

Timberlane **Regional** School District  
ACADEMIC PROTOCOL FOR CONCUSSED STUDENTS

A student who has been determined to present with symptoms of a concussion will fall under the guidance of the academic protocol for concussed students. Concussions vary in degrees of severity, so it is best to address each student's needs on a case by case basis. However, in each case, the following procedures should be followed:

**Procedural actions prior to putting the Academic Protocol into place:**

1. Whenever a student suffers a head injury or is suspected of having a concussion, the school nurse will be promptly notified.
2. The school nurse will perform an assessment of the student for symptoms of a concussion unless a physician's assessment has already been performed and reported to the school nurse. The school nurse will notify the parents/guardians of her determination.
3. If the student has not yet been seen by a physician, the nurse will recommend to parents/guardians that the student be referred to a physician.
4. If the student is determined to have symptoms of a concussion either by a doctor, the school nurse, or the athletic trainer, the nurse will notify the student's guidance counselor, teachers, administrator, and the Athletic Director (if applicable) for the purpose of enacting the Academic Protocol.
5. The nurse will encourage the concussed student's parents/guardians to keep the student home for at least two days to one week, depending on the severity of the concussion, to rest the brain. The nurse will explain the importance of reducing stimuli to allow the brain to begin to heal. The nurse, as spokesperson for the school, will encourage the parents/guardians to keep the student from using electronic stimuli such as, television, cell phones, iPods, video games and computers. In the event where a student attends school during a period of time when s/he should be resting the brain, the school will take measures to reduce the student's brain stimulation.
6. For cases of severe concussions, the nurse, trainer, and healthcare provider's recommendations, along with the parent's input, will determine the length of rest period.

**The Academic Protocol for Concussed Students:**

1. The nurse will inform teachers of the student's initial concussion and the length of the recommended rest period. Teachers will also receive information on symptoms of a concussion.
2. During the "rest period" the concussed student's absences will be considered "exempt." All other absences related to the student's concussion will also be considered "exempt."

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3. Teachers will defer missed daily assignments until the student is medically cleared to return to an appropriate level of academic participation. If an essential summative assignment(s) takes place during this time or during an extended period related to the concussion, the teacher will make accommodations for the student to make up the assignment(s).
4. Upon the student's return to school, the nurse will encourage the student to check in with her for ongoing assessment. This "check in" should take place daily. The student will continue to be monitored in this way for the time period he or she is exhibiting concussive symptoms.
5. The nurse and the student's guidance counselor, teachers, and/or trainer will periodically communicate with one another on the concussed student's status. Each student's needs will be considered on a case by case basis.
6. The severity of a student's symptoms as determined by a healthcare provider's assessment will help to determine the types of academic supports that are put into place. The counselor may refer the student for eligibility of 504 or special education at any time in the process. When the student continues to exhibit ongoing symptoms beyond 60 days, the guidance counselor will refer the student for consideration of eligibility for a Section 504 Plan or possible referral for a special education evaluation. If found eligible for 504 or an IEP, the 504 or IEP team will determine the accommodations that are required in order for the student to access his/her educational program. The 504 or IEP team will determine future interventions until such time as the team determines that the concussive injury can be effectively managed by the school nurse in consultation with other officials.
7. For the students who have suffered an injury and who are not placed on a 504 plan or IEP, notification of injury and subsequent clearance will be initiated through the nurse's office to teachers, counselors, advisors, coaches, trainers and administrators.
8. If the concussion and/or the recovery period extend through a grading period, the student's teachers will be instructed by the guidance counselor to assign an "Incomplete" for a grade in the course. The length of the incomplete period will be determined on a case by case basis.
9. Once the student has been determined ready to return to a regular academic work schedule by the nurse and/or trainer, he/she is to complete missed essential work and turn it into the teacher for assessment. As appropriate, the teacher is encouraged to differentiate the assessments or assignment(s) to allow the student an opportunity to demonstrate proficiency.