



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS (MCPS)

BASELINE TESTING PLAN (YEAR 11)

Guidelines for Baseline Testing

The following are guidelines regarding the implementation of ImPACT baseline concussion testing at MCPS high schools for 2023–2024.

A. Fundamental Process

1. Student-athletes are encouraged to complete a baseline test one time, prior to their initial participation in the MCPS interscholastic athletics program.
2. The baseline test establishes a standard or “baseline” cognitive profile of the student-athlete in a non-concussed state.
3. If a student-athlete suffers a concussion, upon request of the parent/guardian, a follow-up test may be administered to potentially compare to the original test taken in a non-concussed state.
4. Follow-up tests are free and shall be administered by the school or the vendor.
5. Student-athletes suffering concussions are not required to be retested in order to resume participation; rather, it is a tool that can provide parents/guardians and health care providers with options.

B. Fundamental Points

1. All student-athletes are tested prior to their initial participation in the MCPS interscholastic athletics program.
2. The test is administered via a unique link sent to each individual student-athlete.
3. The athletic department assists in scheduling teams/student-athletes for testing.
4. Baseline test results are not required for a student-athlete to return to play.

C. Consent, and Information

1. Baseline testing information will be provided at the request of parents/guardians and student-athletes during the online registration process for athletics.
2. Student-athletes and parents/guardians complete the *Consent Form - ImPACT Baseline Concussion Testing* during the online registration for athletics. This must be done prior to testing.
3. Information regarding baseline testing is also made available on the MCPS athletics web page.
4. MCPS provides schools with the ImPACT software.

D. Timeline

1. Schools may begin testing at any time prior to the season.

2. Ideally tests should be administered prior to the first practice. However, tests for individual student-athletes must be completed prior to participation in their competition against another school, whether it is a scrimmage or contest.
3. Tests are administered prior to the fall, winter, and spring seasons.

E. Test Administration

1. Schools should determine appropriate procedures for verifying student-athletes' identification.
2. Testing completion and confirmation is tracked using the online registration portal for athletics.

F. Follow-up Tests (Retesting after a student-athlete suffers a concussion)

1. If a student-athlete suffers a concussion, the student-athlete does not necessarily have to undergo a retest in order to resume participation. However, if a parent/guardian of a student-athlete requests a retest, the school or the vendor will administer the retest at no charge.
2. Upon request, the school will make the results available to the student-athlete, parent/guardian, or the student-athlete's health care provider.

G. Follow-up treatment for a concussion

1. Student-athletes must have approval from a qualified health care professional in order to return to action. "Return to Play" protocol is included in the MCPS Concussion Plan, available on the MCPS web page.
2. If a student-athlete chooses to utilize the medical services provided by the vendor assigned to his or her school, the student-athlete's family must work with the vendor and insurance company.
3. Schools should provide vendor contact information to parents/guardians. Parents/guardians do not have to work with the vendor to have their child cleared to return to play, but it is an option for the parent/guardian.

H. Invalid Tests/Student-Athletes with Cognitive Disabilities

1. There are certain student-athletes for whom it is impossible to attain valid test results. If, after multiple attempts, valid results cannot be obtained for a particular student-athlete, the school will notify the student-athlete's parents/guardians that a valid test result could not be obtained.
2. Some student-athletes have disabilities that may not allow them to take a baseline test. In such cases, the school should confirm in writing with the student-athlete's case manager and school nurse that the student-athlete could not be tested.

I. Questions and Answers

1. *Question:* How many times does a student-athlete need to complete a baseline test?
Answer: Student-athletes are encouraged to complete a baseline test one time, prior to their initial participation in the MCPS interscholastic athletics program
2. *Question:* I understand that MCPS is encouraged that student-athletes undergo baseline concussion testing. May a student-athlete have a baseline concussion test administered by someone other than the school?
Answer: Yes, but the student-athlete will still have to take the baseline test administered by the school.

3. *Question:* Does a student-athlete have to take a second baseline test if he or she suffers a concussion?

Answer: No. Taking a retest is optional. Some medical professionals utilize baseline testing as a tool to assist in making decisions about when a student-athlete is able to return to play, others do not. Some health care providers may request follow-up testing after suffering a diagnosed concussion.
4. *Question:* A student-athlete has suffered a concussion. The parents/guardians understand that their child does not have to take a re-test, but they would prefer that he does. Who administers the re-test?

Answer: The vendor will administer a re-test(s), at no charge.
5. *Question:* Where does a parent/guardian find a medical professional qualified in comparing and interpreting baseline tests?

Answer: One source is the vendor assigned to that particular school. Each of the vendors assigned to MCPS high schools have the capacity to either compare tests or recommend someone who does.
6. *Question:* Would a parent/guardian have to pay the vendor to analyze a re-test or otherwise provide treatment for a concussion?

Answer: Yes. The vendor will supply re-tests at no charge, but treatment or analyses are a separate matter. The parent/guardian would work with the vendor and his or her insurance company.
7. *Question:* Who actually administers the baseline test?

Answer: The student-athlete can complete the test at home. However, certain school personnel may attain certification to administer tests without direct supervision of the vendor. If the vendor acknowledges the certification, the school may implement tests to student-athlete who join the team after the start of the season, or for retests following a concussion.

Parents/Guardians should contact the local school athletics specialist with questions regarding baseline testing. Contact information is available in the [Contacts](#) section of the MCPS Athletics web page.