

NASHUA MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS

Student-Athlete-Parent Handbook

Lisa Gingras
Director of Athletics & Wellness

Elm Street Middle School
John Lysik - Coordinator
603-966-3900

Fairgrounds Middle School
Samantha Little - Coordinator
603-966-3990

Pennichuck Middle School
Michaela McMenammin - Coordinator
603-966-4164



www.ElmStreetAthletics.com



www.FairgroundsAthletics.com



www.PennichuckAthletics.com

Page 1	Introduction, Vision, Core Values
Page 2	Sports Offered, Governing Body, Proper Conduct and Sportsmanship
Page 3	Commitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tryouts • Daily team attendance • Daily school attendance • School/family vacations and Extended Absences • Non-school competition
Page 4	Playing Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sub Varsity and Middle School Teams • Varsity Teams Disqualification from Athletic Events
Page 5	School Athletic Equipment Team Captains Communication
Pages 6	Role of Parents in Middle School Sports
Page 7	Registration process/eligibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online registration • Current medical exam • Academic eligibility
Pages 8 & 9	Additional TriCounty Policies for Middle School Athletics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Player Eligibility • Home-educated, non-public and charter school • School Representation
Page 10	Additional Nashua School District Guidelines and Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation to and from contests • Sportsmanship for Student-athletes • Physical Education • School Disciplinary Actions • Hazing • Behavioral Expectations for Student-Athletes including additional consequences for extracurricular activities
Page 11-12	Concussion Information

Introduction

The material presented in this handbook has been compiled to acquaint you and your family with some of the policies, practices, and regulations that govern the athletic programs in the Nashua School District. By registering to participate in athletics in Nashua, you are agreeing to the contents of this handbook. Please keep this handbook and refer to it if questions and/or concerns about your son or daughter's athletic experience should arise. If your questions or concerns are not answered within this booklet, please feel free to contact us.

Vision

The Nashua Athletics program strives to be a program which excels in academics, sportsmanship, and athletics while building pride within the school and the community.

High school sports are an extension of the classroom learning experience. As such, athletics provide an opportunity to extend the values and ideals developed in the classroom, and constantly strive towards the development of a well-rounded individual.

As a member of the Nashua Athletic Program, students are expected to demonstrate proper respect for all coaches, teammates, officials, spectators, facilities, and equipment. Student-athletes are expected to exhibit the highest level of conduct, both on and off the playing surface, as they are, at all times, representatives of themselves, their team, school, and community.

Core values

Accountability – Student-athletes are to follow the expectations set forth by the Nashua School District, their school, the Nashua Athletic department, and the sport-specific program in which they participate.

Commitment – In order to make our teams the best they can be, coaches and student-athletes must be fully committed. Family, faith, and academics should be the only priorities that come before interscholastic athletics.

Excellence – Every task, drill, practice, game, and homework assignment should be done with pride and excellence at all times; understanding that each individual's level of excellence may be different.

Responsibility – Student-athletes have a responsibility to be leaders amongst their peers. They have to demonstrate respect to their community, school, program, team, and self by behaving appropriately at all times. They are encouraged to excel in school and to make the right decisions in social settings and in peer groups.

Sportsmanship – Student-athletes represent themselves, schools, families, and city. Unsportsmanlike behavior by students will have consequences.

If these core values are instilled in our student-athletes, all of our programs will be successful. Our students will leave our programs prepared for college, career, military, and all aspects of life after interscholastic athletics.

Sports Offered

Tryouts for programs are open to all students provided they meet the standards of academic eligibility, school citizenship, completed permission, and liability information and basic physical/health qualifications including Impact testing (High schools only). Participation in the program, therefore, is a privilege earned by students who meet and maintain these standards.

Middle Schools:

FALL:	WINTER:	SPRING:
Cross Country	Basketball	Baseball
Field Hockey*	Spirit (cheerleading)	Outdoor Track
Soccer		Softball
Volleyball		

*currently one club team for the three middle schools combined

High Schools:

FALL:	WINTER:	SPRING:
Cross Country	Alpine Skiing	Baseball
Field Hockey	Basketball	Lacrosse
Football	Gymnastics	Outdoor Track
Golf	Ice Hockey	Softball
Soccer	Indoor Track	Tennis
Spirit	Spirit	Unified Track+
Unified Soccer+	Swimming/diving	
Volleyball	Unified Basketball+	
	Wrestling	

+High school Unified Sports provide an opportunity for students with and without intellectual disabilities to compete on the same team.

Governing Body

Elm Street, Fairgrounds, and Pennichuck Middle Schools are members of the **Tri County League (TCL)** and adhere to the policies, rules, and regulations set by the TCL.

Additional policies, regulations and rules are set by the Nashua Board of Education and the Nashua Athletic Department. The TCL Handbooks can also be viewed in the Nashua School District Athletic Department Office.

Proper Conduct and Sportsmanship

Student-athletes represent themselves, their coaches, their teammates, their school, and the Nashua community. It is expected and encouraged that they maintain the highest level of scholastic achievement and citizenship, conducting themselves in a positive, courteous, and respectful manner at all times, whether in or out of season. Good sportsmanship will be displayed at all times with teammates, opponents, coaches, and officials. It is also expected that student-athletes will encourage this sportsmanship by spectators by leading by example.

Student-athletes will abide by all school, District, Athletic department, and team rules and expectations at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, proper dress and only using appropriate language at all times.

Smoking or use of any tobacco-like products (including e-cigarettes and vapors), drinking, and/or use of other drugs is prohibited. Violations of this will result in severe disciplinary actions up to and including immediate dismissal from a team.

The Principal, Athletic Director, or Athletic Coordinator reserves the right to remove a student from a team for poor academic performance, inappropriate behavior, and/or poor citizenship for any length of time. A student may be reinstated upon sufficient evidence of improvement as determined by the Principal and Athletic Director.

Commitment

Tryouts

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege; students try out voluntarily and, for some of our teams, risk being cut. During the tryout period, the coach will provide an explanation of his/her expectations. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate to the coach that he/she can meet those expectations. Students cut from one team may find opportunity with a non-cut sport providing there is space on that team.

Daily Team Attendance

It is expected that once a season begins, a student will be in attendance at every tryout, practice, competition, and team event. If this level of commitment is not possible, a student will most likely not be able to be a part of the team. If a student is not going to be present at a practice or game, he/she must notify the coach. Students may be excused from team activities for illness, injury, academic, family or religious reasons with **prior** notification and approval whenever possible. Our coaches expect athletes to be present at all team-related activities and may suspend a student-athlete from contests for absences.

Middle school athletics is a minimum 5-day a week commitment, though there are times events take place on weekends. Those weekend events are not optional.

Daily School Attendance

Absences

- All students must be in attendance for the entire school day in order to participate in practice or an event that day.
- Exceptions, such as school field trips or events, family emergencies, funerals, religious holidays, and scheduled appointments, must be cleared through the coach and/or Athletic Coordinator in advance.
- If a student-athlete is dismissed by the School Nurse due to illness; he/she is ineligible to participate in athletics that day.
- If a contest is scheduled on a weekend or over a school vacation, the student must be in attendance the preceding Friday (or last school day) in order to participate.
- Unique or extenuating circumstances not listed above may be excused at the discretion of the Athletic Director or Athletic Coordinator.

School/Family Vacations, Extended Absences

Every student-athlete is expected to be present for all team practices and contests. At times there may be events and/or practices over school vacations.

Student-athletes who take school sponsored trips during the scheduled season should not be penalized. However, it must be understood that time away from practice and games will impact one's ability to immediately return to competition. Student-athletes will be evaluated upon their return, if participation in a game or practice may be considered a health or safety concern, the Head Coach will not allow them to compete. This is to make certain they are not putting the student-athlete at risk for injury or that they are a detriment to the team.

If the student-athlete takes any other type of vacation, the student-athlete will be suspended for the same number of contests he or she missed while on vacation. Additional consequences may be imposed for missed practices at the coach's discretion. Any issues or problems arising from this policy should be addressed to the appropriate Athletic Coordinator or the Athletic Director.

Non-School Competition

Members of a school team are prevented from missing any portion of a middle school practice or competition to practice or compete with an out-of-school team. This includes non-school tournaments, showcases, combines, or other athletic events. Whenever a conflict arises between the middle school team practice/competition and an out-of-school practice/competition on the same day, the middle school team practice/competition must be honored by the student-athlete. Priority must be given at all times to the middle school team, its practices, and its contests unless a waiver has been granted by the athletic coordinator or director. It is expressly understood that waivers shall not be granted on a regular basis and shall only be granted in extraordinary circumstances.

A minimum 2-game/event suspension will be imposed for violations of this rule at the Middle School level.

Playing Time

There are many benefits to be gained by participation in athletics at the middle school level. Student-athletes learn the values associated with discipline, performing under stress, teamwork, sacrifice, commitment, effort, accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership, organizational skills, participating within the rules, physical well-being, and striving towards excellence. Although there are many measures of success in the minds of each participant, perhaps the most emotional is “playing time” during contests. If a student has questions as to his/her “playing time” he/she is encouraged to discuss it with the coach. In the Nashua Athletic Department, being a member of a team does not guarantee an equitable amount of “playing time.” However, there are guidelines for this important topic.

Sub-Varsity & Middle School Teams

At the sub-varsity level (junior varsity, freshman, and middle school), members of the coaching staff will make a strong effort to play all team members for as much time as is practical. There are many factors that govern an individual’s playing time, but overall, students must be “positive contributing team members”, attend practices, show effort, have a positive attitude, and exhibit a full commitment to the school team. Another factor that must always be considered is athletic skill. If these factors are present at the sub-varsity levels, students may expect to enjoy their share of playing time, but it may not be every event and it will most likely not be equal.

Varsity Teams

At the varsity level, the guidelines for the coaching staff are similar to those stated about with an added factor of competing at the highest possible level. Varsity teams are striving for a spot in post-season tournaments and a chance at the Division 1 Championship. Players, coaches, parents, and staff members all want the Nashua varsity teams to be successful on the field, court, track, pool, rink, etc. To reach that goal, teams must compete to win as many contests as possible. In order to do this, there are many instances when the major burden of the contest will be carried by the most competitive and most skilled team members; however, teams cannot be successful without committed substitutes and role players. These athletes have to be ready at all times to step forward and shoulder the burden when needed. They have to practice as hard as they can to help make the teams as competitive as they can be. They also have to constantly strive to move up to a “starting” role. By no means are our varsity programs “win-at-all-costs” programs, but winning is one goal of every competition.

Disqualification/Ejection from an Event

Any player who is disqualified before, during or after any sanctioned event at the sub-varsity or varsity level shall not participate in the next **two** scheduled interscholastic athletic events (that he/she would have normally competed in) including NHIAA or TCL tournament contests, invitational events, or regular season contests. The NHIAA and TCL impose a one game suspension, Nashua imposes a second.

Any player involved in a fight shall receive a **four** game suspension for the first offense (2 game from the NHIAA/TCL, doubled from Nashua). A second offense will lead to a disqualification in that sport for the balance of the sports season.

Any coach who is disqualified before, during or after a game at the sub-varsity or varsity level shall not participate in the next **four** scheduled interscholastic athletic event, including NHIAA or TCL tournament contests, invitational events, or regular season contests. The NHIAA/TCL imposes a two game suspension, Nashua doubles that.

Additional event suspensions may be imposed by the Athletic Director based on the nature and severity of the incident that caused the disqualification.

An ejection or disqualification from an event is a subjective decision by the officials and cannot be protested or appealed. The above suspensions are in place regardless of the reason for the ejection/disqualification.

School Athletic Equipment

Students have an obligation and responsibility for all equipment and uniforms issued to them. Proper care, retention, and return of all equipment and uniform parts is a requirement. Students failing to turn in all issued equipment, uniforms, or returning equipment damaged through misuse, are responsible to meet the current replacement cost for such equipment or uniforms. Payment is required at the time of the loss, prior to the next season of athletic involvement, or graduation, whichever comes first. In the event that the equipment or uniform is found and/or returned after payment, a refund will be made.

Team Captains

Team captains are leaders of their team and should be ready to assume duties as outlined by their coach. They are expected to not only be aware of team rules and student responsibilities but also to help their teammates abide by them. Captains are expected to communicate with the coach and team in the event of any problems that may affect the team or its members. Captains of teams may be relieved of their position for violation of team, department, school, District or state rules.

The coach determines how team captains are selected, if at all. Captains may be elected by the team or appointed by the coach. Captains may also be elected or appointed on a game-by-game basis. There is no requirement that teams must have captains nor that captains must be eighth graders.

Communication

While interscholastic athletics can provide some of the most rewarding and inspiring moments in students' lives, there can also be times when things may not go the way a parent or child had hoped. If a conflict or issue arises during a season, it is imperative that it be addressed in a timely and appropriate manner so that the concern can be resolved promptly. Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult jobs. Open communication and clear expectations will enable both groups to work together to provide a greater benefit to the student-athletes.

In many instances, a conversation between a **parent and the student-athlete** can resolve most questions or concerns. The student-athlete is in attendance daily at practices and games and should be able to address rules and roles of the program.

If this conversation does not resolve the problem or answer the question, the next step is for the **student-athlete and coach** to discuss the concern. Many times a misunderstanding can easily be resolved with this direct conversation.

If it is necessary for a **parent and coach** to meet to discuss a concern, the parent should contact the coach to schedule a meeting. Please do not attempt to confront the coach before, after, or during a practice or game. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach and would not promote a positive resolution. It should be understood that playing time, team strategy, play calling, and other student-athletes are not appropriate topics of discussion.

If none of the above avenues resolve the concern, then a meeting between the student, parent, coach, and Athletic Director will be scheduled.

Contact the Athletic Director immediately at any time in the case of an emergency or a severe violation of safety or any rules or regulations.

The Role of Parents in Middle School Sports

(Adapted from a variety of sources)

Accept the demands and time commitment of high school sports.

Do everything possible to have your child at every practice, team event, and competition.

Attend as many games as possible.

Support the entire team, not just your child.

Support the coach and let him/her be the single instructional voice before and during competition.

View the game with team and program goals in mind.

Accept the goals and roles of your child.

Model appropriate behavior before, during, and after the game. Be poised, confident, and calm.

Model and demand positive sportsmanship.

Cheer positively for your team only.

Relieve competitive pressure, do not increase it.

Accept the judgement of the officials and remain in control.

Do everything possible to make the athletic experience a positive one for the players, yourself, and those around you.

Be an encourager, keep both victory and defeat in perspective.

As is read prior to many of our athletic events ... we would ask that parents help make the event a meaningful one for the athletes by showing respect for your team, the opposing team, the coaches, and the officials.

Let the players play, the coaches coach, and the officials officiate.

Registration Process/Eligibility

Students wishing to participate in middle school interscholastic athletics must complete the following in order to be eligible. A student MAY NOT participate until each item is completed and verified.

1. **Online registration through FamilyID for each season of participation**

During this registration process, the parent/guardian will

- give permission for participation;
- provide emergency and medical information
- provide proof of health insurance.
- accept policies, procedures, and expectations as outlined in this handbook.

Opportunities will be provided for families to use a school computer if other internet access is not possible. Online registration is required each season.

2. **Proof of medical examination clearing student for athletic participation**

This is required once in the student's middle school career. This is required prior to participation at any level. For students new to middle school athletics, the physical must be dated on or after July 1 of the previous year. For example: for the 2022-23 school year the physical must be dated on or after July 1, 2021 (last summer).

3. **Academic Eligibility**

Beginning of each school year

All middle school students will be considered academically eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities at the start of each new school year.

During a Season at Progress Report Time:

If a student earns more than one F on mid-trimester Progress Reports, he/she will become immediately ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities until grades have improved.

End of each trimester grading period

A middle school student who earns more than one non-passing grade on his/her report card at the end of a trimester will be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities until the next trimester's progress report grades are distributed. At that time, if there are one or fewer non-passing grades and the student is not on probation, the student regains academic eligibility.

The effective date of eligibility is the date grade reports are distributed as determined by the Nashua School District Superintendent's Office.

Non-passing grades include F, Fail, Incomplete, No Credit.

Please refer to Nashua School District Policy JJA and JJA-R for further information.

Additional TriCounty League Policies for Middle School Athletics

In addition to Academic Eligibility stated above, there are other TriCounty League policies which have been summarized below in an attempt to highlight the most important rules and regulations. If the following information does not answer specific questions, or if there is a concern, please contact the Nashua School District Athletic Office.

Player Eligibility

Upon entering fifth grade, a student is eligible for competition (whether or not he/she competes) for no more than four consecutive years.

Home-educated, non-public, charter school students

A home educated student may represent a charter school, non-public or public school in the district where they reside. The home educated student must be living with the parents or legal guardians in the family residence.

A non-public and charter school student may represent the non-public or charter school they attend or the public school in the district where they reside. The non-public or charter school student must be living with the parents or legal guardians in the family residence.

School Representation

A student is eligible to represent only one (1) school in any academic year, unless a legal change of residence has occurred.

Additional Nashua School District Guidelines and Policies

Transportation To and From Contests

The school provides bus transportation, or a suitable substitute, to and from most “away” contests. All team members are required to travel to these contests using the school provided transportation. Exceptions for transportation home by a student’s own parent/guardian will be at the discretion of the coach at the middle school level.

Sportsmanship for Student-Athletes

Nashua student-athletes must honor the responsibility that accompanies the privilege of representing their school by behaving with dignity and class on and off the field or court. Student-athletes participating in NHIAA sponsored events are expected to treat opponents and officials with respect. There will be no tolerance for trash-talking, taunting, heckling, or baiting of opponents. Nashua student-athletes must appreciate and understand that they are perhaps the most visible representatives of their school.

If any student in any sport willfully, flagrantly, or maliciously attempts to injure an opponent, he/she may be withheld from participation in athletics in the future.

The NHIAA/TCL suspends any student from participation in a sport if ejected from athletic contests for unsportsmanlike behavior or what may be considered dangerous play. The Nashua School District imposes additional penalties as well. The District also reserves the right to impose the same penalties on spectators displaying poor sportsmanship at any contests, both home and away.

Physical Education

All students are required to participate in their regularly scheduled physical education classes. Students being medically excused from physical education may not participate in their team practice or game for that day.

School Disciplinary Actions

A student-athlete with a school disciplinary obligation is expected to fulfill the disciplinary obligation before reporting to an athletic practice and/or game. Students cannot expect, and should not request, disciplinary action to be postponed or canceled for any athletic reason. The Athletic Department reserves the right to remove a student from a team for excessive disciplinary problems and may reinstate the student upon sufficient evidence of improvement. It is expected that our athletes be model citizens both in and out of school; they should set an example for all students.

Hazing: (See NSD Policy JICFA for full details)

Hazing activities are contrary to the Nashua School District's educational goals and objectives and will not be tolerated in our Schools. Hazing activities are prohibited at all times. Hazing is also a violation of the NH Criminal Code section 631:7, Student Hazing. Hazing is defined as:

Doing an act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation into, admission into, continued membership in or association with any organization that causes or creates substantial risks of causing mental or physical harm to any person. Permission, consent, or assumption of the risk by an individual subjected to hazing is not a defense to the prohibitions contained in this Policy. Examples of behavior that could be considered hazing include being forced to:

1. Destroy or steal property
2. Be tied up, taped, or confined in a small space
3. Be paddled, whipped, beaten, kicked or beat up by others
4. Do embarrassing, painful, or dangerous acts
5. Be kidnapped or transported and abandoned
6. Consume spicy or disgusting concoctions
7. Be deprived of sleep, food, or hygiene
8. Participate in drinking contests
9. Engage in or simulate sexual acts
10. Be tattooed or pierced

No school board member, administrator, faculty member, school employee, or volunteer of the Nashua School District will encourage, commit, condone, or tolerate hazing activities. No student will plan, encourage, or engage in any hazing.

Behavioral Expectations for Student-Athletes (See NSD Policy JJB and JJB-R for full details)

Students who participate in Nashua School extracurricular programs are expected to adhere to high standards of conduct. Any Class I, Class II or Class III violation of the Student Behavior Standards policy (NSD Policy JIC) resulting in a suspension will cause a student to be suspended from extracurricular activities. The following behaviors are examples of Class I, Class II, or Class III violations:

- Illegal use or possession of alcoholic beverages, regardless of where such use or possession occurs;
- Illegal use, manufacture, possession, having under control, sale, purchase, prescription, administering, transportation, dispensation, or compounding of any controlled drug, controlled drug analog, or any preparation containing a controlled drug, as any of the above terms are defined in N. H. RSA 318-B:1, regardless of where such behavior occurs;
- A finding of guilt, delinquency, probable cause, or indictment for violation of a criminal statute in any jurisdiction.
- Student Hazing as defined in N.H. RSA 631:7(d), and in POPPS 3244.2, regardless of where such student hazing occurs;
- Illegal gambling, assaultive or threatening conduct, stealing, vandalism, and destruction of property – if any of these behaviors occurs while on school grounds, or otherwise while participating or attending a scholastic or interscholastic event;
- Gross misconduct, including but not limited to assault or on advisor, coach, judge, official, participant, opponent or spectator; inappropriate behavior and/or obscene language; cheating; directing threats or obscene gestures at an advisor, coach, judge, official participant, opponent or spectator – if any of these behaviors occur while participating in or attending a scholastic interscholastic event.

Any student suspended from school, in or out of school, will also be suspended from participating in and/or attending any school extracurricular activities or functions. At minimum, the length of the extracurricular suspension is equal to the number of days of the school suspension. The suspension from extracurricular activities begins on the date of notice of suspension and concludes no earlier than the first day the student returns to his/her regular class schedule.

NOTE: If a student is on suspension during a try-out period of an extracurricular activity, it will be at the discretion of administration if the student may participate in a try-out period. This exception may only be made on a student's first violation.

Additional Extracurricular Consequences

First out-of-school suspension or accumulation of five (5) total days suspension in a school year:

The student shall be suspended from all extracurricular programs for up to two calendar weeks (14 days). The building principal or his/her designee shall provide written notice of any such suspension to the student and to the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).

Second out-of-school suspension or accumulation of ten (10) total days suspension in a school year:

The student shall be suspended from all extracurricular programs for not less than three calendar weeks (21 days). The building principal or his/her designee shall provide written notice of any such suspension to the student and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).

Third out-of-school suspension or accumulation of fifteen (15) total days suspension in a school year:

The student shall be suspended from all extracurricular programs for the remainder of the school year. The building principal or his/her designee shall provide written notice of any such suspension to the student and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).

NOTE: A principal may remove a student from extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year for any single egregious act.

In addition to the above, a middle school student on probation through the school's Team Accountability Program will be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities for the duration of the probation period.

Concussion Information

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a type of brain injury resulting from an impact to the body causing the brain to strike the inside of the skull. A direct hit to the head is not required for a concussion to occur. Students suffering from concussions may experience symptoms for a few days, weeks, or in severe cases even months. Because the brain is very complex, every brain injury is different. Some symptoms may appear right away, while others may not show up or days or weeks after the concussion. Sometimes the injury makes it hard for people to recognize or admit that they are having problems.

The signs of concussion are subtle. Early on, problems may be missed. People may look fine even though they are acting or feeling differently.

Concussion Symptoms

A concussion can affect a student in a variety of different ways: physically, cognitively, emotionally, and with sleep. Each student's symptoms are different in both occurrence and severity. Symptoms for a student should only be compared to how he/she felt, acted, slept, and performed prior to the concussion. One student's symptoms and recovery should never be compared to another student's.

Physical	Cognitive	Emotion	Sleep
Headache	Slow processing	Irritability	Trouble falling asleep
Dizziness	Mental fog	Sadness	Trouble waking
Balance difficulties	Trouble focusing	Nervousness	Sleeping more than usual
Nausea/vomiting	Memory problems	Embarrassment	Sleeping less than usual
Fatigue	Concentration problems	Anger	Drowsy
Sensitivity to light	Feeling confused	More or less emotional than normal	Altered sleep schedule
Sensitivity to sound	Shortened attention span	Anxiety	
Change in vision	Difficulty planning	Paranoia	
Feeling sluggish	Difficulty organizing		
Speech problems	Slower reading		
	Difficulty with comprehension		
	Easily distracted		

Who can diagnose a concussion?

Only a licensed health care professional who has experience managing concussions, including Certified Athletic Trainers, can officially diagnose a student with a concussion.

Danger Signs

If any of the following are observed in an individual with a concussion, he/she should be taken to the doctor or Emergency Department immediately:

- Cannot be awakened
- Have one pupil (the black dot of your eye) larger than the other
- Have convulsions or seizures
- Have slurred speech
- Are getting more confused, restless, or agitated

Recovery

How fast people recover from a concussion varies from person to person. Although most people have a good recovery, how quickly depends on many factors. These factors include how severe the concussion was, what part of the brain was injured, their age, and how healthy they were before the concussion.

Rest is very important after a concussion because it helps the brain to heal. You will need to be extremely patient because healing takes time. As the days go by, you can expect to gradually feel better.

While you are healing, you should be very careful to avoid doing anything that could cause a blow to your head. On rare occasions, receiving another blow before a concussion has healed can be very dangerous and possible fatal. Here are some tips for healing:

- Get plenty of sleep at night and rest during the day
- Return to activities gradually, not all at once
- Avoid activities that could lead to a 2nd brain injury until cleared by the doctor
- Take only those drugs that your doctor has approved
- Rest your brain – limit cognitive stimulation: cell phones, TV, computer, video games

The Nashua School District has implemented a Return to Learn Protocol for students with concussions. Be sure to notify the school nurse immediately if your child has been diagnosed with a concussion.

Resources:

NFHS Guidelines for Management of Concussions in Sports

- https://www.nfhs.org/media/1018446/suggested_guidelines_management_concussion_april_2017.pdf

NFHS Learn Courses

- <https://www.nfhslearn.com/courses?searchText=Concussion>
- Concussion in Sports
- Concussion for Students

REAPsm the Benefits of Good Concussion Management

- <https://www.nfhs.org/media/1015690/reapaugust2015.pdf>

Nashua School District Return to Learn Protocol

- <http://www.nashua.edu/Nashua/Media/PDF-files/For%20Students/Concussion-Awareness-for-Parents-and-School-Staff-Flyer.pdf>