



# HOT WEATHER OPERATIONS

*August 2023*

With higher temperatures and extreme heat conditions occurring more often, all schools in the Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD) have plans in place for continued operations of schools during periods of extremely hot weather. The guidelines are outlined in the District's Heat Operations Plan

The safety and well being of our students and employees are our top priority. We want to make sure that students and employees are healthy and well, and to prevent heat-related illness so that learning can continue. As a result, our schools have guidelines in place for instruction during hot weather.

The district does not close schools due to hot weather but may call for alternative locations for instruction at some schools under certain circumstances.

The California Department of Public Health (CDHP) has updated its [guidance for schools on sports and strenuous outdoor activities during extreme heat.](#)







## Forecasting Heat

CDHP and PUSD are now using the latest version of the [National Weather Service's "HeatRisk" forecast](#), which incorporates data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to determine if temperatures pose an elevated risk of heat-related health impacts. HeatRisk is a better indicator than temperature alone because it takes into consideration:

1. how unusual the heat is for your location and time of the year, and
2. how long the heat will last

Value	Risk of Heat-Related Impacts
<b>0</b> (Green)	<b>Little to no risk</b> from expected heat.
<b>1</b> (Yellow)	<b>Minor</b> - This level of heat affects primarily those individuals extremely sensitive to heat, especially when outdoors without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration.
<b>2</b> (Orange)	<b>Moderate</b> - This level of heat affects most individuals sensitive to heat, especially those without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration.
<b>3</b> (Red)	<b>Major</b> - This level of heat affects anyone without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration.
<b>4</b> (Magenta)	<b>Extreme</b> - This level of rare and/or long-duration extreme heat with little to no overnight relief affects anyone without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration.

Temperature is not the only indicator that determines the HeatRisk Level. An *approximate* range of temperature corresponding to the heat levels is:

	Green 80°F and below		Red 100 - 115°F
	Yellow 80 - 95°F		Purple 115°F and above
	Orange 96 - 100°F		



## HeatRisk Levels and Guidelines

Adapted from [CDPH Health Guidance for Schools on Sports and Strenuous Activities During Extreme Heat.](#)

<b>Value 0</b>	Little or no risk from expected heat
<b>General actions for those at risk</b>	No preventive action necessary
<b>PUSD actions</b>	No preventive action necessary

<b>Value 1</b>	<b>Minor</b> This level of heat affects primarily most individuals extremely sensitive to heat, especially when outdoors without effective cooling/hydration. This level initiates concern for students with pre-existing health conditions that cause sensitivity to heat.
<b>General actions for those at risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Increase hydration</li> <li>→ Reduce time spent outdoors or stay in the shade when the sun is strongest</li> <li>→ Open windows at night and use fans to bring cooler air inside buildings</li> </ul>
<b>PUSD actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Implement alternative plan that includes change of schedule or location and access to water for students who have pre-existing health conditions causing sensitivity to heat</li> <li>→ Reduce outside activity.</li> <li>→ Notify parents of high heat and ask to pack cold water and dress in cool clothing</li> <li>→ Monitor mobility devices to ensure they are safe for use (i.e. check metal and vinyl parts to make sure they are safe to touch)</li> </ul>



<b>Value 2</b>	<p><b>Moderate</b> This level of heat is tolerated by many but affects most individuals sensitive to heat, especially those without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration.</p> <p>Some risk for the general population who are exposed to the sun for longer periods of time. For those without air conditioning, living spaces may become uncomfortable in the afternoons and evenings, although fans and opening windows at night may help.</p>
<b>General actions for those at risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Increase hydration</li> <li>→ Reduce time spent outdoors or stay in the shade when the sun is strongest</li> <li>→ Open windows at night and use fans to bring cooler air inside buildings</li> </ul>
<b>PUSD actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Trigger alternative plan including change of schedule or location</li> <li>→ Access to water for students with pre-existing health conditions that causes sensitivity to heat</li> <li>→ Reduce outside activity. During recess/lunch students may be outside half the time and inside for the other half</li> <li>→ Schools notify parents about high heat forecasts. Parents asked to to pack cold water and dress students in cool clothing</li> <li>→ Monitor mobility devices to ensure they are safe for use (i.e. check metal and vinyl parts to make sure they are safe to touch)</li> </ul>

<b>Value 3</b>	<p><b>Major</b> This type of heat affects anyone without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration. Individuals who are active in the sun and those who are sensitive to heat are at risk. Possible poor air quality. Possible interruptions of power as demand increases.</p>
<b>General actions for those at risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Consider canceling outdoor activities during the heat of the day, otherwise move activities to the coolest part of the day</li> <li>→ Stay hydrated</li> <li>→ Stay in a cool place during the day and evening</li> <li>→ Fans may not be adequate. Use air conditioning or find a location that has it. A few hours in a cool location may lower risk</li> </ul>
<b>PUSD actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Rainy day schedule unless air conditioned spaces and fans for air circulation are not available for students and employees</li> <li>→ Cancel all outdoor and unconditioned indoor activities during the heat of the day (usually 10am-5pm)</li> <li>→ Reschedule all outdoor and unconditioned indoor activities to a cool time of the day or a different day</li> <li>→ Scheduled water breaks for all classes and student group activities</li> <li>→ Notify parents about high heat and ask them to pack cold water and</li> </ul>



	<p>dress students in cool clothing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Check temperature of metal and plastic playground equipment</li> <li>→ Monitor mobility devices to ensure they are safe for use (i.e., check metal and vinyl parts to make sure they are safe to touch)</li> <li>→ Relocation of students will be considered if there is limited to no access to air conditioning or water</li> <li>→ Athletic Programs: all outdoor and unconditioned indoor activities are rescheduled to a cool time of day or a different day</li> </ul>
--	--

<b>Value 4</b>	<b>Extreme</b> This level of rare and/or long duration extreme heat with little or no overnight relief affects anyone without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration. This multi-day excessive heat is dangerous for everyone who is not prepared. Poor air quality is likely. Power outages are more likely as electrical demands reach critical levels.
<b>General actions for those at risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Strongly consider canceling outdoor activities</li> <li>→ Stay hydrated.</li> <li>→ Stay in a cool place, including overnight</li> <li>→ Use air conditioning or find a location that does. Even a few hours in a cool location can lower risk. Fans will not be adequate</li> <li>→ Check on your neighbors</li> </ul>
<b>PUSD actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Cancel all outdoor and unconditioned indoor activities</li> <li>→ Relocation of students will be considered if there is limited to no access to air conditioning or water</li> <li>→ Athletic Programs: Cancel and reschedule all outdoor and unconditioned indoor activities</li> </ul>



## **KEEPING STUDENTS COOL AND HYDRATED**

Students are encouraged to bring containers of water to school during hot weather. Water fountains are available in all schools and schools are encouraging students to take extra water fountain breaks throughout the day. 24 PUSD schools and sites have water filling stations (see appendix for locations)

It is recommended that students wear lightweight clothing in keeping with school dress codes. Please also make sure to apply sunscreen to your child before school, as school staff are not permitted to apply it.

## **ACCESS TO WATER**

Drinking fountains are open and have been serviced.

The District is delivering bottled water to schools for hot day emergencies. Schools may also request additional water bottles from the District warehouse.

## **COOLING SYSTEMS**

The district has installed cooling systems in classrooms and many shared spaces. In the last 12 months, the District's Maintenance and Operations has completed a number of HVAC projects. In addition, this summer the District purchased evaporative ("swamp) coolers for three schools.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS**

Elementary teachers may rearrange the daily schedule so that basic skills subjects are taught at the optimal time. Recess activities are limited to quiet games that require a minimum of physical activity. Physical education activities at all grade levels are limited to less strenuous activities and/or are rescheduled to a more appropriate time.

## **ALTERNATIVE LOCATIONS FOR INSTRUCTION**

Cooler areas of schools buildings and grounds are used when available. As an example, some teachers may have students gather in shaded lawn areas or move to rooms with better cross-ventilation. Students in non-air-conditioned portable facilities may be merged with other classes in air-conditioned buildings, such as media centers, cafeterias or auditoriums.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Athletic activities and practices may be canceled due to hot weather, or rescheduled for a more appropriate time. Before- and after-school programs may also be modified or activities rearranged.

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Additional fans will be provided for any medically fragile students.



## **EMPLOYEES**

- Hydrate, rest, and stay in the shade as needed
- In case of relocation
  - Staff remain in place to stay with students until they are released to parents
  - Be mindful of staff with health conditions; watch each other for symptoms
  - Coordinate with site administration who will communicate with the district office

## **TECHNOLOGY**

Devices are sensitive to heat. Students and employees are asked to be mindful of their district Chromebooks and devices to prevent heat damage. Devices should not be left in direct sunlight or in backpacks that are placed on the ground outdoors.

## **POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS (IF NECESSARY)**

In case there is a need to stay home, families will be able to access instructional resources and specific classroom updates on teacher Canvas pages and can access additional educational resources via the Clever dashboard.

To provide continuity in learning, students and teachers will use Canvas pages. Students can access Canvas courses using their PUSD provided Chromebooks. For younger children, packets may need to be sent home.

## **RESOURCES**

[Canvas Resources for Teachers](#)

[How to link to your student in Canvas \(Parents/Caregivers\)](#)

[PUSD EdTech Resources for Families](#)