

# Catholic school board revises concussion protocol

By Kathy Yanchus  
METROLAND WEST MEDIA GROUP

The Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB) has revised its concussion policy as mandated last spring by the Ontario Ministry of Education.

The new protocol was outlined for trustees at a recent meeting of the HCDSB, and is based on the minimum standard set by the province under the Ontario Physical Health Education Association.

The ministry required that all school boards upgrade their concussion procedures by January 30 to include components of awareness,

prevention, identification and management, and training.

Although the board had a concussion strategy in place, it only addressed a student's return to physical activity and not when a student should be allowed to return to school.

"We all recognize that the health and safety of students are essential pre-conditions of effective learning," said Tim Overholt, superintendent of education, school services, in his report to the board.

"Research has shown that a concussion can have a significant impact on a student cognitively, physically, emotionally and socially. Therefore, it is important that adults respond

in a timely and effective manner in addressing this condition."

Research shows activities that require concentration can cause a student's concussion symptoms to reappear or worsen so it's just as important to "help students as they return to learn in the classroom as it is to help them return to physical activity," according to the guidelines.

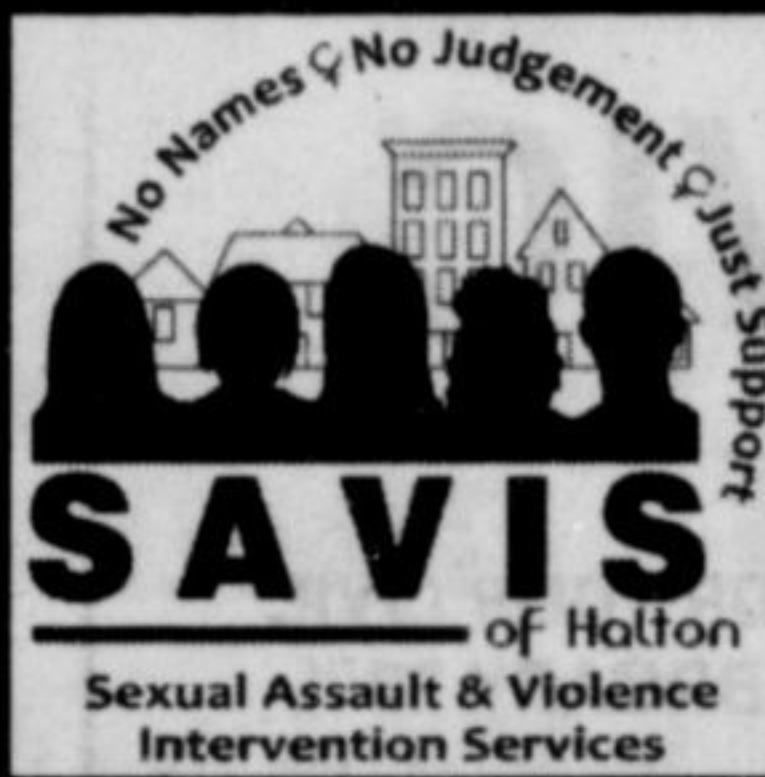
The HCDSB worked in conjunction with the Halton District School Board and the Halton Public Health Department to develop a protocol, with support from a board steering committee, and input from parents and students.

"This committee examined and refined the joint committee's protocol to address the needs of our school board," said Overholt.

The updated document includes an outline of the signs and symptoms of a concussion, as well as documentation for teachers, coaches and parents to follow in monitoring a student's return to school and physical activity. Staff also will be trained in concussion prevention strategies.

"Recognizing that concussion research is ongoing, our protocol will continue to evolve with the development and implementation of this research," said Overholt.

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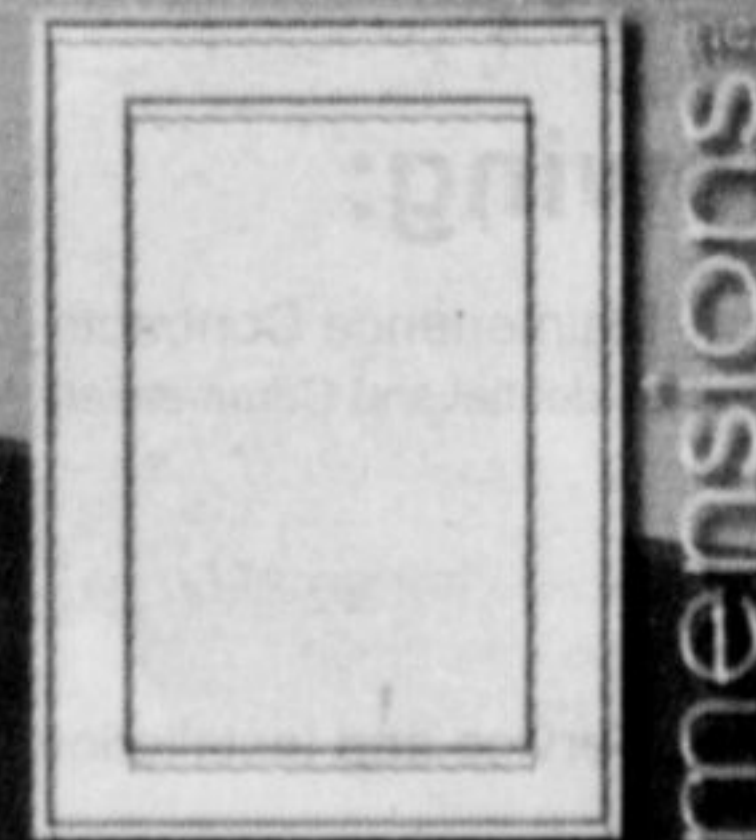


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