



July 26, 2024

# MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

## 24-25 – New Rules, New Procedures

Here we are at the end of July and preparations for the fall season are already underway at most of our member schools. As is the case most every year, school administration and athletic faculty should be aware and ready to immediately implement the rule changes enacted the previous year.

## Heat Guidelines

The Extreme Heat and Air Quality Policy should have most everyone's attention. Assembly Bill 1653, which passed the legislature and was signed by the governor in October of 2023, mandates that by no later than July 1, 2024, the California Interscholastic Federation must develop guidelines, procedures and safety standards for the prevention and management of exertional heat illness. The guidelines adopted by the CIF have been the accepted guidelines adopted by many state associations across the country in recent years. In 2021, the NFHS placed an emphasis on WGBT measurements for all state associations and funded a grant opportunity to provide Kestrel 5400 Heat Stress Trackers with tripods. The CIF State office provided grant funds to schools to assist in the purchase of these devices. If you have purchased a device but are not exactly sure how to use it, here is a link to a short instructional video on how to effectively use the Kestrel 5400: <https://nfhslearn.com/library/videos/wet-bulb-globe-thermometer-educational-video>.

California is a state with various climates and heat ranges. To understand what category your school district is in, follow this link to the State CIF website and the Extreme Heat and Air Quality Policy. Under Step 1, there is a link to the category designation by county and school district. Private schools have been designated based upon the public school district in which they reside. These classifications have been made based upon recent data collection. However, it is understandable that this data collection may not take into consideration all the microclimates that exist in the Southern California area. If you believe that your school has been mis-classified, you cannot just call the office and ask for a change. Please, collect some longitudinal WGBT data (over the entirety of your pre and early season practice) from your school that can assist the state in making informed decisions related to category adjustments if warranted.

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## Heat Guidelines continued

Two things about the implementation of these Extreme Heat Guidelines: 1) Many southern states such as Georgia and Louisiana have successfully adopted and followed these guidelines for a few years now. It may have been challenging at first, but they have adapted. 2) We have a duty to protect our athletes from the dangers of Heat Illness. Major injury or death from heat illness is a terrible tragedy because these incidents are 100% preventable. These measures have been implemented to assist all schools and athletic programs in protecting their athletes. Let's think of this first before we get upset at the potential inconveniences that may result from following these new guidelines.

## Air Quality

The potential for wildfires across the state is quite high this year. My own neighborhood in fact was just recently affected by a large fire. The resulting air quality was a challenge to be sure. If there is a local fire or some other air quality issue in your area, please make sure to check the [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov) website or your onsite AQI indicator to make sure it is permissible to participate. If the AQI reading in your area is greater than 151, you must cancel all activity. If the reading is between 100 and 150, you should consider possible adjustments to your practice plans as well.

## Emergency Action Plan

Hopefully by now schools have developed their site-specific Emergency Action Plans (EAP) and are preparing to review and practice these plans with the fall sports teams at their venues. The bylaw change that took place last spring expanded on the fact that schools must have an EAP, the bylaw change also specified elements that must be included in their athletic EAP. Bylaw 503.L states that "Each school's emergency action plan (EAP) shall:

- a. list and provide the location of all on-site emergency equipment that may be needed in an emergency situation.
- b. identify personnel and their responsibilities to carry out the plan of action.

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## Emergency Action Plan continued

- c. include appropriate contact information for EMS.
- d. specify documentation actions that need to be taken post emergency.

Schools also need to have an AED available at each athletic venue located within 3 minutes of a potential sudden cardiac arrest.

To assist host schools with communicating their emergency action plan to visiting teams prior to a game, we have developed a simple [Pregame Emergency Action Plan Information](#) template on an excel spreadsheet. This template is intended to be customized by the host school to include pertinent contact information, AED location, EMS arrival points, emergency parent parking areas, local hospital information, and talking points to discuss at a pre-event meeting. The template can be found on the CIFSS Website under Resources > Sports Medicine > Management. Once completed, it is intended to be printed back-to-back on card stock and cut into 4 individual cards. These cards can be customized per sport, venue, or even per admin on duty. The use of this card or any information document like it is not mandatory. However, providing pregame EAP information in some form or fashion is strongly encouraged.

As always, the CIF Southern Section Office is available to assist in any way we can as you prepare for the upcoming school year. Here is to an outstanding 2024-2025 school year!!!



**Mike West**

