

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2021 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 2040

BY DELEGATE BARNHART

[Introduced February 10, 2021; Referred to the
Committee on Education]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section,
2 designated §18-2-25d, relating to requiring the West Virginia Secondary Schools Activities
3 Commission to adopt and implement a “Heat and Humidity Practice Policy” for all
4 interscholastic athletic events of the students in public secondary schools.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 2. STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

§18-2-25d. Heat and Humidity Practice Policy.

1 (a) By the beginning of school year 2021-2022, the West Virginia Secondary Schools
2 Activities Commission shall adopt and implement the “Heat and Humidity Practice Policy” set forth
3 in this section for all interscholastic athletic events of the students in public secondary schools.

4 (b) Heat Participation Policy Guidelines. – Schools must follow this best practice policy
5 when conducting outdoor practices and games in all sports. The policy follows modified guidelines
6 of the American College of Sports Medicine in regard to:

7 (1) The scheduling of practices during times of various WetBulb Globe Temperature
8 (WBGT) levels;

9 (2) The ratio of workout time to time allotted for rest and hydration during times of various
10 WBGT levels; and

11 (3) The WBGT levels which will result in practices and contests being modified or
12 terminated.

13 An instrument scientifically approved to measure WBGT must be utilized at each practice
14 and game. WBGT readings must be taken on the practice and game site a minimum of every
15 hour, beginning 30 minutes before the beginning of practice and game. All readings must be
16 recorded, or data logged (e.g., written, or electronic form). In the event that a modification or
17 cancellation was required, documentation using the WBGT NJSIAA Heat Participation Policy
18 Record Chart must be completed.

19 (c) WBGT Reading Flag Risk for Heat Illness Activity Guidelines and Rest Break

20 Guidelines. –

21 (1) Under 80.0°F – Green (Very Low) – Normal activities – Provide at least three separate
22 rest breaks each hour of minimum duration of three minutes each during workout.

23 (2) 80.0°F – 85.0°F - Yellow (Low) – Use discretion for intense or prolonged exercise;
24 watch at-risk players carefully; provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour with a
25 minimum duration of four minutes each.

26 (3) 85.1°F – 88.0°F – Orange (Moderate) – Maximum practice time is two hours. For
27 football, lacrosse and field hockey: All helmets and shoulder pads must be removed for practice
28 and conditioning activities. If the WBGT rises to this level during practice, football players may
29 continue to work out wearing football pants without changing into shorts. For all sports: Provide
30 at least four separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of four minutes each.

31 (4) 88.1°F – 90°F – Red (High) – Maximum length of practice is one hour. For football,
32 lacrosse and field hockey: No protective equipment may be worn during practice and there must
33 be no conditioning activities. For all sports: There must be no conditioning and there must be 20
34 minutes of rest breaks distributed throughout the hour of practice.

35 (5) Over 90°F – Black (Very High) – NO OUTDOOR WORKOUTS. Delay practice until a
36 cooler WBGT level is reached.

37 (d) Guidelines for hydration and rest breaks. –

38 (1) Rest time must involve unrestricted access to fluids (e.g. water or electrolyte
39 beverages).

40 (2) With sports requiring helmets (e.g. football, lacrosse, field hockey), the helmets must
41 be removed during rest time.

42 (3) The site of the rest time must be in a shaded area.

43 (4) When the WBGT reading is greater than 85.0°F: Ice towels, spray bottles filled with ice
44 water or equivalent must be available to aid in the cooling process within the shaded area,

45 (e) The guidelines shall provide a default policy to those responsible or sharing duties for

46 making decisions concerning the implementation of modifications or cancellation of practices and
47 contests based on the presence of heat and humidity.

48 (f) Schools must purchase a WetBulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) tool to measure the
49 heat stress in direct sunlight at the practice site. Heat stress consists of temperature, humidity,
50 wind speed, the angle of the sun, and cloud coverage.

51 (g) Definitions. – For the purposes of this section:

52 “Game” means any interscholastic athletic event.

53 “Practice” means the period of time that a participant engages in coach-supervised,
54 school-approved sport or conditioning-related activity. Practices are timed from the time the
55 players report to the field until they leave.

56 “Walk through” means a period of time shall last no more than one hour and is not
57 considered to be a part of the practice time regulation, and may not involve conditioning or weight-
58 room activities. Players may not wear protective equipment.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to require the West Virginia Secondary Schools Activities Commission to adopt and implement a “Heat and Humidity Practice Policy” for all interscholastic athletic events of the students in public secondary schools.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law, and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.