

Air Quality & Inclement Weather Recess Guidance

Dear Parents,

In January of 2008, all schools in Utah received guidance from the Utah Department of Health pertaining to air quality standards and recess procedures. Since that time, American Heritage School has complied and continues to comply with this guidance.

In recent years we have seen inversions, fires and other factors affect our outdoor air quality. There is concern about the effects of poor air quality on children's health and their ability to breathe easily. Because of this, we have adopted the following guidelines recommended by the Utah Department of Health:

What does the School do?

1. We check the local Particulate Matter (PM2.5) levels on a daily (and oftentimes during the winter season, hourly) basis. This information guides our outdoor physical activities. Our data source is Brigham Young University. Please note that we do not base our decisions upon readings from Salt Lake County, which we understand can have very different weather and air quality patterns from Utah County.
2. When the PM2.5 level falls between 35.5 and 55.4, we instruct "sensitive" students to stay indoors.
3. When the PM2.5 level falls between 55.5 and 90, we instruct "sensitive" students and students experiencing respiratory symptoms, such as with a cold or allergies, to stay indoors.
4. When the PM2.5 level rises above 90, we cancel outdoor recess for all children and alternative play/exercise opportunities are offered indoors.

What should parents do?

- Parents, with advice from your health care provider, should contact the school health aid (Mrs. Mulvey, lmulvey@ahsmail.com) if your child is "sensitive" to poor air quality. We will not place a student in the "sensitive" category without parental instruction – even if your child has been reported on your application for enrollment as having asthma or other respiratory concerns.
- Sensitive children may include those with significant or poorly controlled asthma, cystic fibrosis, chronic lung disease, congenital heart disease, compromised immune systems, or other respiratory problems.

For your information:

- ✓ The daily PM2.5 level is located at www.airquality.utah.gov.
- ✓ Additional information on air quality guidance for schools is located at www.health.utah.gov/asthma.

Inclement Weather Safety

Indoor Recess is called at AHS when the temperature drops below 20 degrees Fahrenheit, including wind chill, or when other conditions, such as precipitation, warrant indoor recess based upon the best judgment of administrators, teachers, and parents.

Currently, there is no national temperature standard for when to keep students indoors during the winter months, according to the U.S. Department of Education. Schools make their own determination based on

temperature, including the wind chill factor. Many schools across the country cancel outdoor recess when temperatures fall below 20 degrees. It is more important to look beyond the specific temperature and check factors such as wind chill, playground conditions, and the amount of time spent outdoors. Wind chill is the body's sensed temperature on exposed skin created by the combination of the actual temperature and the additional heat loss from skin exposed to wind. The National Weather Service (NOAA) has created a wind chill chart to help determine if it is safe for children to be outside. The following are examples from the chart: Outdoor temperature of 20 degrees with a wind velocity of 5 mph is equivalent to 13 degrees. Outdoor temperature of 25 degrees with a wind velocity of 10 mph is equivalent to 15 degrees. For more information please see the following website: www.nws.noaa.gov/om/windchill/

We are committed to providing a safe and healthy school environment for your child! Please contact us if you have questions about this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Wheeler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Bob Wheeler
Director of Health & Safety