

# HHHS Severe Weather policy

Version: May 2018

At Hunting Hills High School, severe weather including temperature may affect the type, duration and requirements that must be met in order to conduct school activities. For activities that take students away from the school building, no one temperature level is used as a cut-off.

(Note that it is the School District that prescribes when any school is open or closed for operation.)

We encourage parents to adjust for the activities planned by HHHS. Depending on the Program of Studies or extracurricular involvement, students may be expected to face severe weather challenges in order to complete activities such as cross-country skiing safely in wilderness settings, taking photographs outside the school or travelling to tournaments around Alberta. These experiences, with school supports, help prepare students for safe experiences in these conditions whether for work or recreation in their future. When given some advance notice, HHHS staff can often assist in finding appropriate gear to give students a safer severe weather experience.

Staff use best practices to make their severe weather decisions. Environment Canada guidelines indicate that frostbite risk is low when wind chills are  $-27^{\circ}\text{C}$  or warmer. To help staff plan, they also depend on their training and documents such as weather forecasts, road condition reports, Environment Canada advice and direct observations. The Environment Canada chart included below is provided as guidance for staff. Staff includes teachers and bus drivers operating HHHS buses.

Parents will find guidance in the provided chart to know how their children need to dress for activities that they undertake in severe weather conditions. Teachers must exclude a student from the planned group activity and provide an alternate learning experience if the student is not appropriately dressed for the severe weather conditions.

Parents may direct any questions to the staff involved regarding the activity. Staff in each activity area have training and experience with severe weather judgments that are highly specialized to their work. Other general questions can be directed to administration in Hunting Hills High School.

The following chart, including more information, is found at the following web page by scrolling down to the Wind Chill Hazards section:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/weather-health/wind-chill-cold-weather/wind-chill-index.html>

## Wind Chill Hazards and What To Do:

Each temperature range includes comment on: wind chill exposure risk, health concerns and what to do.

### 0 to -9C **Low Risk**

- Slight increase in discomfort
- Dress warmly
- Stay dry

### -10 to -27C **Moderate Risk**

- Uncomfortable
- Risk of **hypothermia** and **frostbite** if outside for long periods without adequate protection.
- Dress in layers of warm clothing, with an outer layer that is wind-resistant.
- Wear a hat, mittens or insulated gloves, a scarf and insulated, waterproof footwear.
- Stay dry.
- Keep active

### -28 to -39C **High Risk**: exposed skin can freeze in 10 to 30 minutes

- High risk of **frostnip** or **frostbite**: Check face and extremities for numbness or whiteness.
- High risk of **hypothermia** if outside for long periods without adequate clothing or shelter from wind and cold.
- Dress in layers of warm clothing, with an outer layer that is wind-resistant
- Cover exposed skin
- Wear a hat, mittens or insulated gloves, a scarf, neck tube or face mask and insulated, waterproof footwear
- Stay dry
- Keep active

### -40 to -47C **Very High risk**: exposed skin can freeze in 5 to 10 minutes

- Very high risk of **frostbite**: Check face and extremities for numbness or whiteness.
- Very high risk of **hypothermia** if outside for long periods without adequate clothing or shelter from wind and cold.
- Dress in layers of warm clothing, with an outer layer that is wind-resistant.
- Cover all exposed skin.
- Wear a hat, mittens or insulated gloves, a scarf, neck tube or face mask and insulated, waterproof footwear.
- Stay dry
- Keep active.

### -48 to -54C **Severe risk**: exposed skin can freeze in 2 to 5 minutes

- Severe risk of frostbite: Check face and extremities frequently for numbness or whiteness.
- Severe risk of hypothermia if outside for long periods without adequate clothing or shelter from wind and cold.
- Be careful. Dress very warmly in layers of clothing, with an outer layer that is wind-resistant.
- **Cover all exposed skin**
- Wear a hat, mittens or insulated gloves, a scarf, neck tube or face mask and insulated, waterproof footwear.
- **Be ready to cut short or cancel outdoor activities.**
- Stay dry.
- Keep active.

-55C and colder **Extreme risk:** exposed skin can freeze in less than 2 minutes

- DANGER! Outdoor conditions are **hazardous.**
- **Stay indoors.**