

Name: _____ Date: _____

ACE Post-Concussion Gradual Return to School

Stage	Description	Activity Level	Criteria to Move to Next Stage	Date Criteria Met
0	No return, at home	Day 1 - Maintain low level cognitive and physical activity. No prolonged concentration. Cognitive Readiness Challenge: As symptoms improve, try reading or math challenge task for 10-30 minutes; assess for symptom increase.	To Move To Stage 1: (1) Student can sustain concentration for 30 minutes before significant symptom exacerbation, AND (2) Symptoms reduce or disappear with cognitive rest breaks* allowing return to activity.	
1	Return to School, Partial Day (1-3 hours)	Attend 1-3 classes, intersperse rest breaks. No tests or homework. Minimal expectations for productivity.	To Move To Stage 2: Symptom status improving, tolerates 4-5 hours of activity-rest cycles; 2-3 cognitive rest breaks built into school day.	
2	Full Day, Maximal Supports (required throughout day)	Attend most classes, with 2-3 rest breaks (20-30'), no tests. Minimal HW ($\leq 60'$). Minimal-moderate expectations for productivity.	To Move To Stage 3: Symptom number & severity improving, needs 1-2 cognitive rest breaks built into school day.	
3	Return to Full Day, Moderate Supports (provided in response to symptoms during day)	Attend all classes with 1-2 rest breaks (20-30'); begin quizzes. Moderate HW (60-90') Moderate expectations for productivity. Design schedule for make-up work.	To Move To Stage 4: Continued symptom improvement, needs no more than 1 cognitive rest break per day	
4	Return to Full Day, Minimal Supports (Monitor final recovery)	Attend all classes with 0-1 rest breaks (20-30'); begin modified tests (breaks, extra time). HW (90+') Moderate- maximum expectations for productivity.	To Move To Stage 5: No active symptoms, no exertional effects across the full school day.	
5	Full Return, No Supports Needed	Full class schedule, no rest breaks. Max. expectations for productivity. Begin to address make-up work.	N/A	

*Cognitive rest break: a period during which the student refrains from academic or other cognitively demanding activities, including schoolwork, reading, TV/games, conversation. May involve a short nap or relaxation with eyes closed in a quiet setting.

