Partners in Christ † Instructing for Life † Equipping for Eternity

Trinity St. John LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Athletic Handbook

Trinity-St. John Lutheran School

680 West Walnut Street

Nashville, IL 62263

618-327-8561

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Trinity-St. John Lutheran School

Athletics Program Handbook

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1) Rationale

Interscholastic athletics at Trinity-St. John are an important part of educating the total child. Our program exposes students to team activities and provides opportunities for them to learn and gain from the experience of competition that are found on the field and court. It is here, and under these conditions, that an athlete can put into practice the Christian values and ethics taught in our classrooms and in their church.

1st Corinthians 10:31 tells us, "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."

Trinity-St. John, in partnership with the parents, seeks to minister to the student athlete by teaching Christian sportsmanship and instilling the attitude that one can both win and lose with dignity, and without boasting or excuse. Young athletes on the playing field use their God given talents to bring Him glory and honor. By practicing good sportsmanship, an attitude of wanting to do their very best, cooperation and teamwork with fellow team members, self-discipline and dedication, the TSJ athlete makes the statement to everyone watching that they are ultimately on God's team and they play to win praise for God.

The athlete will develop the fundamental skills at the Little Dribblers and Pee Wee levels through active participation. It is our goal to give all members at these levels a chance for meaningful participation in all games and practices.

Those who desire to continue to use their skills at a more competitive level will have the opportunity to do so on our B team (Junior Varsity) and A team (Varsity).

Since the teams our children compete against are schools that have the same general attitude toward interscholastic athletics, we look forward to enjoyable, competitive contests. We expect our players, coaches, and spectators to conduct themselves in a Christian manner at these contests.

2) Student/Parent Christian Sports Pledge

It is the goal of the coaches, teachers, and administration to assist all students in their spiritual, physical, and mental growth. They desire that each student grow to be more like Christ and **"increase in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." -- Luke 2:52** With this goal set before you, we ask you to carefully read and sign the following pledge in order that we may put God first.

We the undersigned are dedicated to Trinity-St. John Lutheran School's athletic program as representatives of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We realize we will be expected to behave in a Christian fashion throughout the season.

We agree to follow Matthew 18 in addressing any concerns we have with the coaches by going first to the coach, then the Athletic Director, then the Principal, and finally to the school board if we have not reached resolution to our concerns.

We understand that family and friends that come to the games will be expected to behave in a manner appropriate for a program dedicated to living the faith we profess.

We also realize that athletes on the team will be expected to attend worship together during the season as a team, when participating in an out of town tournament that includes a Sunday game.

We realize inappropriate behavior on the part of any athlete could result in a suspension or removal from the roster.

We will abide by the decisions made by the school concerning the athletic program of Trinity-St. John Lutheran School.

Signed: _____ Date:_____
Student Signature

Signed:_____ Date:_____
Parent Signature

3) Objectives of Program

T-SJ Athletes will:

1. Recognize their talents as a blessing from God and will develop and use them in God pleasing ways.
2. Be given the opportunity to play as a child, not as an adult.
3. Learn the skills and strategies associated with each sport they participate in.
4. Unselfishly recognize and respect the talents and abilities of others on their team and in the competing teams.
5. Display the values of Christian sportsmanship.
6. Develop the understanding and attitude that trophies do not make the team a winner; instead, everyone is a winner when they have done their best on the playing field or court.
7. Accept the responsibility for the hard work and commitment necessary for being part of a team.
8. Have fun through physical activity.

4) Sports Offered

Grade level may change due to the number of students available in each class and will be reviewed annually by the Executive Board. The Executive Board must gain approval from the Board of Christian Education for any deviations or exceptions.

C Team Volleyball	Grades 5 - 6	
Junior Varsity Team Volleyball	Grades 5 - 7	
Varsity Team Volleyball	Grades 6 - 8	
Baseball/Softball	Grades 6 - 8	
Little Dribblers Basketball	Grades 1 - 2	
Pee Wee Basketball	Boys Grades 3 - 5	Girls Grades 3 - 5
Junior Varsity Team Basketball	Boys Grades 6 - 7	Girls Grades 6 - 7
Varsity Team Basketball	Boys Grades 6 - 8	Girls Grades 6 - 8
Track	Grades 4 - 8	
Cross Country	Grades 4 - 8	
Golf	Boys Grades 7 - 8	Girls Grades 7 - 8

*** "At the discretion of coaches with consultation with both Athletic Directors, this can be adjusted based on low numbers available in any one grade."**

If lower grade athletes are needed, all athletes from that grade will have the opportunity to be included on the Junior Varsity team.

Basketball

Girls' basketball games start the first week of November.

Boys' and girls' basketball ends after the public schools' state tournament unless there is qualification for the Lutheran State tournament.

Boys may play in the Springfield Tournament which is held the last week of February. The girls' Springfield Tournament will be decided on a year-by-year basis because of possible conflicts with volleyball.

Chicago Trip - Our varsity basketball teams will go to Chicago for the LSA Tournament of Champions when the team achieves 65% winning percentage by February 1st. Circumstances that may affect the winning percentage of a team may arise due to injury, sickness, etc. and may warrant an appeal to the executive board. If a team has the opportunity to go to the LSA Tournament of Champions, the goal is to represent the cooperating schools in a Christian manner regardless of how well the team has previously performed. All students participating in Varsity team basketball are expected to attend. Exceptions are made only under special circumstances, and in agreement with the coach. Appeals may be made to the Executive Board of the co-op which consists of the two athletic directors and the two principals of the cooperating schools. Financial obligation for the trip is the parents, however parents may arrange transportation and supervision of their child.

Volleyball

Spring volleyball begins after the public school's state basketball tournament ends.

5) Expectations of Teams

Little Dribblers & Pee Wee - This is the entry level, the learning stage, for this sport. The main purpose for this level is to learn the fundamentals and skills of the game. Provided that they meet eligibility requirements, all students at this level play in every game. However, they will not necessarily get equal playing time. Participation and experience are the main goals.

Junior Varsity Team - Junior Varsity teams apply all of their experience and ability to winning the game. Teaching skills will continue to be stressed. Although every eligible athlete will have an opportunity to play, it is possible that not every athlete will have equal playing time in every game. The game is played with the intention of bringing home an honorable victory. The main goal of regular season games is to give each athlete the opportunity to participate and improve their skills. However, during a tournament play time is not guaranteed as the objective is to win. Junior Varsity Team athletes wishing to compete at the Varsity Team level are encouraged to develop their skills more fully through summer leagues, camps, etc.

Varsity Team - Varsity teams apply all of their experience and ability to winning the game. Teaching skills will continue to be stressed. The game is played with the intention of bringing home an honorable victory. Although every eligible athlete will have an opportunity to play, it is possible that not every athlete will have equal playing time. Athletes wishing to compete at the

Varsity Team level are encouraged to develop their skills more fully through summer leagues, camps, etc. At the varsity level the goal of the game is to win. The coaches will use their discretion as to which players are able to accomplish this goal.

> **Varsity Team Selection -** All students desiring to play on the Varsity team will be given the opportunity to participate. Every reasonable effort will be made to accept all students on the Varsity team level. However, if the eligible number of team members is deemed unmanageable, player selection may be limited. This decision will be made after consultation with the Coach and the Executive Board.

6) Eligibility

STUDENTS MUST HAVE A CURRENT PHYSICAL AND CONCUSSION FORM ON FILE BEFORE PRACTICE BEGINS.

Although T-SJ Lutheran is primarily an academic institution, the school seeks to provide any interested student the opportunity to join one or more of our athletic teams. Students may participate in our athletic programs if they continue to meet the academic requirements as set out in the student and athletic handbooks.

T-SJ Student-Athlete Eligibility Policy:

T-SJ athletes are first and foremost ***STUDENTS***. Students participating in athletics and cheer-leading are expected to establish and maintain a passing grade in the academic areas of Math, English, Spelling, Reading/Literature, Memory/Religion/Confirmation, Social Studies, and Science. These grades will be checked each Thursday. The parents will be notified on Friday of any upcoming ineligibility which will take effect on the following Monday through Sunday. In addition, they shall establish and maintain a consistent effort on all work as assigned by his or her teacher. Any student who is not passing a class or does not have his or her daily work turned in by the beginning of class on Friday of that particular week will not be allowed to participate in the next week's contests (Monday through Sunday). Parents and coaches will be notified by the principal or AD of ineligibility.

Where completion of assignments, quality effort, and conduct become a problem the teacher will notify the student, parent and Athletic Director. In these cases the following guidelines will apply:

Temporary Suspension - Students who become ineligible due to academic reasons, will not be eligible to participate in practices and games. Participation may resume the following week once eligibility has been restored. Students ineligible for other reasons may be subject to further disciplinary action as seen fit by their coach and the athletic director.

Any student who has failed to obey team rules established by the coach or failed to live up to the expectations of student athletes may also be suspended for up to one game. The Coach in conjunction with the Athletic Director and/or the Principal will determine these suspensions.

Students exhibiting improper / unsportsmanlike behavior may be subject to disciplinary action.

Removal from the Roster - Repeated violations or serious inappropriate conduct ***WILL*** result in a student's removal from a team roster. The Athletic Director and/or the Principal will determine the removal.

Athletes who miss any three weeks in a season due to academic ineligibility will be removed from the team roster. Exceptions may be made in the case of students with ISPs.

Absences - Any student absent for more than ½ day on the day of a game or practice may not participate in that game or practice.

The Athletic Director and/or the Principal may grant an absent student permission to play based on extenuating circumstances.

7) Expectations of Student Athletes

1. Team players are representing their Lord and school. They will do this in a Christ-like manner.
2. Participation in school athletics will take priority over non-school sports / activities.
3. Students are expected to attend all practices and games. A written excuse should be given to the coach or Athletic Director, prior to the absence.
   Valid excuses for missing practices or games include:
   a. Illness or injury
   b. Family emergency
   c. Academic responsibilities
   d. Excuses approved by the coach
   Missed practices and/or games may result in reduced playing time, suspension, or possible removal from the team.
4. Players will show respect for property when visiting other schools.
5. Players will try their best, but not make winning their most important goal, but rather that they display Christian action.
6. Players will win with humility, and lose with grace.
7. Players are not to question the decisions of referees, but accept that the referees are doing their best and abide by their decisions graciously.
8. Players will play within the rules and keep a fair sense of play.
9. Players may never use crude, vulgar, or un-Christian language.
10. Players are to be polite to opposing coaches and teams.
11. Players will never belittle or make fun of the other players.
12. Players will respect their coaches as their parents' representative.

Game Attire - As representatives of T-SJ Lutheran School, athletes are expected to present themselves in a positive manner. This not only includes actions, but also attire. At games, athletes are expected to wear:

Boys – School Appropriate Dress or Team Uniform
Girls – School Appropriate Dress or Team Uniform

Athletes should follow these guidelines at the site of the game until it is time to change into the uniform. Student athletes are allowed to modify their athletic or team uniform for the purpose of modesty in clothing or attire that is in accordance with the requirements of their religion, cultural values or modesty preferences.

Practice and Games - Practice is an important part of being a member of a team. Coaches have the right to determine playing time based on practice time put in by the student athlete. Failure to attend practice may result in appropriate discipline including sitting-out game time, additional running, etc. This will be determined by the coach. The Athletic Director will be informed of any game time to be missed.

The coach will hand out a printed schedule of all games and practices as soon as possible.

Four games and practices per week except for tournaments will be enforced.

During the Lenten and Advent season Wednesdays will not be used for practices or contests.

Varsity teams have precedence over all other levels as far as scheduling practices and games.

Church Attendance – T-SJ Student Athletes are strongly encouraged to attend a weekend worship service. We will try to arrange a ride to Trinity/Nashville or St. John/ New Minden for any student wishing to attend here. Students will be expected to worship with the team, when the team is at a special event (at an out of town tournament). **Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another… Hebrews 10:25**

Failure to follow any of the above could result in a suspension from the team.

8) Expectations of Parents & Families

1. Place academics as first priority, schoolwork is their primary responsibility at T-SJ.
2. Show support for teams by attending as many games as possible.
3. If possible, schedule appointments around team schedules.
4. Parents should deliver and pick up their student athletes to games / practices at prescribed times.
5. Be willing to work during home games at various jobs including scorekeeper, scorebook, concessions, clean-up, etc.
6. Respect officials, coaches, players, and other fans. Be supportive of both teams and use positive words and actions.
7. Parents must respect the calls and decisions of the officials at all times. Parents may be asked to leave based on poor sportsmanship or disrespect towards officials.

8. Spectators at games should at all times behave in a Christian manner, encouraging one another.
9. Respect others' property when visiting other schools.
10. Be responsible for the proper care and return of uniforms and equipment.
11. Parents of players should instruct their children that their Christian witness and fair play are more important than winning.
12. Fans should be humble in victory and gracious in defeat.
13. Rude, vulgar, and un-Christian language by spectators will not be tolerated.
14. Parents should maintain close supervision of younger siblings. Any child seen running in the hallways behaving in an inappropriate manner will be told to go sit with their parents.
15. Accordingly, parents must abide by the Parent Conduct Expectations found in the Student Handbook.

Failure to follow any of the above could result in action by the executive board which may include a suspension of that spectator from the next two games in accordance with SIJHSAA article VIII Section 3. Additional penalties may be assessed by the executive board.

Transportation - Transportation to and from games is the responsibility of the parents. If a parent is unable to attend a game, please make arrangements for your child. Coaches may assist in helping arrange carpooling when necessary but it is not their responsibility.

Uniforms - Uniforms are the property of T-SJ Lutheran. Proper care of uniforms is expected. Student athletes will be allowed time at the end of the school day to change into uniforms before away games. Washed and cleaned uniforms shall be returned to the school office after the season. Uniforms that are lost or damaged will be the responsibility of the athlete and his/her parents. Parents will be expected to pay the replacement cost of the uniform. If a uniform is damaged during a practice or a game, the coach will determine the responsibility.

9) Expectations of Coaches

1. Attend the annual Coaches meeting with the Athletic Directors before the season begins.
2. Conduct a meeting with the parents of their athletes to review the Athletic Handbook and any other expectations, especially regarding tournaments and the Chicago trip.
3. Teach Christian values, sportsmanship, etc. Begin each practice and game with prayer and encourage players to lead prayers.
4. Teach basic skills proficiently to all team members.
5. Know and teach the rules of the game/sport.
6. Coaches represent their Lord in appearance, attitude and action.
7. No foul or abusive language will be used on the fields or courts.
8. Coaches need to submit requested practice times to the Athletic Directors two weeks prior to the first practice. This will allow the Athletic Directors time to schedule the use of the gym for all teams. Wednesday will not be used for games, practices, or open gyms with the exception of a tournament game.
9. Coaches should work with each other to ensure that there are no scheduling conflicts with gym use. In-season varsity team sports have first priority of gym use.

10. Coaches are responsible for submitting game information for press release.
11. Coaches should submit tournament rosters to the Athletic Director.
12. Coaches should question referees decisions only in a God pleasing manner.
13. Coaches, by their speech and action, demonstrate proper game behavior to their players and fans.
14. Instruct players about the proper respect of property when visiting other schools.
15. Coaches will not leave a practice or game until all players have been picked up.
16. Check the locker rooms after home games and practices, make certain lights are off and the doors are locked.
17. Issue and collect uniforms and equipment.
18. Monitor the conduct of players and assistant coaches. Report misconduct to the Athletic Director. Notify parents of player misconduct.
19. Properly care for all injuries. Keep a record of all injuries and care provided. Notify parents of injuries. Always have the parental consent forms accessible in case of an emergency.
20. Undergo evaluation annually as conducted by the Athletic Director. Coaches who also serve as Athletic Director will be evaluated by an administrator or representative of the school board. In the event of a coop, a representative of both cooperating schools will conduct the evaluation.

Failure to follow any of the above could result in a suspension from the team.

10) Qualifications of Coaches

1. Coaches must be Christians that support the purposes and goals of Trinity-St. John Lutheran School.
2. Head coaches must be at least 21 years of age and approved by the executive board.
3. Coaches must have knowledge of their sport and the ability to relate well with their players.
4. Coaches must have the ability to organize and supervise practices and games.
5. Coaches must obtain training in first aid, CPR and concussions. Documentation of completion must be filed in the office.
6. All coaches must be fingerprinted and have a background check completed before the season starts.
7. Coaches must also be familiar with the T-SJ Student and Parent Handbook.

Coaching Application Policy and Procedure - All interested coaching candidates must fill out an application for any open coaching position.

Coaching Applications will be made available in the school office and on-line. The deadline to turn in applications will be posted for each individual sport. All coaches, including assistants, must be approved by the school board(s).

Coaching Reimbursement- Coaches will be reimbursed for overnight hotel stays for no more than two varsity events. These events should have a maximum of three nights per event. This

reimbursement will be given to the head coach and one assistant coach. If there is more than one assistant coach, the head coach will designate which coach should receive the reimbursement. It is the coach's responsibility to give their receipts to the Athletic Director within 30 days of the event. Reimbursement will come from the athletic fund.

11) Expectations of Athletic Director

1. The Athletic Director is responsible for the extracurricular athletic program at T-SJ.
2. Organize and lead an annual coaches meeting which will include reviewing schedules, workers' lists, athletic handbooks, concession procedures, scoreboard and scorebook procedures, and gathering email addresses.
3. Work with the coaches to set up schedules.
4. Arrange for the use of facilities for practices.
5. Serve as a model for the coaching staff.
6. Inform coaches of their responsibilities.
7. Arranges and publishes games and schedules.
8. Approve practice schedules.
9. Make certain that the gym; equipment, and uniform details are in order.
10. Address questions or concerns that may arise within the framework of the extracurricular athletics program.
11. Hire or contact officials.
12. Arrange for proper supervision of home athletic contests.
13. Determine scholastic and behavioral eligibility along with the teachers and principal.
14. Submit a monthly financial report to the principal.
15. Coordinate the taking of team photographs.
16. Represent our Lord, school, parents and teachers in attitude and action.
17. Perform evaluations on head coaches.
18. Report the rosters for tournaments.
19. If possible, attend 8th grade night.
20. Attend four Varsity and Junior Varsity games for girls and boys basketball and volleyball and the conference track meet.

12) Chain of Command

Since we are all working together for the benefit of our children let us make good use of the encouragement we get from God in **Matthew 18. If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.**

We understand that not every concern that parents or coaches have will deal with sin. However, we believe that Matthew 18 shows a clear chain of command to be followed. In order for steps to be taken in an orderly way, this chain of command has been developed and may be helpful in situations that may arise.

When a parent schedules a meeting with an athletic director or principal, two members of the

executive team must be present.

Order for parents to seek answers to questions.

1. Coach (Individual Sport Coach)
2. Athletic Director
3. Principal
4. Board of Education

13) Communication

Coaches Communication to Parents - The following are ideas that may help you, as parents know what to expect from our coaches.

Coaches should:

1. Share expectations of athletes
2. Communicate location and time of all practices and games
3. Communicate team requirements, i.e. practices, special equipment, out-of-season conditioning, etc.
4. Injury – if an injury takes place that the coach is aware of they should bring it to the attention of the parents
5. Discipline – if an athlete is being disciplined, by the coach, for any serious offense the coach should make sure the parents are aware of the offense and disciplinary measures to take place.

Parents Communication to Coaches

Parents should:

1. Schedule an appointment with the coach to share concerns regarding coaching practices and expectations. **A twenty-four hour waiting/reflection period must pass before scheduling the appointment.** Concerns are not to be expressed at games or practices.
2. Notify the coach immediately of any scheduling conflicts.

Appropriate topics for parents to discuss with coaches:

1. Treatment of child mentally and physically
2. Ways for child to improve
3. Concerns about child's behavior

Inappropriate topics for parents to discuss with coaches:

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling
4. Other student athletes

14) Executive Board for the T-SJ, ILS, and Oakdale Coop

The Executive Board shall consist of the principals and the Athletic Directors of all cooperating schools.

Purpose:

1. Review the Athletic Handbook bi-annually or upon request of the School Board.
2. Review coaching applications and make coaching recommendations to the School Board.
3. Ensure the Athletic Handbook policies are enforced.
4. Bring all recommendations to respective School Boards and facilitate joint School Board meetings when necessary.

15) Co-op Guidance

T-SJ Athletics manages the income and expenses for the athletic co-op.

The Athletic Directors share the duties and responsibilities needed to make a successful co-op.

1. T-SJ and ILS coop for Girls and Boys Basketball

2. T-SJ, ILS, and Oakdale coop for Softball, Baseball, and Volleyball

16) Concussions Protocol

As stated by the IHSA Protocol for Implementation of NFHS Sports Playing Rule for Concussions, "any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional." Trinity-St. John Lutheran School ensures that students are removed immediately from practice or competition if any statute-specified person (coach, game official, physician, or athlete's parent or guardian) believes the student has sustained a concussion. Trinity-St. John Lutheran School also ensures that students who have been so removed are not permitted to resume practice or competition unless the return to play protocol has been followed completely.

IHSA Sports Medicine Acknowledgement & Consent Form

*See www.tsjlutheran.org/back-to-school-resources.html for the actual form

Concussion Information Sheet

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, **all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly.** In other words, even a "ding" or a bump on the head can be serious. You can't see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right

after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Symptoms may include one or more of the following:

- Headaches, “pressure in head”, nausea or vomiting, neck pain, balance problems or dizziness, blurred, double or fuzzy vision, sensitivity to light or noise, feeling sluggish or slowed down, feeling foggy or groggy, drowsiness, change in sleep patterns, amnesia, “don’t feel right”, fatigue or low energy, sadness, nervousness or anxiety, irritability, more emotional, confusion, concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays), repeating the same question/comment

Signs observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:

- Appears dazed, vacant facial expression, confused about assignment, forgets plays, is unsure of game, score, or opponent, moves clumsily or displays incoordination, answers questions slowly, slurred speech, shows behavior or personality changes, can’t recall events prior to hit, can’t recall events after hit, seizures or convulsions, any change in typical behavior or personality, loses consciousness

What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns too soon?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athletes will often fail to report symptoms of injuries. Concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key to student-athlete’s safety.

If you think your child has suffered a concussion

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. The Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act requires athletes to complete the Return to Play (RTP) protocols for their school prior to returning to play or practice following a concussion or after being removed from an interscholastic contest due to a possible head injury or concussion and not cleared to return to that same contest. You should also inform your child’s coach if you think that your child may have a concussion. Remember it’s better to miss one game than miss the whole season. And when in doubt, the athlete sits out. For current and up-to-date information on concussions you can go to: http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/

*Adapted from the CDC and the 3rd International Conference on Concussion in Sport

Concussion Oversight Team

Trinity-St John Lutheran School has a principal- appointed concussion oversight team that is responsible to oversee the implementation of the concussion protocol, including the return to play and return to learn protocols. These protocols, especially the return to learn protocol, will be followed whether or not the concussion occurs on or off school property. The concussion oversight team will be updated annually as needed and will answer to the principal.

Concussion Oversight Team Leader: Athletic Director
Additional Team Members: T-SJ Teachers on Staff

The 6-Step Return to Play Protocol

- Step 1: Back to Regular Activities – Resuming non-athletic activities, such as school, with minimal symptoms.
- Step 2: Light Aerobic Activity – 5–10 minutes of walking, stationary biking, or light jogging to increase heart rate, without heavy lifting or strenuous exertion.
- Step 3: Moderate Activity – Increased intensity exercise (moderate jogging, brief running) with limited body/head movement.
- Step 4: Heavy, Non-Contact Activity – High-intensity exercise, such as sprinting, non-contact sport-specific drills, or weightlifting.
- Step 5: Practice & Full Contact – After medical clearance, resume normal, full-contact training/practice, allowing for evaluation of concussion recovery in a controlled environment.
- Step 6: Competition – Returning to full game participation.

Key Considerations

- If Symptoms Return: Stop immediately. The athlete must rest and can only return to the previous, asymptomatic step after a 24-hour period of no symptoms.
- Medical Clearance: Essential before returning to contact training (Step 5).
- Recovery Time: While some recover in a few days, others may take longer; the process should not be rushed.
- Individualized Care: Every concussion is different, and protocols should be overseen by a healthcare provider, especially for children.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention | CDC (.gov) +4

Disclaimer: This information is for educational purposes based on CDC guidelines. Always consult a healthcare provider for a personalized concussion recovery plan.

Return to Learn Protocol

Key Principles of Return to Learn

- Gradual Approach: Recovery is not a race; return to school in stages to avoid worsening

symptoms.

- Not a "Dark Room" Policy: Total rest for more than 1–2 days is discouraged. Active rehabilitation, such as light activity, is more effective.
- Manage Symptoms: If symptoms worsen during an activity, stop and take a break.
- Individualized Plan: Accommodation needs vary; some students need a lighter load, others need more frequent breaks.

Nationwide Children's Hospital +4

Recommended Return-to-Learn Steps

1. Daily Rest & Light Activities: 24–48 hours of rest, followed by light mental activity at home (reading, short screen time) that does not increase symptoms.
2. Home Schoolwork: Increase cognitive activity at home, such as reading, texting, or working on school assignments for short periods.
3. Part-Time School Attendance: Return to school part-time (e.g., half-days) or with lightened workloads.
4. Full School Day with Accommodations: Return to school full-time, but with modifications to reduce cognitive load.
5. Full Schoolwork & Non-contact Activities: Return to full academic load and resume extracurriculars that do not pose a risk of a second hit.

Brain Injury Association of America | BIAA +4

Potential Classroom Accommodations

- Reducing homework and class assignments to only key tasks.
- Allowing extra time to complete assignments or tests.
- Providing written notes or allowing the use of audiobooks to reduce cognitive strain.
- Allowing rest breaks or time in a quiet area, such as the nurse's office, during breaks.
- Allowing sunglasses/hats for light sensitivity.

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When to Modify

If symptoms return or worsen (e.g., headaches, dizziness, difficulty concentrating) for more than an hour, the student should reduce their intensity and consult a medical professional.

Disclaimer: Consult a medical professional before starting a return-to-learn plan, as protocols may vary based on individual, age, and severity of the concussion.