

Administrative Procedures

AP-440 OUTDOOR AIR QUALITY	Date of implementation: September 2025 Date of review: Date of update:
	Related Administrative Procedures: AP-410 Physical Safety AP-418 Learning Activities Outside of the School AP-423 Extra-Curricular Activities AP-607 Physical Education

Purpose: As part of its commitment to providing safe learning environments, Prairie Spirit School Division will monitor outdoor air quality and its impact on school-related programming.

Research shows that air quality conditions can have a detrimental and unhealthy impact on people of all ages. It is important to provide guidance and direction to school communities as to the risks of changing air quality conditions.

Prairie Spirit schools will monitor outdoor air quality particularly during spring and fall seasons when smoke from forest and grass fires may be most prevalent.

Definitions:

Air Quality: Air quality refers to the quality of outdoor air primarily related to weather, climate, and smoke (forest fires, grass fires, etc.). Air quality impacted by industry or emergent situations should be guided or directed by proper authorities.

Air Quality Health Index (AQHI): Air Quality is measured by Environment Canada using the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) which is a 1 - 11 scale. The AQHI provides a local air quality current value as well as a local air quality forecast. [About the Air Quality Health Index - Canada.ca](#)

Air Quality Monitoring - The administrator or designate will monitor air quality with reliable sources such as:

- [Environment Canada](#) – provides current and forecasted conditions in AQHI
- [Purple Air](#) – provides current and forecasted conditions where monitors exist

Procedures:

- 1) Some Prairie Spirit schools have Purple Air monitors that provide up to the minute readings on local air quality. The PurpleAir interactive map includes real time readings for the locations where monitors exist: [Canadian PM2.5 by PurpleAir](#). The Principal or designate shall use the local PurpleAir readings when determining the risks associated with students being outside.

- 2) Prairie Spirit schools without air quality monitors/sensors should rely on the nearest monitors or sensors that report AQHI at least hourly and on Environment Canada's AQHI forecast for their location to guide their planning for outdoor activities.
- 3) The air quality readings will be responded to in the following ways:
 - a) **Low Risk - AQHI of 1 - 3:** Continue with usual outdoor activities.
 - b) **Moderate Risk - AQHI of 4 - 6:** Conditions must be monitored frequently. Some at risk members of the school community may experience health effects. Consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors for those who are at risk or those who are experiencing symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.
 - c) **High Risk - AQHI of 7 - 10:** Conditions must be monitored frequently. Consider moving all outdoor activities indoors, such as extra-curricular activities, Physical Education classes and recess. Allow those who are at risk or those who are experiencing symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation to remain indoors. Avoid extended periods outside.
 - d) **Very High Risk - AQHI of 10+:** Conditions must be monitored frequently and are deemed unhealthy. Recesses and Physical Education classes must be moved indoors. Outdoor extra-curricular events will be moved indoors (if possible), postponed, or cancelled.