 **Carver Crusaders Concussion Policy** 

**2015-2016**

Carver Middle High School is committed to the safety of all our student athletes. The main purpose of this policy is to educate our parents, student-athletes, coaches, administrators, school personnel, and volunteers on the seriousness of brain injuries, and more specifically concussions. Another purpose is to provide standardized procedures for any persons involved in the prevention, training, management and return to play decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities. This includes but is not limited to interscholastic sports and intramurals, in order to protect their health and safety.

A team of healthcare personnel consisting of our athletic trainer, school nurses, health teacher, as well as the athletic director have developed these policies/procedures for Carver Middle High School, serving grades 6-12. These policies/procedures have been developed in the best interest of our student athletes, in conjunction with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations, as our main goal is to ensure and maintain a safe environment for all.

* Carver Middle High School will be submitting affirmations on our school letterhead via the Athletic Director and Superintendent no later than January 1st, 2015, ensuring that our policies are in accordance with (105CMR201.006) MDPH. These policies/procedures will be reviewed and revised “as needed but at least every two years”.

**Section #1: Persons Responsible for Implementation of School Policy and Procedures**

The Carver Middle High School has designated its school Nurse, Karen Showan and Athletic Director, Mike Schultz (and his/her staff) who has administrative authority, to oversee implementation of these policies and protocols governing the prevention and management of sports-related head injuries. In addition, the Nurse/A.D. will be responsible for:

* Supporting and enforcing the protocols, documentation, training and reporting outlined in this policy;
* Supervising and reviewing that all documentation is in place;
* Reviewing, updating, and implementing policy every two years and including updates in annual training and student and parent handbooks.

**Section #2: Annual Training Requirement**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires annual safety training on prevention, identification and management of a sports-related injury including head trauma and second impact syndrome for designated school personnel as well as parents or legal guardians of children who participate in any extracurricular athletic activity. This annual safety training shall be required for Carver Middle High School’s coaches, certified athletic trainers, trainers, volunteers, school nurses, school and team physicians, athletic directors, parent or legal guardian of a child who participates in an extracurricular athletic activity and student who participates in an extracurricular athletic activity.

The trainings available for Carver Middle High School for school staff, parents/guardians and student athletes are MDPH Approved Online Training courses listed below. They are available free of charge and last only about 30 minutes. THIS MUST BE COMPLETED **BEFORE** PARTICIPATING IN ANY TYPE OF ATHLETIC TEAM ACTIVITY.

* Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Heads up Concussion in Youth Sports On-Line Training Program ([www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online\_training.html](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html))
* National Federation of State High School Associations Concussion in Sports – What You Need To Know ([www.nfhslearn.com/electiveDetail.aspx?courseID=15000](http://www.nfhslearn.com/electiveDetail.aspx?courseID=15000))

The school’s athletic director is responsible for ensuring that the training requirements for staff, parents, volunteers, coaches and students are met, recorded, and records are maintained. The written verification of completion of the annual training (either the certificate of completion from the on-line courses or a signed verification that written materials have been read and understood) will be kept on file by the following Department Heads:

* Nurse Leader: all school nurses and the School Physician Consultant
* Athletic Director: all members of the athletic staff, volunteers at any extra-curricular athletic activity, and parents or legal guardians of children who participate in any extra-curricular athletic activity
* Director of Health Education: all members of the physical education staff

**Section #3: Documentation of Physical Examination**

Every student athlete in Carver Middle High School must be separately and carefully examined by a duly licensed physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant, **prior to a student’s participation in competitive athletics, on an annual basis.** The completed and signed copy of the medical clearance form should be mailed, faxed or hand-delivered to either the school nurse or athletic office. No student athlete will be allowed to participate in athletic activities until all forms, including annual physical examinations, are signed and submitted.

As a matter of MIAA policy, Carver Middle High School accepts physical examinations completed within 13 months, to the date, to allow for insurance coverage that would not be possible if examinations are within a 12 month period.

**Section #4 Concussion History Pre-Participation Form**

The Massachusetts concussion law requires athletes and their parents to inform coaches about prior head injuries at the beginning of each sports season. This reporting is done online via the Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form and should be completed by the student’s parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and the student. It must be completed online and submitted, prior to the start of their season. This form provides a comprehensive history with up-to-date information relative to concussion history. This form is designed to ensure that particular attention is paid to identifying athletes with a history of brain or spinal injuries. For example, it asks such questions as:

* Has student ever experienced a traumatic head injury (a blow to the head)? (If yes, when?)
* Has student ever received medical attention for a head injury? (If yes, when?)
* Was student diagnosed with a concussion? (If yes, when?)
* Duration of symptoms for most recent concussion.

\*Until the pre-participation form is completed and signed by the parent/guardian and student and returned to the school prior to the start of every sports season, the student cannot participate in the extracurricular sports activity.\*

Medical Review of Pre-Participation Form

At the start of each sports season, the Athletic Director will review all pre-participation information and forward to the school nurse those forms indicating a history of head injury. The school nurse and Athletic Trainer will be responsible for:

* Reviewing or having the school physician review completed pre-participation forms
* Addressing any questions raised by the Athletic Director
* Communicating with the coach regarding the student’s concussion history and discussing concerns
* Following up with parents and students as needed prior to the student’s participation in extracurricular athletic activities.

**Section #5: Impact Testing**

Baseline Impact testing will be done bi-annually for ALL athletes participating in any sport at Carver Middle High School. This is done so that we have a baseline neurological test score for every athlete in the event that they sustain a concussion. Once cleared by the doctor the athlete will complete a post-injury Impact test to be used as a comparison to the baseline. The tests are good for two years and athletes will need to re-take the baseline test if theirs expires. The athletic trainer will be in charge of administering the test or if the athletic trainer is not available the athletic director will schedule a time to have the athlete take the test.

As of 2016 we will begin testing every student in the high school, starting at the end of their 8th grade year. We will also test 10th graders at the end of the school year, as the test is good for two years and will be valid through the rest of their high school career. This will be done so that we will have a baseline on every student in the school in the event that a non-sports related concussion occurs.

**Section #6: Procedure for Reporting Head Injuries to School Nurse and Certified Athletic Trainer**

At Carver Middle High School head injuries or suspected concussions (after a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body) sustained during extracurricular athletic activities must be reported by the coach as soon as possible to the school nurse and the certified athletic trainer. **Athletes who experience signs or symptoms of a concussion should not be allowed to return to play, until evaluated by a certified athletic trainer or physician.**

**Section #7: Removing Athletes from Play and Medical Evaluation:**

In the event that a student athlete receives a head injury, or is suspected of having a head injury, the student will be removed from play and **will not be returned to play or practice that day.** The coach should report the head injury to the certified athletic trainer or school nurse/physician as soon as possible, for medical assessment and management and for coordination of home instructions and follow-up care. The certified athletic trainer or school nurse/physician will be responsible for contacting the athlete’s parents and providing follow-up instructions. If the athlete is injured at an away event or if the certified athletic trainer is unavailable, the coaching staff are responsible for notifying the athlete’s parents of the injury and, if warranted, calling for emergency care. Coaches should seek assistance from the host site athletic trainer, coach or school nurse if at an away event.

**Section #8: Medical Clearance for Return to Play**

All students at Carver Middle High School must be cleared to return to play/practice by a licensed medical professional (physician, NP in consultation with a physician, CAT in consultation with a physician or neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student’s recovery) *after the graduated return to play has been completed.* It is recommended that this medical professional have familiarity with concussion diagnosisand management in order to determine how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for the student to return to normalactivities including physical activity and school (concentration andlearning activities). These forms are state-mandated and will be issued to the athlete and/or the athlete’s family via a HeadSmart packet given out by the athletic trainer, school nurse, or athletic director. Sports activities include physical educationclass as well as sports practices and games:

* The student should be completely symptom free at rest and with physical (sprints, non-contact aerobic activity) and cognitive exertion (school work).
* Return to play should occur gradually (see below).
* Students should be monitored for symptoms and cognitive function during each stage of exertion.
* Students should *only progress to the next level of exertion if they are asymptomatic at the current level.*
* **Massachusetts Regulated 5 Day Gradual Return to Play Plan:**

Day 1: No physical activity – Athlete will take a post-injury Impact Test and results will be compared to baseline results.

Day 2: Low levels of aerobic cardio activity. This includes light jogging, and/or light stationary biking for 20+ minutes.

Day 3: Moderate levels of physical activity with body/head movement. This includes moderate jogging, moderate-intensity weightlifting (reduced time and/or reduced weight from your typical routine), non-contact sport specific agility drills (in 3 planes of motion)

Day 4: Heavy **non-contact** physical activity. This includes return to practice NON-CONTACT only with participation in any drill that does not involve physical contact.

Day 5: Return to full contact in controlled practice.

In a situation in which a student has been medically cleared but school staff has observed continuing symptoms, **the athletic trainer/nurse will make the final decision regarding a student’s return to play**. If this situation arises, the Carver Middle High School staff should communicate to the physician or health care provider who provided the clearance regarding the symptoms which school staff has observed, to allow for re-evaluation by the health care provider. It is possible that the health care provider was not aware of the student’s symptoms when the provider gave the clearance. If the athlete still has symptoms, the athlete should **NOT** return to play.

**ADDITIONAL CMHS SCHOOL RULES**

**Carver Middle High School – SCHOOL RULE:** If any athlete has been diagnosed with a concussion and/or are in any stage of the return to play protocol, they **ARE NOT ALLOWED TO ATTEND ANY SPORTING EVENT**, whether it is practice or game of their own team, or a game/event of another sport. This also includes open gymnasium time where athletes may be shooting around or exercising in the weight room. If they are seen on the school premises after school hours their parent or guardian will be contacted and arrangements will be made for them to be picked up immediately. This rule will be strictly enforced and is not up for debate.

**Carver Middle High School – SCHOOL RULE:** Medical clearance notes received from an urgent care clinic in regards to returning to play after a sustained concussion **WILL NOT BE** accepted as a valid form of clearance. These documents must be received from one of the following:

(1) A duly licensed physician;

(2) A duly licensed certified athletic trainer in consultation with a licensed physician;

(3) A duly licensed nurse practitioner in consultation with a licensed physician; or

(4) A duly licensed neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student’s recovery.

Any questions, comments, or concerns can be directed to the Athletic Director, Michael Schultz, the school Nurse, Karen Showan, or the Athletic Trainer, Tyler Whealan ATC LAT by phone at (508)-866-6126, or by email at athtrainer@carver.org