EBBD - Temperature Guidelines for Schools

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MSAD 35 is committed to maintaining safe and comfortable learning and working environments for all students, staff, and visitors during periods of extreme heat and cold. The health and safety of our school community is the highest priority.

Guiding Principles

All temperature safety decisions shall prioritize:

- The health and safety of students and staff
- Maintaining comfortable learning and working conditions
- Flexibility to respond to changing conditions
- Common-sense approaches to temperature-related health and safety

The Superintendent is authorized to make immediate decisions regarding school operations during extreme temperature events to ensure the safety and comfort of all members of the school community.

Authority and Responsibility

The Building Administrators have the authority to implement appropriate temperature safety measures based on:

- Indoor temperatures below 50℉ or above 95℉
- Outdoor temperature conditions
- Heat index calculations, wind chill factors, and weather forecasts
- Building infrastructure, heating, ventilation, and cooling capabilities
- Guidance from health and safety experts
- Input from local emergency management officials

Implementation

The Building Administrators shall ensure reasonable and appropriate precautions during extreme temperature events, which may include but is not limited to:

- Monitoring temperature conditions, heat indices, and wind chill factors
- Modifying outdoor activities, including recess and physical education
- Relocating activities indoors when outdoor conditions are unsafe
- Opening windows, when this can be done safely
- Pulling down shades or blinds
- Using fans and/or opening doors within the building to improve air circulation
- Turning off heat-producing electronics and equipment
- Having water readily available to students and staff
- Allowing students and staff to bring battery operated personal fans to school
- Adjusting schedules, dismissing early, or closing schools when necessary
- Allowing teachers to move students to a cooler area of the building (e.g., air-conditioned library or space on shaded side of the building), or, if feasible, to move students to a cooler “outside classroom” for continued instruction
- On days of extreme heat, considering rescheduling tests/exams to another day to enable more effective demonstration and evaluation of student performance
- Ensuring clear communication with staff, students, and families
- Authorizing the athletics department to implement practice and contest plans in accordance with MPA and NFHS guidelines, with the Athletic Director and Certified Athletic Trainer having final authority on practice and game restrictions

This does not preclude Building Administrators from acting preemptively in anticipation of a rise in building/classroom temperature to the point that will require action to be taken.

On cold days, when building and classroom temperatures hover near the minimum, schools are encouraged to incorporate more opportunities for physical activity during class time and may consider having extra layers of clothing available. Families should ensure that their students are dressed appropriately for expected weather conditions.

Emergency Situation

The Superintendent is authorized to close schools or dismiss early when:

- Heating system failures create unsafe indoor temperatures
- Cooling system failures combined with extreme heat create unsafe conditions
- Extreme weather conditions pose safety risks for transportation or outdoor activities
- Advised by federal, state, county or local emergency management agencies

Legal Reference:

20-A MRSA § 1001, sub-§23

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