
Subject: Weather Guidelines

**Regulation
Identifier:** HSV-01

Office: Student Services

Reference:

To: All Staff

Date: July 2018

Issued By: Don Schmidt

Guidelines for Modification of School Outdoor Activities Related to Weather and Environmental Conditions

Description of Groups

1) Curriculum Related and All Outdoor Activities:

- Physical education (Kindergarten – 12th grade)
- Field Days (Kindergarten – 5th grade)
- Field Trips (Kindergarten – 12th grade)
- Outdoor Classes (Kindergarten – 12th grade)
- Bike Rodeo (Kindergarten – 8th grade)
- Intramurals (6th – 12th grade)

2) Band, Spirit Groups (Pep, Dance/Drill, Cheer), ROTC

3) Athletics grades 7th – 12th (UIL)

Heat Guidelines

The occurrence of heat induced illnesses or unsafe acts are the highest in San Antonio from May through September when the daily high temperature generally ranges between 95 to 100+ degrees.

In combination with humidity, these temperatures can result in a heat index value that can produce heat injury, especially to students in outdoor practice such as running, jumping, marching (especially in heavy or multi-layered uniform) and other vigorous activities.

Students and staff who are not acclimatized to working in hot environments and who are exposed to combinations of environmental and metabolic heat above an identified tolerance level, substantially increase their risk of incurring acute adverse health effects.

Group 1 (Physical education, Intramurals, Field Days, Field Trips, Outdoor Classes, Bike Rodeos, and other related outdoor activities)

At a heat index value of 105 degrees or greater, precautionary measures should be taken. The heat index values are generally given two to three times per hour on most major radio stations and are posted on weather apps that a teacher can monitor from their computer.

To reduce the risk of heat induced injuries and illnesses the following would serve as advisory guidelines to be used. These recommendations apply to San Antonio school events held outdoors during activity:

- 1) Physical activities should not be conducted when the heat index reads 105 degrees or above.
- 2) Teachers and activity sponsors should provide water before, during and after exercise.

Group 2 Band, Spirit Groups (Pep, Dance/Drill, Cheer), ROTC

Heat:

All directors and sponsors of programs are required to schedule a mandatory “water-rest” every 15 minutes, regardless of the weather. All outside rehearsals should have a number of water containers and a sanitary procedure for student access. During the break time, instructors should monitor the students for heat related symptoms. Students should clearly understand that if they feel ill at any time during rehearsal or a performance, they should immediately notify an instructor. Directors and sponsors are encouraged to make available “water camel-packs” to allow students the ability to hydrate continuously during rehearsals. Students are advised to wear light colored clothing consisting of breathable fabric (go-gear, Underarmour, etc.) and to have a hat, sun shades, and sun lotion available at all times.

Outdoor rehearsals when temperatures are between 90 – 99 and / or a heat index below 109 degrees will be conducted with the above stated guidelines in effect.

Outdoor rehearsals when temperatures are between 100 – 102 and / or a heat index below 109 degrees will be conducted with the above guidelines in effect. However, directors will increase breaks as necessary and consider optional rehearsals times during early morning or late evening.

Outdoor rehearsals when temperature is greater than 107 and/or a heat index is greater than 115 will be conducted prior to 9:00 am daily or after 7:00 pm nightly.

Campus administrators and directors will work together in determining adjustments in rehearsals and performances as temperatures fluctuate.

Group 3 (Athletics Grades 7th – 12th)

Section I—Chain of Command

The following chain of command will occur:

- Notification of temperature
- Staff Athletic Trainer will obtain weather report from National Weather service (www.noaa.gov) by 9:00am each morning for morning workouts. The Head Coach will be given the weather report by 9:30 am each morning.
- A second report will be taken at 1:00pm for the afternoon workout. The Head Coach will receive the report at 1:30 pm.
- The temperature of the day will dictate which protocol will be followed.
- Daily temperature reports will be on file in Athletic Trainers office.
- The District Athletic Trainer will obtain a weather report from the internet or the National Weather Service.
- Report will be given to the Middle School Coordinators to notify the coaching staff of the day's temperature.
- The Middle School Coaches will then set the practices per policy.
- Weather reports are not required on days where the temperature falls between 45 degrees and 90 degrees.

Enforcement of Regulation

- Head Coach/Staff Athletic Trainer will monitor time of exposure
- Staff Athletic Trainers will report any violations to the District Head Athletic Trainer.
- Head Athletic Trainer will meet with Head Coach
- Violation of policies will be reported to the Athletic Coordinator in writing.

Section II—Heat Regulation

Specific heat conditions will determine activity restrictions during practice according to the following:

The following are guidelines for coaches and athletic trainers to help prevent heat related illnesses and emergencies. These guidelines should be strictly followed; failure to do so could result in serious illness or death.

To decrease the risk of heat illness/emergencies:

- **Gradually Acclimatize Athletes**-getting them accustomed to working out in the heat.

For example:

Football-the first 4 days of practice must be in shorts and helmets only and then proceed on the 5th day to full pads. (Each athlete must complete the 4 days of Acclimation)

Cross Country-these athletes MUST be monitored closely at all times. Running distances should be increased gradually. Monitor weather conditions closely with staff Athletic Trainers as outlined below.

Volleyball and Basketball (indoor sports)-coaches should be aware that heat problems could occur indoors if the athletes are not properly hydrated. If the indoor sports coaches, choose to practice outdoors they should be aware of the weather conditions. These athletes will not be accustomed to the heat outdoors. They MUST be monitored very closely and water should be readily available. The first 3-4 practices (indoors or out) should not be overly strenuous.

Soccer, Track, Tennis, Baseball, Swim and Softball-the first 3-4 practices should not be overly strenuous. Overuse/friction injuries will be dramatically decreased in these sports if these athletes start workouts at 50% and ease up to a full 100%. This usually takes two to three weeks for track athletes.

Golf-weather conditions need to be monitored daily.

- **Identify Susceptible Athletes**-those athletes who are obese or have a larger muscle mass tend to have more heat related problems. Keep a close eye on these athletes.
- **Uniforms**-should be lightweight, breathable jerseys/pants in hot weather months. Watch for athletes wearing unnecessary extra clothing.
- **Allow Fluid Replacement**-Athletes must have unlimited access to cool water at all times. DO NOT RESTRICT WATER AS A FORM OF MOTIVATION!
- **Encourage a Good Diet**-Athletes **MUST** eat lunch to workout in extreme heat. Fat intake should be somewhat decreased. Salt intake can be slightly increased. Athletes should stay away from carbonated beverages during season.
- **Alter Practice Schedule According to Temperature/Humidity/Heat Index Readings**- We will use instrumentation at the campus level in conjunction with the national weather service to determine what precautions need to be taken. Practices may be altered according to the following conditions:
- **Athletic Trainers will have necessary supplies on the field/court for hydration and cooling of the athletes.**

Temperature is between 90 – 99 and / or a heat index below 109 degrees

Football – Athletes will receive a 5 minute break every 30 minutes with water available. Athletes should be closely monitored. Helmets will be allowed to be removed during breaks or instructional non-contact drills.

Cross Country/ Track – Athletes will receive a 5 minute break every 30 minutes with water available. Athletes are to be monitored closely.

Baseball/Softball/Soccer/Tennis/Golf and SWIM– Athletes will receive a 5 minute break every 30 minutes with water available. Athletes are to be monitored closely

Off-season programs – 45 minutes total heat exposure with 1 water break

Indoor sports – Coaches must have athletic trainer’s approval to practice outside.

Temperature is between 100 – 102 and / or a heat index below 109 degrees

Football – Pants may be worn for a limited time during practice at the discretion of the Athletic Coordinator and Athletic Trainer. After the time limit is reached, athletes will be in shorts/shoulder pads/helmets. Athletes will receive a 5 minute break every 30 minutes with water available. Athletes should be closely monitored. Helmets will be allowed to be removed during breaks or instructional non-contact drills. Practice will not exceed 2 hours of total exposure. **Middle school football must be in shorts and helmets only.**

Cross Country/ Track – Athletes will not be allowed to run off campus. Coach must not lose eyesight. Athletes will receive a 5 minute break every 30 minutes with water available. Athletes are to be monitored closely. Practice will not exceed 2 hours of total exposure.

Baseball/Softball/Soccer/Tennis/Golf and SWIM– Athletes will receive a 5 minute break every 30 minutes with water available. Athletes are to be monitored closely. Practice will not exceed 2 hours of total exposure. Off-season programs – 45 minutes total heat exposure with 2 water breaks

Indoor sports – No outside practices.

Temperature is between 102 – 105 and / or a heat index between 110-115 degrees.

Middle schools – All outdoor practices limited to 1 hour with 2 water breaks of 5 minutes. Attire is to be shorts and t- shirts only.

High Schools - Practice in morning if possible.

Football – Pads may be worn for a limited time during practice at the discretion of the Athletic Coordinator and Athletic Trainer. After the time limit is reached, Athletes will be in shorts, T shirts, and helmets only. Athletes will receive a 5 minute break every 20 minutes with water available. Athletes should be closely monitored. Practice will not exceed 1.5 hours of total exposure.

Cross Country/ Track – Athletes will not be allowed to run off campus. Coach must not lose eyesight of any athlete. Athletes will receive a 5 minute break every 20 minutes with water

available. Athletes are to be monitored closely. Practice will not exceed 1.5 hours of total exposure.

Baseball/Softball/Soccer/Tennis/Golf and SWIM – Athletes will receive a 5 minute break every 20 minutes with water available. Athletes are to be monitored closely. Practice will not exceed 1.5 hours of total exposure.

Off-season programs – 30 minutes total heat exposure with 1 water break.

Indoor sports – No outside practices.

Temperature is greater than 107 and/or a heat index is greater than 115

Middle Schools – No Practice

High Schools - Practice in morning if possible.

Football- Practice will be at the discretion of the Athletic Coordinator and Athletic Trainer. Athletes will wear shorts and shirts only with 5min break every 20 min. Practice will not exceed 1.5 hours.

Cross Country/ Track – Practice will be at the discretion of the Athletic Coordinator and Athletic Trainer. Athletes will not be allowed to run off campus. Coach must not lose eyesight of any athlete. Athletes will receive a 5 minute break every 20 minutes with water available. Athletes are to be monitored closely. Practice will not exceed 1.5 hours of total exposure.

Baseball/Softball/Soccer/Tennis/Golf and SWIM – Practice will be at the discretion of the Athletic Coordinator and Athletic Trainer. Athletes will receive a 5 minute break every 20 minutes with water available. Athletes are to be monitored closely. Practice will not exceed 1.5 hours of total exposure.

Indoor sports – No outside practices.

****The NORTHSIDE I.S.D. Athletic Department reserves the right to modify or cancel games or practices due to extreme weather conditions.**

COLD WEATHER

Cold weather is defined as any temperature that can negatively affect the body's regulatory system. Temperatures do not have to be freezing to be harmful. Individuals participating in outdoor activity in cold, wet, or windy conditions are at risk for environmental cold injuries. The following describes signs and symptoms:

Cold Exposure:

- Breathing of cold air can trigger asthma attack

- Coughing, chest tightness, burning sensation in throat and nasal passage
- Reduction of strength, power, endurance, and aerobic capacity
- Core body temperature reduction, causing reduction of motor output

Cold Recognition:

- Shivering, a means for the body to generate heat
- Excessive shivering contributes to fatigue, loss of motor skills
- Numbness and pain in fingers, toes, ears, and exposed facial tissue
- Drop in core temperature; athlete exhibits sluggishness, slowed speech, disoriented

During times of excessive cold weather, specific precautions should be taken for Groups 1, 2, and 3.

Group 1 (Physical education, Intramurals, Field Days, Field Trips, Outdoor Classes, Bike Rodeos, and other related outdoor activities)

The following precautions should be taken at the campus level including:

- Staff should be aware of the wind chill factor and take appropriate precautions during cold weather.
- If a student does not have adequate warm clothing to participate in the outdoor activity, such clothing should be provided or the student should be excused from the activity.
- Students should not have physical education or recess when the temperature or wind chill factor drops below 45 degrees.
- On days when the temperature is unseasonably cold, the duration of outside activity, such as recess and field trips, should be limited to 15 minutes.

Group 2 Band, Spirit Groups (Pep, Dance/Drill, Cheer), ROTC

Cold:

Directors should monitor temperature carefully. Temperatures dropping below 45 degrees increase risk of illness and create challenges for quality instruction and performance. Directors exercise discretion during cold periods to meet performance expectations AND ensure student health and safety. Rehearsals and performances that occur during cold weather are carefully monitored to ensure that all students have adequate warm clothing, hand gloves, and head covers to retain body heat. If rehearsals are required for a performance that will occur in cold weather (i.e. football playoff halftime preparations), directors are prepared to reduce or forfeit quality preparation of the performance to ensure student safety. Campus administration and instructors will determine the extent of outside activity during extreme cold weather.

Rehearsals will be moved indoors when the temperature or wind chill factor drops below 40 degrees.

Group 3 (Athletics Grades 7th – 12th)

The following guidelines have been adopted by the NORTHSIDE ISD Athletic department for practices and games:

Cold Weather Caution: When temperature or wind-chill (which is lower than actual temperature) is from 40°F -30°F.

- No modification of practice, but a warning will be given to coaches and athletes.
- Coaches and Athletic Trainers should emphasize the importance of following UIL Cold Weather Illness Recommendations.
- Watch those “high risk” athletes. Factors that influence an athlete to cold weather illness include: wet skin, dehydration, anemia, diabetes, hypotensive individuals, and those with sickle cell disease.

Cold Weather Warning: When temperature or wind chill is from 29°F - 20°F, there may be modified participation of outside practices and games.

- Instruct athletes on how to properly dress for the cold weather- warm-ups, hoods/knit caps, and gloves if athlete has them
- Warm-up to start indoors (stretching, etc.) not to reduce the 45 minutes of outside time.
- Practice should keep an individual moving and all involved. Practices should avoid a big sweat in the first 20 minutes, and eliminate the athletes from being wet and sitting around watching in the cold temperatures.
- Keep very close watch on those “high risk” athletes.

Cold Weather Termination:

DRY - When temperature or wind chill reaches below 20°F, there may be a termination of outside practices and games.

WET – When temperature or wind chill reaches 32°F or below, there may be termination of Outside practices and games.

****The NORTHSIDE ISD Athletic Department reserves the right to modify or cancel games or practices due to extreme weather conditions.**

Lightening Guidelines

Weather conditions need to be monitored closely in an approaching storm.

Group 1 (Physical education, Intramurals, Field Days, Field Trips, Outdoor Classes, bike Rodeos, and other related outdoor activities)

As a general rule, if one can hear thunder or see lightening, all outdoor activities need to be moved indoors or cancelled.

Group 2 Band, Spirit Groups (Pep, Dance/Drill, Cheer), ROTC

Lightning:

Directors confirm with all sights hosting outdoor marching events that a highly sensitive and efficient lightning detection system is in place. At district events, the Thor Guard system (or equal) is the norm. In addition, directors have a portable lightening detection system that is on them during rehearsals and performances. Directors check electronically for the “potential of lightning strikes” before going outside. If “potential” is even slight, rehearsals remain indoors. Contact with the San Antonio Weather Station is constant during events that are scheduled when the weather becomes questionable.

Should an alarm sound indicating potential for lightning strikes, all students and staff are immediately moved to a safe area such as an enclosed building or school bus. Temporary outdoor covered areas or awnings are considered safe areas from lightning strikes.

Group 3 (Athletics Grades 7th – 12th)

Prevention and education are the keys to lightning safety. The athletic trainer, head coach and/or administrator using one of the four following methods will monitor weather conditions.

- **THOR GUARD LIGHTNING PREDICTION SYSTEM**, which sounds ONE 15 second blast of a horn signaling suspension of all activities. If you are within visibility of system, the strobe light on top of system will begin flashing and remain flashing until safe conditions return. You may resume activities only after THREE 5 second blasts of the horn are sounded and the strobe light stops flashing. *Thor Guard is the official device used at Hardin and Farris complexes.*

- **WEATHERBUG** via smartphones. This has a component called Spark which also tracks lightning based on the location of the user. It makes it very useful for our coaching/athletic training staff because it goes by current location. When using the WeatherBug, it will indicate by turning red, when a **10 - mile** radius is considered unsafe. You must seek shelter immediately!
- **FLASH TO BANG** method to monitor lightning for evacuation of the playing field for a safer environment. With the “Flash to bang” method the seconds are counted from the time a flash of lightning is seen until a clap of thunder is heard. When this number is 30 seconds or less, evacuation of the field should be under way. Lightning awareness should begin with the first flash of lightning seen or thunder clap heard.
- **SKY-SCAN** is a small battery operated lightning detection device that estimates the distance of lightning. Sky-Scan should be used in conjunction with other methods. The unit must be turned on and be powered by a good 9-volt battery and be pointed toward the storm clouds. The display lights up with a range in miles of the last strike detected. All NISD training staffs have a lightning meter for use at athletic events and practices.

Evacuation Procedures

The students should be evacuated to a safe shelter. Staying away from tall or individual trees, lone objects (light or flag poles), metal objects, and open fields. Examples of safe shelter are a bus, dressing room, or other building. A dug out or awning are not considered safe shelter. Administrators should evacuate spectators from the stadium.

Resume Practice and Competition

Once a game or practice has been suspended the storm should continue to be monitored. No contest or practice should be resumed until:

THOR GUARD - You may resume activities only after THREE 5 second blasts of the horn are sounded and the strobe light stops flashing.

WEATHERBUG - When the last strike is outside a 10-mile radius.

FLASH TO BANG - No lightning strike has been detected for 30 consecutive minutes following the last sound of thunder or lightning flash.

SKY-SCAN - No lightning strike has been detected within 3-8 mile range for 30 consecutive minutes using the Sky-Scan.

IF YOU REMAIN OUTDOORS AFTER THE WARNING IS ISSUED, YOU DO SO AT YOUR OWN RISK AND SUBJECT ALL STUDENTS IN YOUR CARE TO DANGER!!!

*Postpone or suspend activity if a thunderstorm appears imminent before or during an activity or contest (irrespective of whether lightning is seen or thunder is heard) until the hazard has passed. Signs of imminent thunderstorm activity are darkening clouds, high winds, and thunder or lightning activity.