

## **STUDENT-ATHLETES COLD WEATHER POLICY FOR PRACTICE AND GAMES**

Maggie Walker Governor's School Athletic Cold Weather Policy is incorporated into the Coaches' Handbook.

### **Notification of temperature**

- Coaches will obtain the weather report from [www.weatherbug.com](http://www.weatherbug.com)

### **Introduction:**

Cold exposure can be uncomfortable, impair performance, and even become life-threatening. Conditions created by cold exposure include frostbite and hypothermia. Wind chill can make activity uncomfortable and can impair performance when muscle temperature declines. Frostbite is the freezing of superficial tissues, usually of the face, ears, fingers, and toes. Hypothermia, a significant drop in body temperature, occurs with rapid cooling, exhaustion, and energy depletion. The resulting failure to the temperature-regulating mechanisms constitutes a medical emergency.

Hypothermia frequently occurs at temperatures above freezing. A wet and windy 30-50 degrees exposure may be as serious as a subzero exposure. For this reason, Maggie Walker Athletics has developed a cold policy using the Weather Bug Feels Like factor, not the ambient temperature. The "feels like" temperature according to Weather Bug considers the effects of multiple parameters, including ambient temperature, wind speed, solar intensity, humidity, precipitation intensity/type, elevation and atmospheric pressure. Wind Chill only considers two variables - temperature and wind speed, while the Apparent Temperature measures only temperature and humidity. Wind speed interacts with ambient temperature to significantly increase body cooling. When the body and clothing are wet (whether from sweat, rain, snow, or immersion), the cooling is even more pronounced due to evaporation of the water held close to the skin by the wet clothing.

Clothing is one of the most important parts of keeping the athlete's body warm. Athletes should dress in layers and try to stay dry. Layers can be added or removed depending on temperature, activity, and wind chill. Athletes should layer themselves with wicking fabric next to the body, followed by lightweight pile or wool layers for warmth. Athletes should use a wind block garment to avoid wind chill during workouts. Heat loss from the head and neck may be as much as 50% of total heat loss; therefore, the head and neck should be covered during cold conditions. Other extremities should always be covered to protect from the wind chill.

### **Cold Exposure:**

- Breathing of cold air can trigger an asthma attack (bronchospasm)
- Coughing, chest tightness, burning sensation in throat and nasal passage
- Reduction of strength, power, endurance, and aerobic activity
- Core body temperature reduction, causing a reduction of motor output

**Cold Recognition:**

- Shivering, a means for the body to generate heat
- Excessive shivering contributes to fatigue, loss of motor skills
- Numbness and pain in fingers, toes, ears, and exposed facial tissue
- Drop in core temperature; athlete exhibits sluggishness, slowed speech, and disorientation

**Maggie Walker Athletic Cold Policy: PRACTICE**

**No precipitation-** 33 degrees-40 degrees- athletes must be covered to go outside for practice. Athletes must be allowed to go inside and warm up for 15-20 minutes if needed during practice. Indoor practice in the hallways, if needed, on the second or third floors, starts after 4:30, and all athletes must be supervised.

**\*NO OUTDOOR PRACTICE** if temperatures are below 32 degrees or feels like below 32 degrees with precipitation.

Cold exposure can be uncomfortable, increase risk of injury, affect performance, and can be life-threatening. Cold weather is defined as any temperature that can negatively affect the body's regulatory system (they do not have to be freezing temperatures).

**Wind Chill Chart**

		Temperature (°F)																		
		Calm	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5	0	-5	-10	-15	-20	-25	-30	-35	-40	-45
Wind (mph)	5	36	31	25	19	13	7	1	-5	-11	-16	-22	-28	-34	-40	-46	-52	-57	-63	
	10	34	27	21	15	9	3	-4	-10	-16	-22	-28	-35	-41	-47	-53	-59	-66	-72	
	15	32	25	19	13	6	0	-7	-13	-19	-26	-32	-39	-45	-51	-58	-64	-71	-77	
	20	30	24	17	11	4	-2	-9	-15	-22	-29	-35	-42	-48	-55	-61	-68	-74	-81	
	25	29	23	16	9	3	-4	-11	-17	-24	-31	-37	-44	-51	-58	-64	-71	-78	-84	
	30	28	22	15	8	1	-5	-12	-19	-26	-33	-39	-46	-53	-60	-67	-73	-80	-87	
	35	28	21	14	7	0	-7	-14	-21	-27	-34	-41	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-82	-89	
	40	27	20	13	6	-1	-8	-15	-22	-29	-36	-43	-50	-57	-64	-71	-78	-84	-91	
	45	26	19	12	5	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-44	-51	-58	-65	-72	-79	-86	-93	
	50	26	19	12	4	-3	-10	-17	-24	-31	-38	-45	-52	-60	-67	-74	-81	-88	-95	
	55	25	18	11	4	-3	-11	-18	-25	-32	-39	-46	-54	-61	-68	-75	-82	-89	-97	
	60	25	17	10	3	-4	-11	-19	-26	-33	-40	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-84	-91	-98	

Frostbite Times

30 minutes

10 minutes

5 minutes

Wind Chill (°F) = 35.74 + 0.6215T - 35.75(V<sup>0.16</sup>) + 0.4275T(V<sup>0.16</sup>)

Where, T= Air Temperature (°F) V= Wind Speed (mph)

Effective 11/01/01

Adopted: September 18, 2025

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Cross Refs.:	Pol 4091	Student-Athlete Sudden Cardiac Arrest
	Reg 4092	Student-Athlete Extreme Heat Safety and Protection