



Anchorage School District

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Dear Parent/Guardian,

Beginning with the 2011-12 school year, Alaska law requires that school districts have a program in place for the prevention and management of concussions in student athletes. The Anchorage School District is pleased to inform you of the steps we are taking within our sports programs to prevent and respond to the serious problem of student concussion.

The Anchorage School District has developed "Guidelines for Concussion Prevention, Identification, Treatment, and Management." The Guidelines provide for training of coaches, nurses, and athletes; require dissemination of important information to parents and athletes about the nature and risks of concussion; and provide for assessment and evaluation of students both pre-season and at the time of injury. The Guidelines can be obtained from your student's coach, the school office, or online at:

High School:

http://www.asdk12.org/activities/high/participant_HS.asp

Middle School:

http://www.asdk12.org/activities/middle/participant_MS.asp

As part of its concussion management program, the District is implementing an innovative program for all our student-athletes. This program will assist coaches and your own health provider in evaluating and treating concussions. We are utilizing a software tool called ImPACT (Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing). ImPACT is a computerized exam utilized in many professional, collegiate, and high school sports programs across the country to successfully diagnose and manage concussions. The Anchorage School District has participated in an ImPACT pilot program over the last several years. If an athlete is believed to have suffered a head injury during practice or competition, ImPACT is used to determine the severity of head injury and when the injury has fully healed.

We are requiring all students who participate in ASD sports to obtain an ImPACT baseline screening. This needs to be done only once in middle school and again once in high school. The computerized exam will be given by ASD prior to or at the beginning of the sport season. This non-invasive test is set up in "video game" format and takes about 15-20 minutes to complete. It is simple and many athletes enjoy the challenge of taking the test. Essentially, the ImPACT baseline test is a preseason physical of the brain. It tracks information such as memory, reaction time, speed, and concentration. It is not an IQ test.

The cost of the baseline test is \$5 and will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

If concussion is suspected, you are highly encouraged to ask your follow-up health care provider about ImPACT post-testing. Both the preseason and post-injury test data can help to evaluate the injury and better enable health professionals to determine when return-to-play is appropriate and safe for the injured athlete.

It is also important to know that Alaska's new concussion law has specific requirements in the event an athlete is suspected of having a concussion. The athlete must be removed immediately from the activity. The athlete cannot return to play until a written release has been provided by a qualified individual who has received training and is certified in the evaluation and management of concussions. As a parent, it will be your responsibility to obtain a release from a qualified provider. Currently, the Anchorage School District requires that a specific medical release be utilized in order to meet our obligations under the new law. This form, entitled Anchorage School District Medical Release for Concussion Patient, will be provided to you should your student suffer a concussion. The form will also be provided directly to your provider upon request, or can be obtained from the ASD website at

High School:

http://www.asdk12.org/activities/high/participant_HS.asp

Middle School:

http://www.asdk12.org/activities/middle/participant_MS.asp

We wish to stress that the ImPACT baseline test is non-invasive and poses no risk to your student. We are excited to implement this program for all of our athletes. The Anchorage School District is striving to keep your child's health and safety at the forefront of the student athletic experience. If you have any further questions regarding this program, please feel free to contact the Activities Department at your school.

Sincerely,



Carol Comeau
Superintendent