



# ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT



## Savannah-Chatham County Public School System Heat Guidelines for Outdoor Athletics

The following are guidelines for coaches and administrators to help protect student-athletes from having heat related illnesses or problems. This guide is to be used and referred to when making decisions or modifying and/or suspending athletic practices. At 3:00 p.m. each day in July, August and continuing into the warmer days in September, a designated person will determine the **heat index**. The heat index combines air temperature and relative humidity to determine an apparent temperature - how hot it actually feels. Administrators, coaches, and the athletic trainer will then make a decision using the guide below on whether to make modifications for all athletic practices to be held that afternoon. Coaches will then make the necessary modifications and notify the administrators and students.

### GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICE/MODIFICATIONS

1. If the **heat index** is **80-94°**, athletes should be watched closely for any heat distress and frequent water breaks should be taken.
2. If the **heat index** is **95-100°**, 10 minute rest breaks should be taken every hour, water breaks every 10 minutes, and athletes should be under careful supervision from coaches and trainers. Practice time must be kept to 120 minutes or less.
3. If the **heat index** is **101-105°**, athletic practices should be modified such as football practice in shorts, shoulder pads and helmets only. Frequent water every 10 minutes and rest breaks must be held, athletes should be able to get water at any time, and athletes should be under extreme supervision from coaches and trainers. Practice time must be kept to 120 minutes or less.
4. If the **heat index** is **106-110°**, further modifications must be made, such as football practice in shorts, T-shirts and helmets only. Water breaks should be taken every 10 minutes and athletes should be allowed to get water at any time, frequent rest breaks must be taken and athletes should be monitored at all times for heat distress. Practice time must be kept to 90 minutes or less.
5. If the **heat index** is **111° or greater**, then practice **will be suspended, postponed until later in the evening, or held indoors** at the coach's discretion, with suggestions made by the athletic trainer. Practice could also be rescheduled or postponed, when the heat index has reached an acceptable level. When a practice or event is "**BLACK FLAGGED**" (which means the heat index is at the 111° level or higher that day), no outdoor practice may begin until the athletic director or athletic trainer communicates to the head coach that the conditions are acceptable, the heat index is below 111°. Practice may be postponed to a later time the same day if the heat index lowers. All appropriate guidelines should be followed based on the reading at the time.

It is the responsibility of all coaches in the Savannah Chatham County Public School System to provide ample supplies of water and appropriate care to our athletes. It is recommended that all guidelines be followed in such a way that the best interests of our students be made our number one priority. It is also recommended that coaches constantly teach our students about proper hydration throughout each day. It is important that student-athletes be allowed to carry water with them during the day and hydrate themselves, on days of practice and games, while the weather has the possibility of reaching critical levels in relation to the heat and humidity.

To Check the Heat Index: <http://www.weatherunderground.com/US/GA/Savannah.html>

Re: See Board Policy JGFB and JGFB-R

Athlete Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_