

FAYETTE COUNTY SCHOOLS
ATHLETIC PROGRAM SEVERE WEATHER PROCEDURES

The following guidelines for heat related illness, extreme cold temperatures, and lightning safety are suggested, though each student and situation is unique, and may not require every step listed or may call for different or additional measures.

The Fayette County School System through its Athletic Administrators or designee will hold a meeting with the coaches whose sport begins prior to the school year to distribute and/or review the material concerning heat related illness and to review the system guidelines with respect to outdoor practices during the summer months.

A meeting must be held at your school for all fall/winter/spring sports coaches before the beginning of each school year. This is a mandatory meeting. At the meeting, the Athletic Administrator will distribute and/or review information concerning heat illness and severe weather. The goal is to continue educating and updating our coaches on the weather factors affecting the various extra curricular athletic teams we sponsor. At this meeting, the Athletic Administrator must go over the procedures regarding heat related illnesses and other severe weather issues. Each coaching staff will review the procedure for taking weather related readings and review the guidelines that follow those readings with respect to practice and participation.

Information that must be reviewed is attached. It is important that all coaches sign in to verify attendance of the meeting as a record that they have received the in-service training. A copy of the sign-in sheet must be kept on file at the local school. Information regarding the date and time the meeting was conducted should be documented and retained by the athletic director.

Any coach who does not attend the meeting must be in-serviced at a make-up session before they are approved to coach a team. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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Excutive Director of Athletics/Discipline/Safety/Attendance
School Operations

WBGT ACTIVITY GUIDELINES AND REST BREAK GUIDELINES

Under 82.0: Normal Activities - Provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 3 minutes each during the workout.

82.0 - 86.9: Use discretion for intense or prolonged exercise; watch at-risk players carefully. Provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 4 minutes each.

87.0 - 89.9: Maximum practice time is 2 hours. For Football: players are restricted to helmet, shoulder pads, and shorts during practice, and all protective equipment must be removed during conditioning activities. If the WBGT rises to this level during practice, players may continue to work out wearing football pants without changing to shorts.

For All Sports: Provide at least four separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 4 minutes each.

90.0 - 92.0: Maximum practice time is 1 hour. For Football: no protective equipment may be worn during practice, and there may be no conditioning activities.

For All Sports: There must be 20 minutes of rest breaks distributed throughout the hour of practice.

Over 92.0: No outdoor workouts. Delay practice until a cooler WBGT level is reached.

- These guidelines are to be applied to all outdoor practices that take place on/off campus.
- Practices should be held early in the morning and/or later in the evening to avoid times when environmental conditions are generally more severe for student athletes.

**FAYETTE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM
GUIDELINES FOR OUTDOOR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
DURING EXTREME HOT AND HUMID WEATHER**

1. Each school shall have and use a Wet Bulb Temperature monitor (provided by Perry Weather) for measuring environmental factors. The digital monitor is used to measure the Wet Bulb Temperature (WBT), which is derived by evaluating the combined dry air temperature, humidity, ground radiated heat, and the wind speed at that particular location. Conditions are subject to change during the practice/activity; therefore, measurements should be taken at regular intervals throughout the practice activity. Measurements should be taken at the practice/activity site:

a. All Activities:

b. Will be required to measure and document the Heat Index Monitor prior to outdoor practice through the months of July and August, and during spring practice in May, and other times when conditions warrant. This can be done by the school Athletic Administrator, Athletic Trainer or a Coach.

2. Practices and games should be held early in the morning and/or later in the evening to avoid times when environmental conditions are generally more severe.

3. An unlimited supply of cold water & cooling stations shall be available to participants during practice games.

a. Coaches/Supervisors shall inform all students participating that cold water is always available or accessible and they will be given permission anytime he/she asks for water.

b. Hydration and fluid replacement is a daily process. Students should hydrate themselves before, during, and after practice. Meals should include an appropriate amount of fluid intake in addition to a healthy diet.

4. Give adequate rest periods. Remove appropriate equipment or clothing when possible. Exposed skin cools more efficiently.

a. During rest periods players shall be allowed to remove helmets.

b. Excess pads should be removed if conditions warrant.

5. Gradually acclimatize participants to the heat.

a. The length and intensity of practice should be adjusted according to the WBT Index until acclimatization occurs.

6. Athletic participants should weigh in before practice and weigh out after to monitor water loss to identify those who are becoming dehydrated.

7. Participants should wear clothes that are light in weight and color.

8. Students who need careful monitoring include:

a. Know your athletes who have recently had a flu illness (i.e. – intestinal viruses).

b. Overweight or weight control problems (fluctuation) athletes.

c. Those taking over-the-counter and prescription medication/supplements (athletic supplements containing creatine or ephedrine and acne medicine).

d. Students who have done absolutely no exercise at all or transfer students who you know little about.

9. Be familiar with all heat related symptoms and corresponding treatments.
10. Be familiar with the Wet Bulb Temperature Chart and utilize guidelines determining length and rest periods.
11. Teach the athletes about the dangerous heat illness signs and symptoms and how to monitor each other. Educate athletes on self monitoring strategies such as urine color observation.

HEAT ILLNESS SYMPTOMS AND TREATMENTS
(As Recommended by the National Athletic Trainers Association)

	Symptoms Treatment	Symptoms Treatment
Heat Cramps	-Muscle spasms caused by an imbalance of water and electrolytes in muscles - Usually affects the legs and abdominal muscles	- Rest in a cool place - Drink plenty of fluids - Proper stretching and massaging - Application of ice in some cases
Heat Exhaustion	- Can be a precursor to heat stroke - Normal to high temperature - Heavy sweating - Skin is flushed or cool and pale - Headaches, dizziness - Rapid pulse, nausea, weakness - Physical collapse may occur - Can occur without prior symptoms, such as cramps	- Get to a cool place immediately and out of the heat - Drink plenty of fluids - Remove excess clothing - In some cases, immerse body in cool water
Heat Stroke	- Body's cooling system shuts down - Increased core temperature of 104o F or greater - If untreated it can cause brain damage, internal organ damage, and even death - Sweating stops - Shallow breathing and rapid pulse - Possible disorientation or loss of consciousness - Possible irregular heartbeat and cardiac arrest	- Call 911 immediately - Cool bath with ice packs near large arteries, such as neck, armpits, groin - Replenish fluids by drinking or intravenously, if needed

GUIDELINES FOR EXTREME COLD TEMPERATURES

- 1. The local school principal, or designee, will make the final decision as to whether outdoor practice/activities will be allowed. The health, safety, and welfare of the students should be the determining factors.**
- 2. The wind chill factor should be used to determine the severity of the cold temperature NOT just the temperature alone.**
- 3. Warm-up and stretch properly up until immediately before the competition or practice.**
- 4. Clothing should be selected for comfort. Do not overdress. Multiple layers provide good insulation.**
- 5. Properly cover the head, neck, legs, and hands. Much of your body heat is lost through these areas.**
- 6. Extreme cold blocks some sensations of pain. Thus, frostbite can easily affect the fingers, toes, ears, and facial areas. Check these areas regularly.**
- 7. Hypothermia is a dangerous and severe level that can occur in cold temperatures. Add extra clothing and move to a warm environment immediately after exercising or practice. Drink warm fluids if possible.**
- 8. Early signs and symptoms of hypothermia include shivering, euphoria, confusion, and behavior similar to intoxication. Severe signs include lethargy, muscular weakness, disorientation, depression, hallucinations, and even combative behavior.**

Preventing Cold Weather Related Athletic Injuries

Outdoor sports in cold weather, particularly those that are around snow, ice or water, place athletes at risk for both frostbite and hypothermia. Hypothermia is a condition in which the body's warming mechanisms cannot maintain normal body temperature and the body cools. Hypothermia is generally caused by prolonged exposure to wet, windy and cold environments. Contributing factors for body cooling include air temperature, humidity, wind and the condition of the skin (wet or dry). Frostbite may occur as a result of being underdressed for the weather conditions, or by remaining too long in the cold without adequate protection. Frostbite is the freezing of local skin or body areas. Signs of frostbite are skin that is waxy, cold to the touch, or discolored (flushed, white, yellow or blue). Frostbite may result in disability or loss of body tissue. Hypothermia and frostbite may occur together or separately.

LIGHTNING SAFETY FOR ATHLETIC EVENTS

The National Lightning Safety Institute (NLSI) recommends that all organizations prepare a Lightning Safety Plan and inform all personnel of its contents. Lightning safety is “anticipating a high-risk situation and moving to a low risk location.” Just as practice and training increase athletic performances, similarly preparedness can reduce the risk of the lightning hazard. Lightning is the most frequent weather hazard impacting athletic events. All outdoor sports have been visited by lightning. That is why education is the single most important means to achieve lightning safety. Lightning Safety Plans should be site-specific, but they all share a common outline:

1. Advance warning of hazard:

- a) “If you can see it, flee it. If you can hear it, clear it”
- b) TV Weather Channel; Weather Radio
- c) Lightning detectors – A reading that indicates lightning is within 10 miles or less will necessitate an evacuation to a safe shelter

2. Make a decision to suspend activities and notify people:

- a) Notify people via radio, siren or other means.

3. Move to safe location:

- a) A large permanent building.
- b) Unsafe places are near metal or water; under trees; on hills; near electrical/electronic equipment.
- c) The 30/30 Rule says to shut down when lightning is six miles away. Use a “flash to bang” (lightning to thunder) count of five seconds equals one mile

4. Reassess the hazard:

- a) It is usually safe after no thunder and no lightning have been observed for thirty minutes. Be conservative here.

5. Inform people to resume activities.

FAYETTE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM GUIDELINES FOR OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES DURING SMOG ALERT

When students are involved in outdoor activities:

- Each school shall monitor the current Air Quality Index (AQI) during the Smog Season, which is currently identified as May 1 through September 30. This information is available at the State of Georgia Department of Natural.

- Air Quality Index

The Air Quality Index (AQI) was developed by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to provide accurate and timely information about the daily levels of air pollution. The AQI converts the measured pollutant concentration in a community's air to a number on a scale of 0 to 500. Refer to the enclosed AQI index. This index will be used to determine Smog Alert Days.

- When to Limit or Avoid Exposure:

- o Check for "Smog Alert Days"

- Days forecasted as Code Orange, Red, Purple or Black.
 - Refer to Administrative Guidelines for modifications.

- o On "Smog Alert Days" plan limited outdoor exercise and activities for students and employees, particularly between the hours of 2p.m. and 7p.m., when smog levels tend to be highest.

- o Plan ahead for "Smog Alert Days" as you would for rainy days by setting up indoor student activities, also, outdoor activities can be held in the morning and later in the evening to avoid conditions that are generally more severe. Finally, plan activities to reduce exertion time.

- Administrative Guidelines on Alert Days

- o Each school will alter normal outside activities and/or inform students of health risks during Code Orange, Red, Purple and Black alert days.

- o On Alert Days activities will be restricted as indicated.

- **AQI reading of 101-150 (CODE ORANGE)**

- Elementary and Middle School Students – Limit outdoor activities for all students by holding outdoor activities in the morning, reducing the normal length of the activity and/or doing activities which require moderate to low level of exertion.

- High School Students – Administration shall announce the potential health risk related to outside activities during alert days. The student/parent shall be responsible for the student's limitation of outside activities. The Administration shall not prevent any student from limiting his/her outside activities as they so choose on alert days.

- **AQI reading of 161-200 (CODE RED)**

- Elementary and Middle School Students – No scheduled outdoor activities, reschedule activities for inside as would be planned for a rain day.
- High School Students – Administration shall announce the potential health risk related to outside activities during alert days. The student/parent shall be responsible for the student's limitation of outside activities. The Administration shall not prevent any student from limiting his/her outside activities as they so choose on alert days.
- Limit planned outdoor activities for all students on days forecasted as Code Red Alert Days. Substitute activities that require a moderate to low exertion level. Plan practice sessions before school or late afternoon after 6:00 p.m.

- **AQI reading of 201-300 (CODE PURPLE)**

- Elementary and Middle School - No outdoor activities for all groups.
- High School Students – No outdoor activities for all groups. Exception would be scheduled GHSA sanctioned events governed by a required starting time. Students with an identified respiratory disease would require a medical release from their Doctor in order to participate.

- **AQI reading of 301-500 (CODE BLACK)**

- Elementary, Middle and High School Students - NO outdoor activity for any individual.
- Everyone will stay inside except when moving between buildings or when transportation is required to and from school.

○ Normal activities for all students can be resumed on the alert days when ACTUAL AQ1 readings are below 100 (Code Yellow or Code Green).