

Lake Oswego,OR-11 Year Old Dies playing Flag Football

by Wendy Owen, The Oregonian

Lake Oswego School District Austin Sergeev

LAKE OSWEGO -- A Lake Oswego boy who died after being hit by a kicked football Tuesday suffered a blunt force trauma to his chest that caused his heart to stop, according to the state medical examiner's office.



Austin Sergeev, 11, was playing flag football during lunch recess at Palisades Elementary School with several other students when he attempted to block a punt and the ball hit him in the chest.

"The concussive force causes the heart to stop beating or beat abnormally," said Deputy State Medical Examiner Dr. Christopher Young. "It's an extremely unusual injury."

Sergeev was playing flag football with a group of students after lunch at the Lake Oswego school. District officials initially said he attempted to block a punt and it hit him in the throat. He collapsed to the ground and students immediately alerted the on-duty teacher.

According to principal Carol Whitten, as the teacher attempted CPR, other staff used hand-held radios to summon help from the Lake Oswego Fire Department.

The boy died at Legacy Meridian Park Hospital in Tualatin shortly after the accident. His mother was with him, Whitten said in an email to parents.

Flag football is a "typical recess behavior," Lake Oswego Superintendent Bill Korach said Tuesday. But "I'm sure we will go back through it and see how things unfolded."

There was adult supervision during the recess, he said. "Right now, our primary concern is for the family, the teachers and staff and the families at Palisades," he said.

Whitten e-mailed parents at the end of the school day with the news, asking them to tell their children.

The 300-student school is tucked in the hills south of Oswego Lake near Lakeridge High School and has a strong parent community.

"We are in shock and grief and will continue to keep you informed of our efforts to support the family and our school family during this sad time," Whitten wrote to parents.

School counselors and additional staff were available at the school Tuesday and will continue to work with students today.

