



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

CATEGORY: **Instruction, School Day**

SUBJECT: **Operation of Schools During Extremely Hot Weather**

A. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1. To outline administrative procedures governing operation of schools during periods of extremely hot weather. Plans may include necessary relocation of classes or students, curtailment or limitation of physical activities, and other appropriate modifications.
2. **Related Procedure:**
School or Site Closure/Early Dismissal of Students 5003

B. LEGAL AND POLICY BASIS

1. **Reference:** Board policies F-1200, F-1300, and H-7900.
2. District policy states that schools are to be kept open as long as a suitable learning environment can be provided. All schools must have a hot weather plan in place to follow for continued operation of schools during periods of hot weather. The plans are to be developed and reviewed collaboratively among school administrators and school staff. The hot weather plan is to be made available in the same location as the School Safety Plan on file at each school. The Superintendent or designee is authorized to declare a minimum day in emergency weather conditions, including extreme heat (Administrative Procedure 5003).

C. GENERAL

1. **Originating Office.** Suggestions or questions concerning this procedure should be directed to the Chief Operations Officer.
2. **Guidelines** for school administrators and school staff to consider when developing a hot weather plan:
 - a. Teachers should make appropriate modifications of the instructional program. Elementary teachers may wish to rearrange the daily schedule so that basic skills subjects are taught at the optimal time.
 - b. Limit physical education to less strenuous activities and/or reschedule to a more appropriate time.
 - c. Restrict noon and recess physical activities to quiet games that require a minimum of physical exertion.
 - d. Permit students to eat lunch in shaded areas.
 - e. Cooler areas of school buildings and grounds should be used when available (e.g., shaded lawn areas and rooms with good cross ventilation).
 - f. Schedule large group activities in the auditorium or a multi-purpose facility.
 - g. Curtail educational field trips that take students into hot climates (at the direction of the site principal/administrator).

- h. Athletes engaging in competitive sports activities must be closely observed. Other strenuous student activities (e.g., drill team, marching band, cheerleading, JROTC, etc.) must be closely observed by teachers, coaches, and other certificated personnel assigned to supervise such activities.
- i. Centrally-controlled air conditioning systems will automatically be turned on when classroom temperatures reach 78° Fahrenheit. Independently operated or stand-alone air conditioning equipment should not be turned on until the room reaches 78° Fahrenheit. Classes held in non-air conditioned portable facilities should be combined with other classes in air-conditioned buildings. Use air-conditioned facilities such as media centers, cafeterias, libraries, auditoriums, and all large group spaces. Exercise caution to avoid overcrowded spaces or blocked doorways, fire exits, halls, and corridors.
- j. Provide electrical fans to bungalows or the hottest rooms. Electrical fans should be positioned to bring in fresh air and exhaust stale air. Fans should be placed in or next to an open window at one end of the room to bring in air, and a window or door (that does not open into a hall) at the opposite end of the room should be opened to exhaust air. Fans should be turned on as early as possible. Precautions should be taken to ensure that fans, coolers, or other devices meet safety standards and that cooling strategies do not place an overload on existing electrical systems.
- k. Restrict use of heat-generating appliances such as overhead lights, projectors and computers to avoid heat build up.
- l. Darken rooms and draw shades or blinds to keep out direct sunlight.
- m. Turn on sprinklers nearest classrooms for short periods of time.
- n. Provide adequate supplies of water. Site principals/administrators should assess weather conditions and make determinations regarding site-specific needs. Personal water containers are recommended for use when heat is excessive as a means to prevent dehydration. Containers of water could be provided to classrooms without drinking fountains. It is acceptable for students to spray themselves with cool water from a pump-spray bottle. The container must be labeled "water only" and not have previously contained cleaning or chemical materials.
 - (1) For health reasons, individual water containers should not be shared.
 - (2) For safety reasons, students should not run with straws or water containers in their mouths.
 - (3) For safety reasons, certain containers may not be used while riding district busses (i.e. no glass containers; lids must be tightly closed).
 - (4) Students should not bring individual water containers to physical education activity areas unless given permission by the physical education teacher.
- o. Nurses should contact parents/guardians of students with serious health needs and determine if attendance at school is considered hazardous.

- p. Contact Extended Learning Opportunities, Physical Education/Health/Athletics, and the Summer School Office regarding before and after school programs, interscholastic athletic contests and practice, and summer school and intersession programs.
- q. If emergencies occur or additional assistance is needed, contact the appropriate Area Superintendent.

3. Weather conditions for modifying activities or school day.

- a. Authorities in the fields of medicine, environmental and occupational hazards, and safety have thoroughly studied heat stress and have issued guidelines pertaining to modifying physical activity and school or work schedules. It is recommended that temperature and humidity forecast be obtained from the National Weather Service (NWS) San Diego at 858-675-8700 or <http://forecast.weather.gov/MapClick.php?CityName=San+Diego&state=CA&site=SGX&textField1=32.7153&textField2=-117.156&e=1>. Local news reports on radio, television and online also carry this information.
- b. Guidelines for consideration in modifying instructional programs, physical activity and school schedules include:

Category*	Temp (F°)	Possible Heat Stress Effects	Humidity < 50%	Humidity > 50%
Normal	82° or less	Good learning conditions; No effect.	Regular school day.	Regular school day.
Alert	83° - 92°	Learning may decrease with long exposure; Fatigue may increase after 4-6 hours.	Regular school day. If near 50% humidity, limit intensity of or modify physical activity and monitor.	Regular school day. Limit duration and intensity of or modify physical activity and closely monitor.
Caution	93° - 95 ^{o**}	Early heat stress and cramps possible; heat exhaustion or heat stroke possible with long exposure.	Regular school day. Limit duration and intensity of or modify physical activity and closely monitor.	Regular school day. Limit duration and intensity of and modify physical activity and closely monitor.
Extreme Caution	96° or above**	Heat stroke or heat exhaustion possible.	Consider schedule change. Prohibit or limit duration and intensity of, modify physical activity, and closely monitor.	Consider schedule change. Prohibit physical activity.

*Air pollution alerts apply to all categories.

**If air circulation (or wind velocity) is 10 mph or greater, the effects of temperatures may be less severe.

4. **Students with certain health needs** may require more attention. If students complain about the heat, allow them to rest and contact the school nurse, mental health technician, or site principal/administrator who may want to have the student's health status clarified by a parent/guardian or physician.
5. **Employees with certain health needs** should make them known to their immediate supervisor and may request appropriate ADA accommodations in advance.
6. **Minimum day declaration.** In cases where excessive heat makes continued operation of schools hazardous for students, the Superintendent may declare a minimum day (Administrative Procedure 5003). Such determination will be based upon information and guidelines from the National Weather Service (NWS).

D. IMPLEMENTATION

1. **School sites** are to follow their hot weather plan unless notified that the Superintendent has declared a minimum day.
2. **Superintendent or designee** analyzes the weather situation; consults with appropriate Cabinet members; determines actions based on guidance from the National Weather Service (NWS). A minimum day due to excessive heat will be declared if the following collective conditions are present:
 - a. The heat wave is forecasted beyond a two-day period. A minimum day will not be called for the first day of a heat wave. If the heat wave is expected beyond the first day, schools will be notified by noon that a minimum day will be called for the second day of the heat wave.
 - b. The forecasted temperature for the second or subsequent days is for 95° Fahrenheit or higher and is combined with a forecasted heat index of 103° Fahrenheit or higher. This combination of weather factors is considered "dangerous" by the National Weather Service (NWS).
 - c. If a minimum day is declared the Superintendent or designee:
 - (1) Notifies site principals/administrators.
 - (2) Provides specific instruction regarding release of district employees, site security needs, or other special circumstances to be considered.
 - (3) Clarifies requirements for safety and supervision of students.
 - (4) Outlines provisions for transportation of students who are regularly transported in district busses and other students not residing in the immediate area.
 - (5) Requests periodic status reports.
 - (6) Contacts local media to provide for notification and status reports to parents/guardians and the public.

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- (7) Monitors weather situation; reviews input and status reports with appropriate Cabinet members.

3. Site principal/administrator:

- a. Instructs staff as to specific responsibilities as needed.
- b. Ensures that on-site procedures are implemented to provide for the safety and supervision of students.
- c. Confirms with Food and Nutrition Services any change to time of lunch service.
- d. Confirms with Transportation Services any change to service times.
- e. In the event of a minimum day called for hot weather, works with Pupil Accounting to plan for making up instructional minutes.
- f. In the event of a minimum day called for hot weather, shall be flexible in releasing staff, allowing the use of available leave once all students have been released.

E. FORMS AND AUXILIARY REFERENCES

- 1. Site hot weather plan


F. REPORTS AND RECORDS

G. APPROVED BY



General Counsel, Legal Services
As to form and legality

H. ISSUED BY



Chief of Staff