**Concussions**

Most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness, but they may result in a wide range of symptoms, including physical signs (headaches, nausea/vomiting, balance problems, dizziness, light sensitivity, slurred speech, blurry/double vision), emotional changes (irritability, depression), cognitive impairment (difficulty thinking clearly or concentrating), and sleep disturbances (frequent awakening, insomnia). Fortunately, most athletes recover within a week or two from a concussion, but some have symptoms that can linger for weeks or even months.

**Return to Learn Guidelines**

Returning to academics should involve monitoring of cognitive effort followed by a gradual increase in activity. In some cases, cognitive rest with limited access to computers, video games, cell phones, TV, and texting might be appropriate.

The most current approach is to permit any cognitive activity that doesn’t worsen symptoms. The return to academics process should be monitored to control for cognitive overload. Students recovering from concussion will benefit from academic adjustments and flexible schedules. Returning to a normal workload too soon can prolong symptoms and slow recovery time.

**Students with TBI are Eligible for a 504 Plan**

Since TBI is the only disability related to a specific event, accommodations on an IEP may not be immediately available.

Often, it is appropriate to start with a 504 plan and then if the symptoms remain, move to an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

There are three ways a student may be considered an individual with a disability under Section 504. A student is considered to have a disability under section 504 if the student:

1. Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.
2. Has a record or history of such an impairment. The term includes children who have been misclassified (e.g. a non-‐‑English speaking student who was mistakenly classified as having a mental retardation)
3. Is regarded as having such an impairment.

**Reasons to Offer 504 Plans as Formalized Support**

**for Students with TBI**

**TBI is the only disability specifically related to an event.**

* Student abilities are often greatly impacted at least for a short time and possibly long term.
* Student adjustment to their new set of abilities is critical after the event.
* Without formal support, there may be issues that go unaddressed.

**Medical issues related to TBI are likely to be ignored in the school setting without a formal plan.**

* Fatigue, sleep issues, and headaches are common for students with TBI, but generally are not part of other disabilities.
* Often, there need to be accommodations at the school level to support students with these issues related to TBI.
* These medical issues are often “invisible”, and without a formal plan accommodations are less likely to happen.

**Documentation is important.**

* Students with TBI can have late onset of problems, or the problems can be quickly forgotten, as they are often “invisible”.
* Documenting a TBI can assure that a student’s TBI will not be overlooked in the future and the student will be able to get help when they need it.