

## **Aquatics Policy**

### **PURPOSE**

All high schools have swimming pools and offer instruction in swimming and diving. In addition, these schools also may offer extracurricular aquatic activities, including swimming and diving teams, clubs, and community usage. This policy will promote safety for students, staff, and community members by requiring appropriate staffing and appropriate water safety equipment at these pools while any aquatic activities are being conducted.

### **AQUATIC ACTIVITIES AT POOLS OR OTHER WATER FACILITIES OWNED, OPERATED, OR USED BY THE FARGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

This policy applies to all aquatic activities. “Aquatic activities” include swimming, diving, water safety, and any other, curricular and extracurricular Fargo Public Schools’ (FPS) activity conducted in or at any pool, beach, lake, or other water facility used, owned or leased by the Fargo Public Schools.

In the event that any person is harmed or injured while participating in an aquatic activity, FPS personnel should follow the emergency response manual. All aquatic activities accidents involving any person should be reported to the Human Resources Department within 24 hours. A Fargo Public Schools Incident Report must be completed.

Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including discharge.

### **1. LIFEGUARDS**

A lifeguard must be present whenever a FPS pool is in use. Lifeguards must be present for all FPS pool use, including any time a pool is used for swimming instruction. Lifeguards shall have the authority to order any person who does not comply with the pool rules or the rules of the school and district to leave the pool.

The following provisions shall pertain to lifeguards working at FPS pool facilities:

1. All lifeguards must possess a current lifeguard’s certificate or license, issued by the American Red Cross, the National Pool and Waterpark Training Program, the YMCA, or other entity acceptable to the Fargo Public Schools.
2. All lifeguards must wear appropriate swimming attire and be identified as a lifeguard at all times while on duty.
3. No lifeguard, while assigned to supervise the pool, may be used as a teacher, teacher’s aide, coach, or assistant coach, or have any additional duties that would distract their attention from proper observation of the pool area.

Lifeguards during Curricular Aquatics Activities (during the school day)

The minimum number of lifeguards that shall be on duty during FPS curricular aquatic activities will be one lifeguard per 40 individuals using the pool.

1. Curricular Aquatic Activities (during the school day) for Students of a Building with a Pool

Principals shall notify the FPS Human Resources Department at least five (5) days prior to any curricular aquatics activities. This includes, but is not limited to, physical education classes and activities, adaptive physical education classes and activities, and other FPS curricular areas, classes and activities. The Fargo Public Schools Human Resources Department will keep a current list of Fargo Public Schools approved substitute teachers who have a current lifeguard's certificate or license. The Fargo Public Schools Human Resources Department will secure approved substitute teacher(s) who has a current lifeguard's certificate or license to serve as a lifeguard during the curricular aquatics activities. If, for whatever reason, the approved substitute teacher(s) who has a current lifeguard's certificate or license cannot be present for the curricular aquatics activities, the aquatic activities may not take place and an alternative non-aquatic activity outside of the pool area must be conducted.

2. Curricular Aquatic Activities (during the school day) for Students of a Building without a Pool

Fargo Public Schools principals of buildings without pools who wish to conduct curricular aquatic activities at a school with a pool, should contact the principal of the building with a pool at least ten (10) days prior to any requested curricular aquatics activities. If the pool is available for use, the principal of the building with a pool shall schedule the pool for the curricular aquatic activities and shall notify the FPS Human Resources Department at least five (5) days prior to the curricular aquatics activities. This includes, but is not limited to, physical education classes and activities, adaptive physical education classes and activities, and other FPS curricular areas classes and activities. The Fargo Public Schools Human Resources Department will secure approved substitute teacher(s) who has a current lifeguard's certificate or license to serve as a lifeguard during the curricular aquatics activities. If, for whatever reason, the approved substitute teacher(s) who has a current lifeguard's certificate or license cannot be present for the curricular aquatics activities, the aquatic activities may not take place and an alternative non-aquatic activity outside of the pool area must be conducted.

Lifeguards during FPS Co-Curricular Aquatics Activities

A minimum of two lifeguards with current certificates or licenses must be present whenever an FPS pool is in use (i.e. participants are in the pool). One of which shall meet the following requirements:

1. Must wear appropriate swimming attire and be identified as a lifeguard at all times while on duty.
2. May not be used as a teacher, teacher's aide, coach, or assistant coach, or have any additional duties that would distract their attention from proper observation of the pool area.

This includes non-swimming and non-diving teams' use of the pool for training purposes, trainers working with student athletes, and FPS sponsored clubs and activities. Principals shall hire the lifeguard(s) to work at their school for all co-curricular activities. If, for whatever reason, the lifeguards with current lifeguards' certificates or licenses cannot be present for the co-curricular aquatic activities, the aquatic activities may not take place and an alternative non-aquatic activity outside of the pool area must be conducted or the co-curricular aquatic activity must be cancelled.

#### Lifeguards during Non-FPS Aquatics Activities (rental)

Lifeguard(s) must be present whenever a FPS pool is in use. Fargo Public Schools Community Use of School Facilities policy (AP-3510) states:

*Certified lifeguards must be provided by the renter. The name of the lifeguard(s) and a copy of the lifeguards' certificate(s) or license(s) must be provided with the rental agreement. A ratio of one lifeguard to 30 swimmers is required when the pool is in use and the total number cannot exceed maximum pool capacity limits at any time.*

If, for whatever reason, the lifeguard(s) specified with the rental agreement, cannot be present for the non-FPS aquatic activities, the aquatic activities may not take place and the aquatic activity must be cancelled (unless prior FPS administrative approval of appropriate certified lifeguard(s) is secured).

#### Lifeguards during Non-FPS Aquatics Activities (joint powers agreements)

Lifeguard(s) must be present whenever a FPS pool is in use (i.e., participants are in the pool). The name of the lifeguard(s) and a copy of the lifeguard's certificate or license must be on file with the joint powers partners.

If, for whatever reason, lifeguard(s) with current lifeguards' certificate(s) or license(s) cannot be present for the non-FPS aquatic activities, the aquatic activities may not take place and the aquatic activity must be cancelled.

#### Renewal of Lifeguard Certificates or Licenses

Lifeguards must provide the FPS Human Resources Department a copy of their lifeguard's certificate or license. The FPS Human Resources Department shall maintain a copy of every lifeguard's certificate or license, and annually review the certificates and licenses on file. Sixty days before a lifeguard's certificate or license will expire, FPS shall instruct the lifeguard to obtain a renewal of the certificate or license, and shall notify the principal of the school to which the lifeguard is assigned of the date by which the lifeguard's certificate or license must be renewed to continue working.

Staff are not permitted to use the pool for personal reasons without a signed rental agreement. Staff wishing to rent the pool must comply with the Fargo Public Schools Community Use of School Facilities policy (AP-3510).

**2. AQUATIC ACTIVITIES TEACHERS AND AQUATIC COACHES**

A. Every person who teaches an aquatic activity or coaches an aquatic sport (or assists in coaching an aquatic sport) must have on file with the FPS Human Resources

Department:

1. A current lifeguard's certificate or license, issued by the American Red Cross, the National Pool and Waterpark Lifeguard Training Program, the YMCA; or
2. A current certification from USA Swimming's Safety Training for Swim Coaches (STSC); or
3. an equivalent approved by the Fargo Public Schools.

If, during a curricular aquatics activities the teacher must be absent the aquatic activities may not take place and an alternative non-aquatic activity outside of the pool area must be conducted.

B. FPS will provide professional development opportunities for aquatic teachers and aquatics coaches (or assistant coaches) to obtain their lifeguard's certificate or license.

**3. WATER SAFETY EQUIPMENT**

Aquatic activities shall not be conducted at any pool, owned, leased, or used by the Fargo Public Schools, unless safety equipment complying with the Fargo Cass Public Health (Design Standards for Pools and Spas, Section 3.17) is readily available for emergency use at all times the pool is open for use. This includes, at a minimum:

A. Rescue Equipment

1. One or more poles 15 ft. long, having a shepherd's crook with an aperture of at least 18 inches between the tip of the hook and the pole;
2. 2 or more backboards;
3. 2 or more throwing rings having a minimum diameter of 18 inches, equipped with 65 feet of ¼ inch line;
4. 2 or more rescue tubes for lifeguard use
5. A buoyed floating lifeline at or near the break in grade between the shallow and deep ends of the pool;
6. One or more first aid kits.

B. Automated External Defibrillator (AED)

An AED must be located and accessible within the pool enclosure.

C. Emergency Telephone and Emergency Contact List

1. A telephone must be accessible in the pool enclosure
2. "911" and other emergency telephone numbers must be posted in a conspicuous place near the telephone, and the name, address and telephone number of the pool must be listed by the telephone.

D. Video Camera

A video camera connected to the school surveillance system will be in the pool enclosure.

**E. Lifeguard Stations**

Lifeguard stations must be located so as to provide a clear unobstructed view of the pool area under surveillance.

**F. Buoyed Safety Ropes**

The buoyed floating lifeline at or near the break in grade between the shallow and deep ends of the pool shall be deployed whenever the pool is open for use unless buoyed safety-rope lane-markers are in place.

**G. Posted Pool Rules**

FPS shall make known its rules governing the use of pools. These rules must be posted in the pool area at all times the pool is in use.

The Fargo Public Schools Pool Rules are:

1. No diving in any water less than 9 feet deep.
2. No running.
3. No cigarettes, candy, gum, or other food and beverage in the pool area.
4. No street clothes in the pool or pool area including shoes, t-shirts, etc.
5. No head phones, iPods, or boom boxes allowed in pool area.
6. No visiting with the lifeguards.
7. No aggravation of others including, spitting, dunking, etc.
8. No foul language or cursing.
9. No lifting of persons by hands, shoulders, etc.
10. No unnecessary splashing including splash dives from the edge.
11. No back dives, flips, handstands, or cartwheels allowed when going off the deck.
12. Do not support children on or around the neck.
13. Extra apparatus such as fins, water wings, toys, snorkels, and masks (excepting swim goggles) are not allowed in the pool or pool area.
14. Coast Guard approved life jackets are allowed.

The Fargo Public Schools Diving Pool Rules are:

1. Divers must be able to swim 25 yards without stopping.
2. Jump or dive straight off the boards; enter diving area from boards only
3. Swim directly to the ladders.
4. One bounce off the board.
5. Swim directly to the ladders.
6. No handstands, seat drops, or other dangerous stunts allowed.
7. No extra apparatus in the diving area.

**H. Locked/Fobbed Access**

Pool doors will remain locked at all times when the pools are not in use. This will include time between classes when a pool is being used for instruction. No one is allowed in the pool without qualified FPS personnel present. Regarding rental, club, and joint powers agreement use, pool doors will not be unlocked until an

authorized/qualified representative from the rental group, club, or joint powers agreement user is present. In all cases, authorized/qualified personnel representing the pool user will be the last to leave the pool area and will be responsible for the doors being locked.

- I. Review of Pool Safety Equipment Rules  
FPS shall review annually the North Dakota statute and rules governing pool safety equipment, log the results of the review, and promptly recommend appropriate changes in this policy whenever those rules change.

**4. STUDENT TRAVEL AND AQUATIC ACTIVITIES**

No aquatic activities may be conducted at any out-of-town pool or other water facility unless the pool or other water facility is properly licensed, a currently certified lifeguard(s) provided by the water facility whose only responsibility shall be to lifeguard swimmers is on duty, and a FPS-affiliated adult supervisor is present at the pool or other water facility.

July 2014  
Reviewed 7/2019  
Reviewed 7/2023  
Revised 9/2024