

<b>Topic:</b>	<b>Risk Management – Minimum Standard of Care for Interschool Athletics</b>
<b>Effective:</b>	<b>June 2016</b>
<b>Cross-Reference:</b>	<b>Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education (OPASSE) and HDSB Localized Minimum Standards Administrative Procedures: Day Field Trips and In School Presentations; Environmental Conditions and Physical Activity; Concussion Prevention, Identification and Management;</b>
<b>Revision Date:</b>	<b>May 2019, June 2021</b>
<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>June 2024</b>
<b>Responsibility:</b>	<b>Superintendent of Education (School Programs, Secondary)</b>

**INTENDED PURPOSE:**

The Halton District School Board is committed to the safety of all students while participating in interschool athletics (try-outs, practices, competitions, tournaments) both on and off school sites as part of an HDSB co-instructional program. In the interests of safety, the minimum standards set out by the HDSB Localized Minimum Standards and the OPASSE, as well as HDSB administrative procedures, must be followed.

**PROCEDURES:****Risk Management:**

The following elements of risk must be taken into consideration by the teacher, coach, and /or supervisor:

- age-appropriateness for the students'/athletes' physical/mental abilities and behavioural patterns;
- knowledge/experience and certification (where applicable) required of teachers/coaches in accordance with the HDSB Localized Minimum Standards and OPASSE;
- appropriate supervision of activity as outlined in the HDSB Localized Minimum Standards and OPASSE (activity specific pages) as well as in the HDSB Administrative Procedures;
- environmental conditions (e.g., lightning, extreme temperatures, high winds, tornadoes and inclement weather) in terms of site appropriateness and/or cancellation/postponement;
- safety standards required of each sport/activity at the elementary and secondary interschool level, which are reviewed annually. Specifically, they include information on:
  - equipment
  - clothing, footwear and jewellery
  - facilities
  - environmental considerations
  - special rules and instructions
  - qualifications
  - First Aid

Each school must appoint a Department Head or Administrator who is responsible for the Interschool Athletic program. This person will ensure that each coach is familiar with the relevant HDSB documents and the coaching philosophies as outlined in the respective athletic association handbooks/ manuals and will ensure each coach meets the specific coaching qualifications and first aid requirements.

Instructional Program Leads (IPLs) for Elementary and Secondary Health and Physical Education (HPE), Safety and Well Being will schedule the regular inspection/repair of all gymnasium and fitness facilities and associated equipment as indicated in the following schedule:

- |  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| ● Secondary Schools                        | annually          |
| ● K-8, 2-8 FI single track, Middle Schools | every second year |
| ● Junior Schools (K-5 and K-6)             | every third year  |

**A. Coaching Qualifications and Expectations**

- o All new coaches must go through an approval process by school administrator/designate to determine the individual's ability to coach the activity and ensure that the individual has the knowledge and experience, and, where required, the necessary qualifications (e.g. high risk activity) to safely coach the activity.
- o Volunteer coaches must go through a formalized application process using the HDSB Volunteer Application Form and be approved by the school administrator/designate. Note: all volunteers require a Criminal Background Check which includes vulnerable sector screening.
- o All current coaches should maintain and possess the minimum coaching qualifications for their activity/sport as outlined in the OPASSE and HDSB Localized Minimum Standards (Interschool).
- o Each season, coaches must attend the sport/season specific to Elementary Athletics (EATH) or the Halton Secondary School Athletic Association (H.S.S.A.A). Coaches Meeting to obtain important information about the upcoming season, safety standard updates, and code of conduct for Coaches, Athletes and Spectators.
- o Prior to the start of each season, coaches must review the related HDSB Administrative Procedures referenced above, the HDSB Localized Minimum Standards, and the specific activity page for their sport from the Interschool module of OPASSE.
- o All student athletes must have a completed Interschool Athletics Package, Part B: Emergency Contact/Medical Information, Acknowledgement of Elements of Risk and Permission to Participate Form. This package must be returned and signed by the parent/guardian on behalf of their child **PRIOR to the first try out for EACH sport** in which their child is a participant.
- o Coaches shall have access to the completed Interschool Athletics Package, Part B: Emergency Contact/Medical Information, Acknowledgement of Elements of Risk and Permission to Participate Form at **all** try outs, practices and competitions.
- o Coaches shall inform parents/guardians and discuss with students/athletes, the risks associated with the sport prior to the start of the season and outline ways in which the risks can be minimized, including concussion prevention and education.
- o Coaches must be aware of and adhere to the procedures for the transportation of students and ensure that parents/guardians have completed the required permission forms prior to transporting student-athletes.

**B. First Aid Requirements and/or Certifications for Low and High-Risk Activities**

Activities are designated high or low risk by OPASSE. The designation of High Risk is present at the top of every OPASSE activity page in red.

**First Aid for Low Risk Activities:** The minimum requirement for first aid is that a coach/staff sponsor take responsibility for providing first aid to injured students.

They must:

- follow the HDSB Concussion Prevention, Identification and Management Admin Procedure,
- follow the school's first aid emergency action plan, and
- be present during the entire try out, practice or competition.

**First Aid for High Risk Activities:** The coach/staff sponsor who takes responsibility for providing first aid to injured students must:

- as a minimum, have a current first aid certification from a recognized first aid provider (e.g. St. John Ambulance, Red Cross) that includes CPR B or C and training in head, neck and spinal injury management;
- be in the geographical vicinity and readily accessible during the entire try out, practice or competition;

- be aware of the school's first aid emergency action plan and follow their first aid emergency response;
- follow the HDSB Concussion Prevention, Identification and Management Admin Procedure; and
- not be a participant in the activity (fully focus on their role as a First Aid provider).

### **C: Expectations of First Aid Providers**

#### **At Practices and Competitions**

For the purposes of providing first aid at practices and competitions (on or off school sites), the team coach or HDSB designate is responsible for the following for each of their own students/athletes:

- having access to the students' Interschool Athletics Package Part B: Emergency Contact/Medical Information, Acknowledgement of Elements of Risk and Permission to Participate Form which includes parent/guardian/emergency contact information;
- identifying athletes with medical conditions (e.g., anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, heart disorders, previous concussion, etc.);
- managing those medical conditions and providing for any emergency first aid as needed;
- ensuring first aid kits are available, accessible and appropriately stocked (see OPASSE: [Sample First Aid Kit Contents](#) and/or [Sample Portable Off-Site First Aid Kit Contents](#));
- ensuring there is a suitable means of communication on site (e.g., phone) in event of emergency to call 911, parent/guardian and School Administrator;
- being knowledgeable of the board or sites' Emergency Action Plan;
- identifying and managing a suspected concussion and following up with parents/admin/EMS using the HDSB Concussion Prevention, Identification and Management Admin Procedure;
- completing the required student injury/accident reports;
- implementing corrective measures to help prevent the occurrence of an injury;
- implementing universal precautions (e.g., using impermeable gloves) when dealing situations involving blood and other bodily fluids;
- completing Board/school required student injury/accident reports and OSBIE Incident Reports as required and notifying the parent/guardian, Principal, Health and Physical Education Department Heads (if applicable) and the appropriate Board official(s); and
- implementation corrective measures to help prevent the occurrence of an injury.

**NOTE: The team coach or designate must not be involved in running the practice or be coaching the game while first aid is being administered.**

#### **When hosting competition or tournament:**

For the purposes of providing first aid when hosting a competition/tournament (on or off school site) the team coach or designate/convenor of a competition or tournament is responsible for the following:

- being knowledgeable of the board or sites' Emergency Action Plan. When the non-school facilities have an Emergency Action Plan with a higher standard of care than the school board, the facility protocol must be followed;
- ensure an individual who takes responsibility for providing first aid is present throughout the entire duration of the competition or tournament;
- ensuring first aid kits are available, accessible and appropriately stocked (see OPASSE: [Sample First Aid Kit Contents](#) and/or [Sample Portable Off-Site First Aid Kit Contents](#));
- ensuring there is a suitable means of communication on site (e.g., phone) in event of emergency to call 911, parent/guardian and School Administrator;
- ensure there are procedures in place for calling 911;
- implementing universal precautions (e.g., using impermeable gloves) when dealing with situations involving blood and other bodily fluids.

**NOTE: The team coach or designate/convenor must be free of coaching duties in order to deal with emergencies.**

**D. “In-charge” persons**

Prior to the start of any try out, practice or competition, an “**in-charge**” adult must be identified to all players/teams/coaches/officials/groups involved in the activity. Examples of who might assume this role include:

- coach of the home team
- convenor of the tournament
- game official
- Elementary Athletics or H.S.S.A.A. convenor
- Instructional Program Leads (IPLs) for Elementary and Secondary Health and Physical Education (HPE), Safety and Well Being

While the “in charge” adult may be responsible for first aid, as per above, the “in-charge” adult also has the responsibility to ensure:

- the locations of the fire alarms/exits and alternative exit routes, known to all participants;
- the environment in which athletes will play is safe for practice/competition. This can be done by completing a pre-activity check of the facilities (e.g., playing field, floor, ice, etc.);
- game/match officials are certified in all high risk sports;
- consideration is given to all environmental conditions (lightning, extreme temperatures, high winds, tornadoes and inclement weather). Safety precautions and protocols must be communicated to all participants and spectators in response to environmental risks.

**E. Medical Conditions**

At the beginning of the school year, teachers/coaches need to be aware of the medical background (e.g., Plan of Care, identified medical peril, etc.) and physical limitations of their student athletes. This will include, but is not limited to the knowledge of conditions such as: anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, heart disorders, previous concussion, etc.

Each school has a process by which medical information is made available to teachers/coaches at the beginning of the school year and throughout the year as needed. Coaches are to ensure familiarization with their school’s process.

Based on the information provided by parents/guardians (Part B: Emergency Contact/Medical Information, Acknowledgement of Elements of Risk and Permission to Participate Form) coaches should review the Board’s medical condition protocols and all relevant HDSB Administrative Procedures.

Concussion is always a risk when one participates in physical activity. The HDSB Concussion Prevention, Identification and Management Administrative Procedure will be followed if a student sustains a jarring impact to the head, face, neck or body and shows signs and/or symptoms of a concussion. Parents/guardians will be asked to seek medical attention for their child/ward from a Physician/Nurse Practitioner using an HDSB Suspected Concussion Form which must be completed and returned to the school. If a concussion is diagnosed, a Home and School Concussion Management Plan must be followed. Included in this plan is the Concussion Medical Clearance Form, to be completed by a Physician/Nurse Practitioner before the student returns to any physical education classes, intramural activities and interschool try outs, practices and competitions.

Sudden Arrhythmia Death Syndrome (SADS) refers to a variety of cardiac disorders which are often genetic and undiagnosed that can be responsible for sudden death in young, apparently healthy people. Because physical activity is a common trigger for many sudden cardiac deaths, it is important for teachers/coaches to recognize possible symptoms/warning signs:

- fainting or seizure during physical activity
- fainting or seizure resulting from emotional excitement, emotional distress or being startled (e.g. a sudden loud noise such as a school fire alarm system)

For more information visit the [SADS](#) website.

**F. Return to Physical Activity (Non-Concussion Medical Illness/Injuries)**

If a student misses any physical activity due to non-concussion related illness or injury requiring professional medical attention, a Return to Physical Activity (Non-Concussion Medical Illness/Injuries) Form must be completed and returned to the school in order prior to the student athlete resuming practice or competition.