



# Outdoor Activities Guidelines

Our local weather can prove to be challenging at times, especially for planned school activities. Student safety is always our top priority and we are committed to working with parents to create safe conditions for our students at all times and for all activities. We have recently updated our weather and air quality restrictions to support schools in this work and we ask that you review these updates below so that you are aware of the guidelines.

## Air Quality Restrictions for Outdoor Activities:

Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) is defined and measured by [Environment Canada](#). Below are the recommended restrictions for outdoor activities related to air quality:

AQHI	Health Risk	Response
1-3	Low health risk	Continue as normal
4-6	Moderate health risk	Consider restricting levels of activities. Reduce the intensity and duration of any strenuous activities. Provide resting periods. Consider indoor recess for students with health issues that maybe impacted by air quality.
7-10	High health risk	Reduce or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors. Consider indoor recess and lunch supervision for all students.
Above 10	Very high health risk	Avoid strenuous activities outdoors. Consider indoor recess and lunch supervision for all students.

Note: Air quality may vary from community to community within Calgary. Principals should make decisions based on local conditions.

The following link provides detailed measurements for air quality in Alberta, and is updated hourly: <http://airquality.alberta.ca/map/>

## Temperature Restrictions for Outdoor Activities:

### Outdoor Breaks at School

We recognize the value of outdoor breaks such as recess and lunch during the school day, however, when the weather is cold, outdoor breaks may not be a viable option.

- When temperatures reach **-20 Celsius or colder including the wind-chill factor**, it is recommended that students be kept inside for recess or lunch breaks. The -20 Celsius guideline is comparable to other school jurisdictions in Alberta and across Canada.

Note | this temperature is provided as a guideline and may be adjusted for the school/activity.

### Off-Site Activities (Field trips)

- When temperatures reach **-25 Celsius or colder including the wind-chill factor**, it is recommended that any outdoor-based off-site activities be postponed or cancelled.

Note | a school may choose to postpone or cancel at a temperature warmer than this number depending on the activity or age of the students.

- Off-site activities to indoor destinations within the City of Calgary can go ahead as long as the school is appropriately addressing the transportation hazards (for example, needing to wait for a replacement bus should a break-down occur).

The target number for off-site activities is based on an understanding that students are taught about appropriate layering principles and adequate clothing for handling outdoor activity conditions.

Any temperature outside can be hazardous if students are not dressed for conditions. The Teacher-in-Charge should ensure students are properly dressed for transport to the activities if the worst happens.

**Field trip travel is not allowed when:**

For activities that involve travel outside of the City of Calgary, travel is not allowed when:

- A blizzard, blowing snow, dust storm, extreme cold, flash freeze, freezing rain, freezing drizzle, hurricane, rainfall, severe thunderstorm, snow squall, tornado , or winter storm warning has been issued by [Environment Canada](#) for areas along the route being travelled or at the destination OR;
- The RCMP has issued a Travel Advisory for any portion of the planned route OR;
- Road conditions are rated as "closed" for any portion of the planned route on [Alberta Transportation's Road Reports](#).

If conditions worsen while at the destination and a delay in the field trip return is necessary, the contingency plans outlined in the school's Off-Site Activity proposal will guide the next steps.

*Updated April 2020*