

Statement of Policy

Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools is committed to providing students with safe learning experiences and physical activities outdoors.

Rationale

Research shows that air quality conditions can have a detrimental and unhealthy impact on all of us. It is important to provide guidance and direction to school communities as to the risks of changing air quality conditions.

Authority

- Government of Canada, Environment and Natural Resources, Air Quality

Definitions

Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) – "...uses a scale to show the health risk associated with the air pollution we breathe. The AQHI is calculated based on the relative risks of a combination of common air pollutants that is known to harm human health." (Government of Canada, 2023). The AQHI provides a local air quality current value as well as a local air quality forecast.

At Risk Population – People with heart or breathing problems. (Government of Canada, 2023).

Procedures/Guidelines

The following are guidelines for the principal and/or designate regarding changing outdoor air quality conditions:

1. The principal (or designate) shall use the AQHI reading found on the Environment Canada Application when determining the risks associated with students being outside.
2. AQHI of 1-3: Low Risk - continue with usual outdoor activities.
3. AQHI of 4-6: Moderate Risk - conditions must be monitored frequently. Some at risk members of the school community may experience health effects. Consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors for those who are at risk or those who are experiencing symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.
4. AQHI of 7-10: High Risk - conditions must be monitored frequently. Consider moving all outdoor activities indoors, such as extracurricular activities, Physical Education classes and recess. Allow those who are at risk or those who are experiencing symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation to remain indoors. Avoid extended periods outside.

5. AQHI of 10+: Very High Risk - conditions must be monitored frequently and are deemed unhealthy. Recesses and Physical Education classes must be moved indoors or cancelled. Local sensors such as Purple Air can be used to measure air quality for outdoor extracurricular activities.

References

- Government of Canada – Environment and Natural Resources – Air Quality, 2023.
- AirHealth.ca
- WeatherCAN app
- PurpleAir.com

Date Approved **Dates Amended:**

May 2024