



KSHSAA Position on the Use of Soft or Padded Headgear

Student-athletes participating in sports in which soft or padded headgear is illegal by NFHS rules, are required to obtain a KSHSAA letter of exception to be allowed to wear these products (this equipment is legal in soccer per NFHS rule). In order for the KSHSAA to grant an exception to allow a student to wear a soft headgear device, a signed statement from the student's physician must be submitted to the Association stating the reason the soft headgear is necessary. **If the soft headgear is being prescribed for concussion prevention or safety reasons, the statement must indicate the student-athlete is cleared for participation with or without the soft headgear.** Requests for a KSHSAA letter of exception for soft headgear for concussion preventive purposes will not be granted without this language in the physician's note.

There is no medical or scientific evidence that soft or padded headgear products are effective at preventing concussions. These products do not address the proposed mechanism of concussion – acceleration, deceleration, and rotational forces acting on the brain. Both the NFHS and KSHSAA sports medicine advisory committees support this position.

The KSHSAA and its sports medicine advisory committee continue to monitor current concussion research and will continually work to provide the most up-to-date information to its member schools.