.

Any player/athlete who does not agree with or refuses to sign the agreement will not be allowed to participate in the sporting event.

While we understand that you are excited about performing / competing, we truly believe that your health and safety comes first. It is our top priority, and we take it very seriously.

If there are any questions or concerns regarding this information or the agreement and its stipulations, please let us know as soon as possible so that we may be able to assist.

Contact Information:

Aimee Demarest Hopka}  
President/CEO  
Cheer U Events & Entertainment  
(c) 908-509-1508  
(e) [info@cheeruevents.com](mailto:info@cheeruevents.com)

Thank you for your interest in playing/competing with us. We hope to see you soon!

All my best,

A handwritten signature in pink ink that reads 'Aimee Hopka'.

Aimee Demarest Hopka



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

# DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: September 14, 2023  
To: Local Educational Agency Leads  
Route to: School Nurses, School Physicians, Athletic Directors, Athletic Trainers, Coaches  
From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner  
Division of Educational Services

## Updated Concussion Protocols and Guidance

On September 24, 2021, [P.L. 2021, c.222](#) was approved, which amended and supplemented existing protocols and guidance on head injuries sustained by student athletes, as established in P.L. 2010, c.94.. Based on this legislation's requirements, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) reviewed and updated the model concussion policy and fact sheet for student athletes.

### Key steps/actions

Each district board of education, charter school, renaissance school project, and non-public school policy must comply with the minimum requirements stated in N.J.S.A. 18A: 40-41.1 - 41.4 regarding the care and treatment of student-athletes, including cheerleaders, who is suspected of sustaining a sports-related concussion or head injury. This policy must be reviewed annually, and update as necessary, to ensure that the policy reflects the most current information available on the prevention, risk, and treatment of sports-related concussions and head injuries developed by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Local Education Agencies (LEAs) may consider providing regular education and training related to concussions for staff including administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, and school counselors regarding concussions and other head injuries.

The updated [Model Policy and Guidance for Districts on the Prevention and Treatment of Sports-Related Head Injuries and Concussions](#) is now available online. The updated [Concussion Fact Sheet and Acknowledgement Form](#) is also available. The fact sheet is to be distributed annually and signed by the student athlete or cheerleader and their parent or guardian. LEAs and non-public schools that distribute this form are directed to adopt the revised form and distribute the updated versions going forward. If previous versions of the form were submitted for this school year, they are acceptable. If the website of a LEA includes these documents, please verify that the previous version is removed and that it is replaced with a link to the current version.

As a reminder, the A-45 was updated in 2014 to add space to record concussion and traumatic brain injury. School nurses must document if a student is diagnosed with a concussion (as part of athletic competition or otherwise). School nurses are uniquely positioned to work with health care providers, teachers, coaches, athletic trainers, students, and parents to support student health by coordinating necessary support during recovery.

### Contact Information

For questions, please contact the Office of Student Support Services at [healthysch@doe.nj.gov](mailto:healthysch@doe.nj.gov).

c: Members, State Board of Education  
NJDOE Staff  
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network  
Garden State Coalition of Schools  
NJ LEE Group



## **Sports-Related Concussion and Head Injury Fact Sheet and Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement Form**

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that can be caused by a blow to the head or body that disrupts the normal functioning of the brain. This sudden movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, creating chemical changes in the brain and sometimes stretching and damaging brain cells, disrupting the way the brain normally functions. Concussions can cause significant and sustained neuropsychological impairment affecting balance, reading (tracking), problem solving, planning, memory, attention, concentration, and behavior. Concussions can range from mild to severe. Having a concussion increases the risk of sustaining another concussion. Second-impact syndrome may occur when a person sustains a second concussion while still experiencing symptoms of a previous concussion. It can lead to severe impairment and even death.

### **Requirements addressing sports-related concussions and head injuries for student athletes and cheerleaders**

- All school districts, charter, and non-public schools that participate in interscholastic sports are required to distribute this educational fact to all student athletes and cheerleaders and obtain a signed acknowledgment from each parent/guardian and student-athlete.
- Each school district, charter, and non-public school shall develop a written policy describing the prevention and treatment of sports-related concussion and other head injuries sustained by interscholastic student-athletes and cheerleaders.
- Any cheerleader or student-athlete who participates in an interscholastic sports program and is suspected of sustaining a concussion will be immediately removed from competition or practice. The student-athlete will not be allowed to return to competition or practice until they have written clearance from a physician trained in concussion treatment and have completed his/her district's graduated return-to-play protocol.

### **Quick Facts**

- Most concussions do not involve loss of consciousness.
- You can sustain a concussion even if you do not hit your head.
- A blow elsewhere on the body can transmit an "impulsive" force to the brain and cause a concussion.
- Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after an injury or may not appear or be noticed until hours or days after the injury.

### **Signs of Concussions (Observed by Coach, Athletic Trainer, Parent/Guardian/Caregiver, Teammate, and others)**

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Forgets plays or demonstrates short term memory difficulties (e.g., unsure of game, opponent)
- Exhibits difficulties with balance, coordination, concentration, and attention

- Answers questions slowly or inaccurately
- Is unable to recall events prior to or after the hit or fall

### **Symptoms of Concussion (Reported by Student-Athlete)**

- Headache
- Nausea/vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double vision or changes in vision - trouble reading
- Sensitivity to light/sound
- Feeling of sluggishness or foginess - fatigue
- Difficulty with concentration, short term memory, and/or confusion

### **Dangerous Signs & Symptoms of a Concussion**

- New onset of symptoms
- One pupil is larger than the other
- Drowsiness or inability to wake up
- A headache that gets worse and does not go away
- Slurred speech, weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting, nausea, or seizures (shaking or twitching)
- Unusual behavior, increased confusion, restlessness, or agitation
- Loss of consciousness (passed out/knocked out); even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously.

### **What should a student-athlete do if they think they have a concussion?**

- Do not hide it. Tell your athletic trainer, coach, school nurse, or parent/guardian.
- Report it. Do not return to competition or practice with symptoms of a concussion or head injury.
- Take time to recover. If you have a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is healing you are much more likely to sustain a second concussion.

### **What can happen if a student-athlete continues to play with a concussion or returns to play too soon?**

- Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the student-athlete vulnerable to second impact syndrome.
- Second impact syndrome is when a student-athlete sustains a second concussion while still having symptoms from a previous concussion or head injury.
- Second impact syndrome can lead to severe impairment and even death in extreme cases.

### **Should there be any temporary academic accommodation made for student-athletes who have suffered a concussion?**

- Most students will only need help through informal, academic adjustments as they recover from a concussion.
- Students may need to take rest breaks, spend fewer hours at school, be given extra time to complete assignments, as well as being offered other instructional strategies and classroom accommodations
- Contact the school nurse if symptoms persist to discuss whether additional accommodations are

necessary.

- To recover, cognitive rest is just as important as physical rest. Reading, texting, computer use and even watching movies can slow down recovery. Limit screen time during recovery.

**Students who have sustained a concussion may not return to practice or competition until they receive written clearance from a physician trained in the evaluation and management of concussion and complete the graduated [Six-step return to play protocol outlined by the CDC](#):**

**Step 1: Back to regular activities (such as school)**

Athletes or cheerleaders are back to their regular activities (such as school).

**Step 2: Light aerobic activity**

Begin with light aerobic exercise only to increase an athlete’s heart rate. This means about 5 to 10 minutes on an exercise bike, walking, or light jogging. No weightlifting at this point.

**Step 3: Moderate activity**

Continue with activities to increase an athlete’s heart rate with body or head movement. This includes moderate jogging, brief running, moderate-intensity stationary biking, moderate-intensity weightlifting (less time and/or less weight from their typical routine).

**Step 4: Heavy, non-contact activity**

Add heavy non-contact physical activity, such as sprinting/running, high-intensity stationary biking, regular weightlifting routine, non-contact sport-specific drills (in 3 planes of movement).

**Step 5: Practice & full contact**

Athletes may return to practice and full contact (if appropriate for the sport) in controlled practice.

**Step 6: Competition**

Young athletes may return to competition.

For further information on Sports-Related Concussions and other Head Injuries, please visit:

- [CDC Heads Up](#)
- [Keeping Heads Healthy](#)

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Student athlete’s name (print)

Student athlete’s signature

Date

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Parent / Guardian name (print)

Parent / Guardian signature

Date