



February 9, 2017

To: Member Districts
From: Robert J. Kretzmer, Director
Subject: Concussion Education and Protocols

The concern of concussions in sports activities has been highly publicized in professional sports. This concern also exists in organized sports for all school levels and has been the impetus for a number of enacted pieces of legislation to protect individuals suspected of sustaining a concussion and to provide a higher standard of safety for athletes.

Training of Coaches

In addition, member districts need to know that Assembly 1451 amended Education Code section 35179.1 effective **January 1, 2013**. This bill indicates that it was the intent of the Legislature to establish a California High School Coaching Education and Training Program. A portion of the bill indicates that training should include a section on teaching a basic understanding of the signs and symptoms of concussions and the appropriate response to concussions.

Member districts can utilize the free video provided by the National Federation of High School State Associations (NFHS) which can be located on the California Interscholastic Federation website at <http://www.cifstate.org/index.php/the-latest-news/concussions>. This short twenty minute video provides the necessary training for a high school coach to fulfill the requirements under Education Code section 35179.1.

Athletic Programs and Concussions

Assembly Bill 2127 amended Education Code section 49475 and added Education Code section 35179.5 and became effective on **January 1, 2015**. It explains the duties and responsibilities for a school district that elects to offer an athletic program. The code indicates that an athlete who is suspected of having a concussion or head injury in an athletic activity shall be immediately removed from the athletic activity for the remainder of the day. The athlete may not be allowed to return to the athletic activity until he or she has been given written clearance to return to the activity by a licensed health care provider. If the licensed health care provider determines that the athlete sustained a concussion, the athlete shall also complete a graduated return-to-play protocol of not less than seven days duration. Education Code

section 49475 also provides that the athlete shall complete a concussion and head injury information sheet on a yearly basis before participation in the athletic activity.

Recent Legislation and Youth Sports

SISC II has received recent inquiries concerning youth sports that take place outside of the purview of school districts. This legislation, Assembly Bill 2007, was signed by the Governor on September 26, 2016 and became effective on **January 1, 2017**. The bill adopts sections of the Education Code related to concussions as noted above into the Health and Safety Code (Section 124235) so they are applicable to youth sports. This new legislation has no effect on protocols for our member districts.

SISC II Resources

In the event your district is interested in receiving informational material or posters that can be placed at school sites providing information on concussions please contact the SISC II Safety & Loss Department at 661-636-4604.

Insurance Coverage

SISC II also provides coverage to our grades nine through twelve student-athletes under a concussion insurance program known as "Headstrong" which is administered by SISC II's Student Insurance section and underwritten by Nationwide Life Insurance Company. Coverage is provided in the amount of \$25,000 for medical costs associated with the diagnosis and treatment of concussions. Please contact Duncan Low, Coordinator of Student Insurance, at 661-636-4863 for information on how your district can report a concussion claim under the Headstrong program.

Comment

Management of concussion protocol and claims that result from concussions is extremely important. Serious concussion injuries can require sustained medical care over an extended period of time. All districts should consult the Education Code sections referenced above as well as your district's administrative or general counsel as to how protocols are being administered. Should you have any additional questions or comments related to how your district currently manages concussion injuries please contact Robert J. Kretzmer, Director at 661-636-4709.

RJK