

# **SPORTS SAFETY POLICY AND PROCEDURE HANDBOOK**

***FORT WORTH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL'S  
ATHLETIC DEPT & SPORTS MEDICINE***

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## INTRODUCTION

The following policies and procedures were specifically designed for Fort Worth Christian School's athletic department and its facilities. This manual was created to help provide FWC employees and our student athletes written guidelines and protocols to help reduce the chances of a serious injury occurring on Fort Worth Christian School's athletic facilities. **This manual cannot guarantee the safety of any individual.**

Please feel free to contact Corry Karlen, FWC head athletic trainer, with any questions or concerns regarding the contents of the manual. I can be reached by phone at 817-281-6504 ext. 192 or by email at [ckarlen@fwc.org](mailto:ckarlen@fwc.org).

Thank you for your support!

-Corry Karlen ATC, LAT  
Head Athletic Trainer  
Fort Worth Christian School

## ROLE OF THE CERTIFIED / LICENSED ATHLETIC TRAINER

The National Athletic Trainers Association (NATA) defines the certified athletic trainer as:

\*Health care professionals who specialize in preventing, recognizing, managing, and rehabilitating injuries that result from physical activity. As part of a complete health care team, the certified athletic trainer works under the direction of a licensed physician and in cooperation with other health care professionals, athletic administrators, coaches, and parents.

### *Minimum Requirements to practice as a Certified/Licensed Athletic Trainer*

1. Bachelor's degree from an accredited university with an approved athletic training curriculum.
2. Pass a licensing examination provided by the Texas Department of State Health Services.
3. Pass a certification examination provided by the NATA Board of Certification.
4. Complete 50 hours of continuing education classes every 2 years to maintain licensure.
5. Maintain current CPR/AED certifications.

### *Duties of the FWC Athletic Trainer*

1. Maintain copies of all current FWC student athlete physicals and medical release forms.
2. Maintain record of injuries and/or treatments provided to FWC student athletes.
3. Assist coaches with equipment needs within the scope of athletic training. Examples include braces, supports, protective equipment, tape, hydration, injury ice, and medical supplies deemed necessary by the head athletic trainer. These items will be made available during most FWC practices and home games.
4. Educate and supervise student athletic trainers.
5. Report to the athletic director problems, violations, or negligent actions of coaches or student athletes regarding the policies and procedures of this manual or of the athletic department and its facilities.
6. Evaluate and treat injuries that occur during FWC middle school and high school athletic practices and events. Due to time restraints and limited resources, injuries that occur during non-FWC sports or extra-curricular activities (club sports) are not covered within the scope of responsibilities of the FWC athletic trainer. For the protection of the athletic trainer and the student athlete, female athletes should be accompanied by another female, team manager, parent, or coach during evaluation and treatments. An injury report can be made available to the head coach verbally or by email any time an athlete receives treatment or evaluation.
7. Provide medical coverage to FWC middle school and high school practices and home events. The athletic trainer will also travel to varsity football road games; other sports will be at the discretion of the head athletic trainer. Priority of medical coverage provided by the athletic trainer will be given first to home varsity events and then to the sport with the higher level of risk. The athletic trainer will not be in attendance during golf, tennis, or swimming events due their off campus practice and event locations. These sports may receive medical attention from FWC coaches or on campus by the athletic trainer. Cheerleaders may also receive medical attention from the athletic trainer. If applicable, student athletic trainers will be provided to coaches when possible in the absence of the athletic trainer.

8. **Tournaments:** If FWC is the host site, the athletic trainer is required to be on campus only when a FWC team is currently playing. Injury ice and drinking water will be made available throughout the tournament in the absence of the athletic trainer. If additional medical coverage is needed, the athletic trainer is entitled to charge an additional fee once amount has been approved by tournament director. This fee will be charged to the tournament director at the completion of the tournament.
9. **FWC Summer Camps:** Camps are considered extra and outside the normal duties of the athletic trainer. If medical coverage is needed, camp director will negotiate a fee with the athletic trainer before camp begins.

### *RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COACH TO THE ATHLETIC TRAINER*

1. Recognize that the head athletic trainer has the ultimate authority regarding the safety and health of all FWC student athletes during scheduled practices and competition. Once a student athlete is evaluated by the athletic trainer, that athlete is now under the direction of the athletic trainer. All physician referrals should be conducted by the head athletic trainer. This will enable good communication between the physician, athletic trainer, coach, student athlete, and parent. The student athlete will not return to activity until an official release is made by the treating physician or by the athletic trainer. Practice or game modifications needed for the injured athlete to participate will be communicated to the head coach or assistant coach by the FWC athletic trainer. Student athletic trainers **cannot** make return to play decisions.
2. All coaches should maintain current CPR/AED certification and are responsible for notifying the FWC athletic trainer if certification is expired. CPR/AED training will be provided by the athletic trainer and/or school nurse during a designated time (\*online CPR/AED renewal option available)
3. All coaches should carry a working cell phone and their facility keys during all practices and games in case of an emergency and maintain a copy of emergency contact numbers for each sport he or she coaches.
4. The head coach should submit to the athletic trainer either verbally or by email a weekly schedule for all practices and games. These schedules should be submitted 48 hours prior to the next week's practices or games (Fridays). If a schedule has not been received 48 hours prior to the next week, then that practice or event may not receive athletic training coverage. Holiday coverage will be at the discretion of the head athletic trainer and/or athletic director.
5. Coaches with keys to the training room and storage closet must keep the doors LOCKED at all times. For inventory and security purposes, if a coach removes an item from the training room or storage closet, then that item should be written on the provided dry erase board or clip board for the head athletic trainer to see (i.e. coolers, cups, tape, towels, medical kit, etc.).
6. Student athletic trainers made available to a particular sport are under the supervision of the head athletic trainer and are receiving HS credit each semester as a 7<sup>th</sup> period class. Student athletic trainers are responsible for carrying out the normal duties (within their capabilities) of the sports medicine department in the absence of the athletic trainer. Student athletic trainers are not licensed, but may assist you with basic first aid and equipment needs such as practice set-up, applying heat or ice, minimal taping, and minor wound care. If there are any questions regarding the seriousness of an injury, contact the head athletic trainer ASAP. Per the request of a head coach, student athletic trainers may travel with FWC teams to road games if deemed feasible by the head athletic trainer.  
**\*College Student Athletic Trainers:** These students are collecting clinical hours while under the supervision of the FWC athletic trainer. Even though these students possess more experience and skills than our HS student athletic trainers, they are prohibited from making return-to-play decisions per policy of their school's curriculum. College SAT's may perform basic taping and wrapping applications, wound care, CPR, and stretching techniques on our athletes during an event or practice alone as long as the FWC head athletic trainer is ON campus. College SAT's will communicate all injuries to the FWC head athletic trainer.

## *LIFE THREATNING INJURIES AND ILLNESSES*

The primary concern of administering emergency aid to an injured athlete is to maintain cardiovascular function and central nervous system function – the failure of either of those systems may lead to permanent injury or death. To provide the best possible care to our student athletes, coaches and athletic trainers must work together as a team. In most situations involving injury or illness to an athlete, coaches are typically the first responder and should be able initiate the Emergency Action Plan (EAP) in the absence of a licensed athletic trainer. In the event that a possible life threatening injury or illness occurs without the presence of a medical professional, first responders must remain calm and act quickly in order to facilitate life-saving care.

Time is the most important factor when responding to a serious injury. Due to the immediate contact coaches have with their athletes, initiating the EAP yourself can save an injured athlete valuable minutes. Having a licensed athletic trainer on staff is an asset to an athletic program; it *does not* eliminate the coach's responsibility to keep their athletes safe nor does it protect them from negligence. Emergency responsibilities for coaches as first responders would include: Contacting emergency medical services (EMS-911), performing CPR, applying a defibrillator, or providing basic first aid.

### *Signs or Symptoms of a Potentially Serious Injury or Illness*

1. Changes in skin color (red, pale, or blue) or temperature (hot, dry, cool, or clammy).
2. Body temperature that is less than 95 deg or greater than 104 degrees.
3. Changes in breathing (shallow, irregular, or gasping).
4. Complaints of head, neck, or abdominal pain after a collision or contact type injury.
5. Frothy blood dissipating from the mouth.
6. Loss of consciousness.
7. No signs of breathing or a pulse.
8. Numbness below the neck and difficulty or inability to move extremities.
9. Pupils are unequal in shape or fully dilated.
10. Uncontrollable bleeding from a laceration or puncture wound.

### *Head and Neck Injuries*

If an athlete suffers an injury to the head or neck and there are no medical personnel available, then it is the coach's responsibility to make sure that their athlete receives proper medical care. Always error on the side of caution in regards to a head or neck injury, coaches should not attempt to diagnose for a concussion nor attempt to move an athlete with a suspected neck injury. "Burners" or "Stingers" can also occur regularly in collision sports and should be treated as a potentially serious nerve injury.

Do not allow the athlete to return to play if he or she is suffering from any of the following symptoms:

1. Loss of consciousness (even if for a few seconds. \*Refer to EAP section of this manual)
2. Numbness, tingling, or burning sensation in the arms or legs.
3. Headache, dizziness, ears ringing, confusion, or amnesia. (Do not give medication to the athlete anytime, use an ice pack to decrease symptoms instead)
4. Complaints of pain anywhere on the head or along the spine.
5. Difficulty breathing.

## *Concussion Protocol*

A concussion is a disturbance in the function of the brain caused by a direct or indirect force to the head or body. It can result in a variety of symptoms and may or may not involve loss of consciousness. What makes a concussion life threatening to the athlete is that a metabolic change occurs inside the brain after a concussion. If an athlete returns to sport during this metabolic change and suffers another head injury (Second Impact Syndrome) the brain may swell and/or bleed very rapidly causing pressure to the brain. As a result permanent brain damage or even death can occur. This is why it is important that the metabolic change must be given time to resolve itself **BEFORE** an athlete returns to sport.

\*Although concussed athletes share similar complaints, not all of them recover in the same manner. Therefore, each concussed athlete here at FWC will be handled on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the head athletic trainer.

## *Recognizing the Signs and Symptoms of a Concussed Athlete*

A student athlete who has sustained a head injury may experience or report one or more of the following symptoms:

-Headache	-Dizziness	-Nausea or vomiting	-Confusion
-Drowsiness	-Memory problems	-Lethargic	-Balance issues
-Vision problems	-Fatigue	-Vacant stare/facial expressions	-Ears ringing

Below is a general guideline for the FWC athletic department to follow:

1. FWC sports medicine has adopted the use of ImPACT computer based neuropsychological testing as part of the athletic department's concussion management program. All student athletes who participate in HS football, basketball, soccer, baseball, softball, and cheerleading should complete a baseline test prior to the beginning of their competitive season.
2. If a FWC student athlete is "**suspected**" of having a concussion or head injury, that athlete should be removed from play immediately and MAY NOT return to play until notification from the medical staff. Follow the motto **\*WHEN IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT!!!**
3. Any FWC student athlete who has suffered any type of head injury, must be evaluated by the FWC athletic trainer to determine if a concussion injury has occurred.
4. If concussion symptoms are present within the athlete, he or she will be removed from ALL physical activity and referred for physician evaluation. Physician's chosen to do the evaluation should be trained in concussion recognition and management.
5. Once the student athlete has provided the FWC head athletic trainer a **written clearance** signed by his or her physician to return to physical activity, that athlete must then complete a return-to-play (**RTPP**) **progression protocol** before returning to sport. RTP progression protocol will be administered and supervised by the FWC head athletic trainer. Once the athlete has successfully completed the progression protocol, that athlete will be allowed to return to sport without restrictions.
6. For more information about concussion injuries and management, please refer to the **FWC Concussion Management Policy** tab located on the Sports Medicine web page.

## ***EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN (EAP) FOR ATHLETICS***

**Step 1:** If an athlete appears unconscious or unresponsive – Call 911 immediately.

*\*If possible, designate another coach, staff member, or athlete to do this while you tend to the victim.*

**Step 2:** Communicate information to EMS in this order (speak clearly and calmly):

1. Name of the school, address of the school, and location of incident (example: baseball field).
2. Your name and phone number.
3. Description of incident.

*\*Cell phones, although very useful, have disadvantages such as dropped calls, bad reception, and inability to track the caller immediately. By following the above steps in order, the dispatcher will have essential information to give the ambulance such as location, contact person, victim's status.*

**Step 3:** Call FWC head athletic trainer - Coach Karlen

**Step 4:** After determining the scene is safe:

- 1) Check for responsiveness and breathing again.
- 2) If no breathing is found, begin CPR. (Continue CPR until AED and/or EMS arrives)
- 3) Apply a defibrillator as soon as possible! (**\*TURN ON** defibrillator and follow voice prompts).
- 4) If athlete is breathing, do nothing and monitor for changes until help arrives.

### *Location of Automated External Defibrillators (AED's) for Athletics:*

1. Cardinal Gym – located on south wall, above gate personnel's desk near gym floor entrance.
2. Mitchell Gym – located on east wall near gym floor entrance.
3. Campus Center – located in east hallway near Art classrooms.
4. Athletic Trainer's Golf Cart – inside red sports medicine bag.
5. High School – located near north entrance facing science tech building.
6. Middle School – located on the wall next to chapel door entrance.
7. Elementary School – located on the wall across from ES front office.
8. Admin Building/Performing Arts Center – located in foyer of PAC near restrooms.

## ***VENUE SPECIFIC EAP - Personnel Duties for the Emergency Action Plan***

### ***BARROW FIELD: (FOOTBALL/SOCCER/TRACK)***

**-Emergency Personnel:** Licensed athletic trainer should be available for scheduled practices and competition. School nurses may also be available for assistance on school days from 7:30am-4:00pm.

*\*Emergency numbers should be posted next to fixed land, phone lines.*



**-Emergency Communication:** It is highly recommended that all coaches maintain a working cell phone and facility keys on their person during all practices and games. Closest fixed land phone lines are located in the following areas of the Cardinal Gymnasium:

- 1) **Training Room:** located on the north end (rear) of Cardinal Gymnasium - adjacent to weight room and men's locker room.
- 2) **Upstairs Coaches Office:** staircase leading to office is located adjacent to weight room and entrance door to gymnasium floor.
- 3) **Girls Coaches Office:** located on the south east corner of Cardinal Gymnasium behind concession stand entrance door.
- 4) **Athletic Secretary's Office:** located in the foyer of Cardinal Gymnasium, door is just to the right of the concession stand service window.

**-Emergency Equipment:** Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is located inside the Cardinal Gymnasium on the south wall of the gymnasium court near the main gymnasium floor entrance.  
\*Additional AED and emergency equipment should be available in athletic trainer's golf cart.

#### **Role of First Responder:**

-First coach on the scene and makes contact with potential victim will:

- A) assess the situation and declare if the scene is safe.
- B) check athlete's responsiveness.
- C) If athlete is unresponsive, activate EMS by designating someone else to call 911 and/or athletic trainer, and have them retrieve the nearest AED.

#### **Role of Other Responders:**

- Athletic trainer will assume control over the scene upon arrival and designate duties for other responders. Duties will include: call EMS, retrieve the AED or other emergency equipment, direct EMS to victim, crowd control, and event documentation.
- If athletic trainer is not available. First coach will designate the above duties as applicable.

### ***AUXILLARY PRACTICE FIELD: (FOOTBALL/SOCCER/TRACK)***

**-Emergency Personnel:** Licensed athletic trainer should be available for scheduled practices and competition. School nurses may also be available for assistance on school days from 7:30am-4:00pm.  
\*Emergency numbers should be posted next to fixed land, phone lines.

**-Emergency Communication:** It is highly recommended that all coaches maintain a working cell phone and facility keys on their person during all practices and games. Closest fixed land phone lines are located in the following areas of the Cardinal Gymnasium:

- 1) **Training Room:** located on the north end (rear) of Cardinal Gymnasium - adjacent to weight room and men's locker room.
- 2) **Upstairs Coaches Office:** staircase leading to office is located adjacent to weight room and entrance door to gymnasium floor.
- 3) **Girls Coaches Office:** located on the south east corner of Cardinal Gymnasium behind concession stand entrance door.
- 4) **Athletic Secretary's Office:** located in the foyer of Cardinal Gymnasium, door is just to the right of the concession stand service window.

**-Emergency Equipment:** Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is located inside the Cardinal Gymnasium on the south wall of the gymnasium court near the main gymnasium floor entrance.  
\*Additional AED and emergency equipment should be available in athletic trainer's golf cart.

**Role of First Responder:**

-First coach on the scene and makes contact with potential victim will:

- A) assess the situation and declare if the scene is safe.
- B) check athlete's responsiveness.
- C) If athlete is unresponsive, activate EMS by designating someone else to call 911 and/or athletic trainer, and have them retrieve the nearest AED.

**Role of Other Responders:**

- Athletic trainer will assume control over the scene upon arrival and designate duties for other responders. Duties will include: call EMS, retrieve the AED or other emergency equipment, direct EMS to victim, crowd control, and event documentation.
- If athletic trainer is not available. First coach will designate the above duties as applicable.

***CARDINAL GYMNASIUM: (VOLLEYBALL/BASKETBALL)***

-**Emergency Personnel:** Licensed athletic trainer should be available for scheduled practices and competition. School nurses may also be available for assistance on school days from 7:30am-4:00pm.  
\*Emergency numbers should be posted next to fixed land, phone lines.

-**Emergency Communication:** \*It is highly recommended that all coaches maintain a working cell phone and have facility keys on their person during all practices and games. Closest fixed land phone lines are located in the following areas of the Cardinal Gymnasium:

- 1) **Girls Coaches Office:** located on the south east corner of Cardinal Gymnasium behind concession stand entrance door.
- 2) **Athletic Secretary's Office:** located in the foyer of Cardinal Gymnasium, door is just to the right of the concession stand service window.
- 3) **Upstairs Coaches Office:** staircase leading to office is located adjacent to weight room and entrance door to gymnasium floor.
- 4) **Training Room:** located on the north end (rear) of Cardinal Gymnasium - adjacent to weight room and men's locker room.

-**Emergency Equipment:** Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is located inside the Cardinal Gymnasium on the south wall of the gymnasium court near the main gymnasium floor entrance. Additional AED and emergency equipment maybe available in athletic trainer's golf cart.

**-Role of First Responder:**

-First coach on the scene and makes contact with potential victim will:

- A) assess the situation and declare if the scene is safe.
- B) check athlete's responsiveness.
- C) If athlete is unresponsive, activate EMS as needed by designating someone else to call 911 and/or athletic trainer, and have them retrieve the nearest AED.

**-Role of Other Responders:**

- Athletic trainer will assume control over the scene upon arrival and designate duties for other responders. Duties will include: call EMS, retrieve the AED or other emergency equipment, direct EMS to victim, crowd control, and event documentation.
- If athletic trainer is not available. First coach will designate the above duties as applicable.

### ***MITCHELL GYMNASIUM: (VOLLEYBALL/BASKETBALL/CHEER)***

**-Emergency Personnel:** Licensed athletic trainer should be available for scheduled practices and competition. School nurses may also be available for assistance on school days from 7:30am-4:00pm. \*Emergency numbers should be posted next to fixed land, phone lines.

**-Emergency Communication:** \*It is highly recommended that all coaches maintain a working cell phone and have facility keys on their person during all practices and games. Closest fixed land phone lines are located in the following areas of the Mitchell Gymnasium:

- 1) **Elementary PE Office** – located inside the Mitchell gym court, office door on east wall.
- 2) **Elementary Computer Lab: #MB101**
- 3) **Additional Mitchell Gym Classrooms: #MB102, 103, & 104** – located in hallway.

**-Emergency Equipment:** Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is located inside the Mitchell Gymnasium on the east wall of the court near the main gymnasium floor entrance. Additional AED and emergency equipment maybe available in athletic trainer's golf cart.

#### **-Role of First Responder:**

-First coach on the scene and makes contact with potential victim will:

- A) assess the situation and declare if the scene is safe.
- B) check athlete's responsiveness.
- C) If athlete is unresponsive, activate EMS as needed by designating someone else to call 911 and/or athletic trainer, and have them retrieve the nearest AED.

#### **-Role of Other Responders:**

-Athletic trainer will assume control over the scene upon arrival and designate duties for other responders. Duties will include: call EMS, retrieve the AED or other emergency equipment, direct EMS to victim, crowd control, and event documentation.  
-If athletic trainer is not available. First coach will designate the above duties as applicable.

### ***CAMPUS CENTER: (CHEERLEADERS)***

**-Emergency Personnel:** Licensed athletic trainer should be available on campus M-F 7:00am-6:00pm. School nurses may also be available for assistance on school days from 7:30am-4:00pm. \*Emergency numbers should be posted next to fixed land, phone lines.

**-Emergency Communication:** \*It is highly recommended that all coaches maintain a working cell phone and have facility keys on their person during all practices and games. Closest fixed land phone lines are located in the following areas of the Campus Center.

1. Campus Center Classrooms: #CC101, entry door is near left side of stage.
2. Cafeteria – inside office.
3. Campus Center Classrooms: #CC102,103, and 104

**-Emergency Equipment:** Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is located inside the Campus Center in the east hallway near Art classrooms. Additional AED and emergency equipment maybe available in athletic trainer's golf cart.

#### **-Role of First Responder:**

-First coach on the scene and makes contact with potential victim will:

- A) assess the situation and declare if the scene is safe.

B) check athlete's responsiveness.

C) If athlete is unresponsive, activate EMS as needed by designating someone else to call 911 and/or athletic trainer, and have them retrieve the nearest AED.

**-Role of Other Responders:**

-Athletic trainer will assume control over the scene upon arrival and designate duties for other responders.

Duties will include: call EMS, retrieve the AED or other emergency equipment, direct EMS to victim, crowd control, and event documentation.

-If athletic trainer is not available. First coach will designate the above duties as applicable.

***HORTON - KECK FIELD: (BASEBALL)***

**-Emergency Personnel:** Licensed athletic trainer should be available for most scheduled practices and competition. School nurses may also be available for assistance on school days from 7:30am-4:00pm.

\*Emergency numbers should be posted next to fixed land, phone lines.

**-Emergency Communication:** \*It is highly recommended that all coaches maintain a working cell phone and have facility keys on their person during all practices and games. **NO FIXED LAND LINE AVAILABLE IN BASEBALL COACHES OFFICE.** Closest fixed land phone lines are located in the following areas of the Cardinal Gymnasium:

**1) Training Room:** located on the north end (rear) of Cardinal Gymnasium - adjacent to weight room and men's locker room.

**2) Upstairs Coaches Office:** staircase leading to office is located adjacent to weight room and entrance door to gymnasium floor.

**3) Girls Coaches Office:** located on the south east corner of Cardinal Gymnasium behind concession stand entrance door.

**4) Athletic Secretary's Office:** located in the foyer of Cardinal Gymnasium, door is just to the right of the concession stand service window.

**-Emergency Equipment:** Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is located inside the Cardinal Gymnasium on the south wall of the gymnasium court near the main gymnasium floor entrance. Additional AED and emergency equipment available in athletic trainer's ATV (gator).

**Role of First Responder:**

-First coach on the scene and makes contact with potential victim will:

A) assess the situation and declare if the scene is safe.

B) check athlete's responsiveness.

C) If athlete is unresponsive, activate EMS as needed by designating someone else to call 911 and/or athletic trainer, and have them retrieve the nearest AED.

**Role of Other Responders:**

-Athletic trainer will assume control over the scene upon arrival and designate duties for other responders.

Duties will include: call EMS, retrieve the AED or other emergency equipment, direct EMS to victim, crowd control, and event documentation.

-If athletic trainer is not available. First coach will designate the above duties as applicable.

## ***SOFTBALL FIELD:***

**-Emergency Personnel:** Licensed athletic trainer should be available for most scheduled practices and competition. School nurses may also be available for assistance on school days from 7:30am-4:00pm.  
\*Emergency numbers should be posted next to fixed land, phone lines.

**-Emergency Communication:** \*It is highly recommended that all coaches maintain a working cell phone and facility keys on their person during all practices and games. **NO FIXED LAND LINE AVAILABLE IN SOFTBALL COACHES OFFICE.** Fixed land phone lines are located in the following areas of the Mitchell Gymnasium:

- 1) **Mitchell Gym Classrooms: #MB104, 103, 102 & 101** – located in hallway.
- 2) **Elementary PE Office** – located inside the Mitchell gym court, office door on east wall.

**-Emergency Equipment:** Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is located inside the Cardinal Gymnasium on the south wall of the gymnasium court near the main gymnasium floor entrance. Additional AED available in athletic trainer's ATV (gator).

### **Role of First Responder:**

-First coach on the scene and makes contact with potential victim will:

- A) assess the situation and declare if the scene is safe.
- B) check athlete's responsiveness.
- C) If athlete is unresponsive, activate EMS as needed by designating someone else to call 911 and/or athletic trainer, and have them retrieve the nearest AED.

### **Role of Other Responders:**

- Athletic trainer will assume control over the scene upon arrival and designate duties for other responders. Duties will include: call EMS, retrieve the AED or other emergency equipment, direct EMS to victim, crowd control, and event documentation.
- If athletic trainer is not available. First coach will designate the above duties as applicable

## ***Non-Emergent Injuries or Illness***

Non-emergent injuries to athletes are considered “not life threatening” and have a common place in athletics. Injuries can certainly make an athletic trainer's or coach's job very difficult because of the uncertainty of the athlete's condition from day to day, week to week, or even month to month. Rarely can the full recovery from any injury be pre-determined. Coaches should understand that there is usually a huge disparity with the physical demands placed on the body when an athlete is participating in practice as opposed to a game. Factors such as an athlete's health, level of conditioning, nutrition intake, sleeping habits, or compliance with a treatment protocol can affect how quickly an athlete recovers from an injury.

Examples of non-emergent injuries or illness:

1. Ligament sprains.
2. Muscle strains.
3. Most contusions (monitor the athlete if contact occurred to the head, spine, abdomen, or groin).
4. Blisters or small lacerations.
5. Muscle spasms or cramps.
6. Post workout fatigue and soreness.

Protocol for handling non-emergent injuries in the absence of the athletic trainer:

**Step 1:** Have the athlete sit and rest, apply ice to the pain site as needed. If applicable, instruct the student athletic trainer to assist the injured athlete.

**Step 2:** If symptoms do not resolve within 15 minutes, contact the head athletic trainer.

\*Notes from physicians or parents should be given to the head athletic trainer regarding all injuries and illnesses. All injuries occurring during FWC athletics should be evaluated by the athletic trainer – NOT THE SCHOOL NURSE. Any athlete having to miss 2 consecutive days of practice due to injury may require a physician's evaluation to help determine the extent of an injury or illness.

### *Equipment provided for practices and games:*

Every effort will be made to provide drinking water and injury ice to all FWC practices and home games. Away games will be equipped with a least a medical kit per coaches discretion. To help avoid a potential hazard or liability, student athletes should not allowed to retrieve items from the medical kit without the permission from a coach or trainer. If available, a student athletic trainer may provide basic first aid needs to an athlete in the absence of the head athletic trainer. Please contact the head athletic trainer if there is any doubt regarding the seriousness of an injury.

### *MEDICATION POLICY*

**Coaches are not to give any OTC or prescription medications to FWC student athletes! FWC school policy requires that a parent or guardian must provide all medications to the school nurse and/or athletic trainer along with a written authorization form allowing for controlled distribution.**

EXCEPTION: Athletes using inhalers should provide visible access to their inhalers and notify the coach and athletic trainer of their condition.

### *HEAT, HUMIDITY, AND THE HEAT INDEX*

Hot weather is a part of life in Texas and heat waves pose threats to the health of students, teachers, coaches, and athletic trainers. It is important for all FWC staff members who supervise physical activity understand the risks to student athletes who exercise in hot and humid conditions. The risk of suffering heat related illness significantly increases at temperatures reach 90 degrees F with humidity as low as 20 percent.

Heat index is how the heat and humidity in the air combine to make us feel. Higher humidity plus higher temperatures often combine to make us feel a perceived temperature that is much higher than the actual air temperature. The combination of heat and humidity results in heat stress on student athletes by interfering with the body's ability to cool itself through sweating. Student athletes exposed to prolonged heat stress can develop heat cramps or heat exhaustion. If heat stress continues, the condition can progress dangerously to heat stroke or even death.

Relative humidity is measured using a sling psychrometer – a device that gives the athletic trainer a reading for a wet bulb temperature. The athletic trainer may take a sling psychrometer reading in the morning before middle school practices and in the afternoon before high school practices or use the FWC Weatherbug to get a reading. If a reading suggests a danger to athletes, the athletic trainer will notify the appropriate coaches and practices may be altered. Due to commitments with other school districts and

with officials, it is extremely difficult to cancel **games** without disrupting the working relationships with other schools and the official's association. Games will proceed as scheduled with extreme caution.

### % Relative Humidity

	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90
T	110	108	112	117	123	130										
e	105	102	105	108	113	117	122	130								
m	100	97	98	102	104	107	110	115	120	126	132					
p	95	91	93	95	96	98	100	104	106	109	113	119	124	130		
e	90	86	87	88	90	91	92	95	97	98	100	103	106	110	114	117
r	85	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	92	94	96	97	100
a																
t																
u	80	76	77	78	78	79	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88
r																
e																

### Legend

80-89 degrees	Fatigue is possible with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity.
90-104 degrees	Heat cramps and heat exhaustion are possible with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity.
105-129 degrees	Heat cramps and heat exhaustion are likely. Heat stroke is possible with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity.
130+ degrees	Heatstroke is highly likely with continued exposure.

### *Heat Illness Warning Signs*

- profuse sweating
- muscle cramps
- fainting
- fast/shallow breathing
- headache
- weak/rapid pulse
- nausea or vomiting
- paleness
- fatigue
- dizziness

### *Different Types of Heat Illnesses*

1. Heat syncope: Fainting or near fainting following dizziness, usually while running or after a sudden change in position. Caused by a drop in blood pressure as the brain is deprived of oxygenated blood.
2. Heat cramps: Tightening or spasms of active muscles, without the loss of consciousness. Caused by an electrolyte imbalance.
3. Heat exhaustion: Inability to continue exercise. Headache, dizziness, fatigue, pale or clammy skin, nausea and vomiting, which maybe accompanied by irrational behavior or belligerence and muscle cramping. Loss of consciousness may occur. Core temperature mildly elevated.

4. Heat stroke: MEDICAL EMERGENCY!! Extremely high body core temperature 104-108 degrees F, no perspiration, disorientation, muscle twitching, red-hot-dry skin, rapid pulse, convulsions, may become unconscious, may lead to a coma and possible death.

### *Dehydration and its effects on performance:*

1. Dehydration occurs when fluid loss exceeds fluid intake. Urine color is similar to apple juice.
2. Dehydration can affect an athlete's performance in less than 1 hour of exercise. It can begin sooner if the athlete begins the session dehydrated.
3. Dehydration of just 1-2% of body weight can negatively influence performance.
4. Dehydration of 3% body weight increases an athlete's risk of heat illness (heat cramps, heat exhaustion, or heat stroke).

### *Fluid guidelines to help prevent dehydration:*

- Thirst is NOT a good indicator for when to drink fluids.
- 2 hours before activity, drink 20oz of water or sports drink.
- 15 minutes before activity, drink 10oz of water or sports drink.
- Every 10-20 minutes during activity, drink 10oz of water or sports drink.
- Within 2 hours after activity, athletes need to drink 16oz of water or sports drink for every pound of body weight lost through sweat. Example: 3 lbs lost = drink 48oz of fluids before the next practice.
- Urine color should be similar to lemonade.

\*Coaches should encourage all athletes to weigh themselves before and after practices in order to properly gauge re-hydration needs.

## *AIR QUALITY AND THE OZONE*

FWC has no control over the ozone levels within our area nor deciding the level of ozone concerns, the National Weather Service determines ozone levels. Due to the numerous factors that determine whether an individual has any health risks to the ozone, FWC does not believe it is possible to establish a policy that provides ozone protection for every student athlete and coach who is prone to respiratory ailments.

It is the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) responsibility to determine if the air quality is unsafe for their child to participate outdoors. A parent or legal guardian will be required to provide a written statement to the head athletic trainer that their child should be excused from all outdoor activities for that day. Excessive absences (2 or more) from outdoor practices will require a physician's diagnosis and signed note containing details on the athlete's treatment plan regarding air quality.

## *DANGERS OF EXERCISING IN COLD WEATHER*

Cold weather exposure can be uncomfortable and impair an athlete's performance significantly. Frostbite is the freezing of superficial tissues, usually of the face, ears, finger, and toes. Hypothermia is a dangerous condition in which the body's core temperature drops below 95 degrees F. Limited exposure and proper clothing is the best defense against frostbite and/or hypothermia. 40% of the body's heat can be lost through the top of the head.



### Warning Signs for Hypothermia:

- shivering
- mental confusion
- difficulty speaking
- un-coordinated muscle activity
- numbness
- quick/shallow breathing
- pale/blue skin

### Recommended clothing for cold weather:

- First layer: Polyester material (UnderArmour) to help wick away moisture from the body.
- Second layer: Cotton material (sweatshirt and pants) to provide insulation for body heat.
- Third layer: Nylon material (windbreaker) to help reduce wind chill exposure to the body.
- Head: Wool cap (beanie) to trap body heat, should also cover the ears.
- Hands: Use full length gloves if possible.
- Feet: Wear at least 1 pair of socks, 2 pair is better to trap heat and control moisture, also reduces blisters caused by friction.

## *RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES DURING EXTREME TEMPERATURES*

*Guidelines for Hot Weather and Cold Weather apply to FWC practices only. Due to commitments with other schools and game officials, it can be extremely difficult to reschedule games. In order to maintain a good working relationship with these other schools and game officials, games may proceed as scheduled unless mutually agreed upon by both head coaches to reschedule their event to another date.*

### *Hot Weather*

1. Coaches should allow 10-14 days for athletes to get acclimated to the hot weather.
2. August Preseason Football “2-a-days”: Noon–6pm, shirts and shorts only are recommended.
3. After school practices will be monitored carefully, recommend limiting sun exposure to 2-3 hours.
4. Off-season sports should limit outdoor practices to 1 hour maximum.
5. Outside practices will be discouraged if temperature is > 109 deg F or heat index > 119 deg F.
6. Mandatory water breaks will be given to all sports every 15-20 minutes with at least 5 minutes of total rest for each break. Football players should attempt to have helmets off during breaks.
7. Open water policy should be available to all student athletes without penalty.

### *Cold Weather*

All athletes, except football, should wear a minimum of a full-length warm-up or sweats (tops and bottoms), athletic shoes with socks. FOOTBALL: athletes need to wear socks with their cleats and are encouraged to wear long sleeves. If a student athlete does not have the minimum required clothing available, he or she may not be able to participate in any outside activities and will be counted as an unexcused absence. That athlete may also be subject to disciplinary actions per his or her coach.

## *SEVERE STORMS*

Lightning is the most consistent and significant weather hazard that can affect high school athletics. The National Sever Storms Laboratory estimates more and 100 fatalities and 400-500 injuries requiring medical treatment occur from lightning strikes every year. While the probability of being struck by lightning is extremely low, the odds are significantly greater when a storm is in the area and the proper safety precautions are not followed. Prevention and education are the keys to lightning safety and should begin long before any athletic event or practice.

Prevention starts with the head athletic trainer obtaining weather reports before an activity begins, designating a weather watcher, and implementing an evacuation plan for event participants and spectators during a lightning storm.

Most people have been educated that lightning is a dangerous phenomenon, but the seeking of safe shelter and the specific time one should evacuate to a safe location is generally not known.

### **Safe Shelter locations:**

- Any **building** normally occupied or frequently used by people that has plumbing or electrical wiring that acts to electrically ground the structure. Avoid taking showers during a lightning storm.
- Any **vehicle** that is equipped with a hard metal roof and rolled up windows. It's not the rubber tires that make the vehicle safe. The hard metal roof dissipates the lightning strike around the vehicle. Do not touch the outside of your vehicle during a lightning storm.

**AVOID:** High places and open fields, isolated trees, gazeebos, rain or picnic shelters, baseball dugouts, communications towers, flagpoles, light poles, bleachers (metal or wood), metal fences, convertibles, golf carts, water (ocean, lakes, ponds, swimming pools, rivers, etc.).

\*Difference between a thunderstorm "Watch" and a "Warning":

**"Watch":** Conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop in an area.

**"Warning":** Severe weather has been reported in an area.

Lightning awareness should be increased with the first flash of lightning or the first clap of thunder, no matter how far away. This activity must be treated as a wakeup call to those monitoring the inclement weather. The important aspect is to monitor how far away the lightning is occurring, and how fast the storm is approaching, relative to the distance of a safe shelter. A typical thunderstorm can travel up to 30 miles per hour. Lightning can and does, strike as far as 10 miles away from the rain shaft. The existence of blue sky and the absence of rain are not protection from lightning; it does not have to be raining for lightning to strike.

To provide the best safety for student athletes who participate outdoors, Fort Worth Christian School has adopted the 30-30 Lightning Safety Rule. This rule incorporates the Flash-to-Bang method which is the most reliable, easiest, and most convenient way to estimate how far away lightning is occurring.

Fort Worth Christian School's lightning policy will also utilize a lightning detector as an aid to the Flash-to-Bang method by enhancing the observer's awareness during the initial stages of the storm. Even though technology and instrumentation have proven to be effective, they cannot guarantee the safety of our student athletes, coaches, officials, and spectators. Equipment malfunctions can cause confusion with the operator which would then cause an unfortunate delay in the evacuation process.

### *The 30 / 30 Lightning Safety Rule (Lightning monitor will also be used)*

The premise upon which the Flash to Bang method is based on is the fact that light travels faster than sound, with sound traveling approximately one mile every 5 seconds. Thunder always accompanies lightning, even though its audible range can be diminished due to background noise and its distance from the observer. Audible range of thunder is approximately 8-10 miles.

To estimate the distance between your location and a lightning flash, use the Flash-to-Bang method:

1. Count the number of seconds once lightning is sighted (flash), until the thunder is heard (bang).
2. Divide that number by 5 to obtain how far away (in miles) the lightning is occurring.

Example: If an individual counts 15 seconds between seeing the flash and hearing the bang, 15 divided by 5 equals 3. Therefore, the lightning flash is approximately 3 miles away.

### *Suspension of Play*

Play is suspended if the Flash-to-Bang method reaches 30 seconds. This indicates the lightning is at the 6-mile range. As a minimum, the National Severe Storms Laboratory strongly recommends that by the time the observer obtains a Flash to Bang count of 30 seconds, all individuals should have left the athletics site and reached a safe location.

### *Resumption of Play*

Resumption of play can continue only when lightning or thunder has not been detected for at least 30 minutes. Each subsequent occurrence of lightning or thunder detected within the 30 minutes, the 30-minute clock restarts. Experts believe 30 minutes allows for thunderstorms to be approximately 10-12 miles from the area. This helps minimize the chances of a nearby lightning strike.

### *First Aid*

In the unfortunate event that someone becomes struck by lightning, call 911 immediately. It is safe for an individual to perform CPR on a lightning victim because their body will no longer carry an electrical charge. Prompt, aggressive CPR increases the survival rate of victims of lightning strikes. If possible, move the victim to a safer location before starting CPR.

## ***CHAIN OF COMMAND FOR SEVERE WEATHER EVACUATIONS***

FWC Athletic Trainer will be the designated weather watcher for all home athletic events and will notify the game officials of FWC's inclement weather policy and evacuation procedures. In the rare instance that the athletic trainer is not in attendance, an FWC coach and/or game official will observe for inclement weather and begin the evacuation procedure as necessary. **Golf/Tennis:** Due to their off campus locations for practices and competitions, please seek shelter in their respected facilities.

1. FWC athletic trainer obtains a Flash-to-Bang count of 30 seconds or less.
2. Athletic trainer will first notify FWC head coach and game officials to suspend the contest due to inclement weather. FWC teams will then return to locker rooms, exception baseball and softball.

- Game officials will notify opposing head coach of the suspension of play and advise opposing team and their staff to evacuate the playing field.

**Football, Baseball, Soccer, Track, Cross Country:** All teams and officials will evacuate to Cardinal gymnasium.

**Softball:** Both teams, officials, and spectators will evacuate to Mitchell gymnasium.

- Athletic trainer will notify the FWC Athletic Director or head coach to begin evacuation procedures and then unlock designated gymnasium doors for athletic teams, officials, and spectators.
- The Athletic Director (AD) will notify stadium PA announcer to read the evacuation message, exception baseball and softball. The AD will make sure that everyone has evacuated the facility and will lock all gates behind him. If the AD is not present, an FWC head coach will initiate the evacuation process and assume the AD's responsibilities.

**Baseball and Softball:** FWC AD or head coach will loudly and calmly announce to all spectators to evacuate the facilities and seek shelter in the nearby gymnasium:  
(Softball - Mitchell gym) or (Baseball - Cardinal gym)

**Football, Soccer, Track, Cross Country:** The announcer will read the following over the PA system:

**“Attention please! Due to the potential threat of thunderstorms in the immediate area, play has been suspended for a minimum of 30 minutes. All event participants and spectators must evacuate the facilities immediately. Repeat, all event participants and spectators must evacuate the facilities immediately. Spectators may seek shelter in the nearby gymnasium. No one will be allowed back onto the facilities until it is deemed “safe” by game personnel. Thank you for your cooperation.”**

\*In the event that another type of emergency has occurred during an athletic event not related to severe weather, please refer to the Fort Worth Christian School's "Crisis Management Plan" maintained by the principles office.

## CONCLUSION

Fort Worth Christian School's sports medicine department would like to thank the following individuals and school districts for their contributions with creating this manual. Without the cooperation from these school districts, the quality of information of this manual would not be possible.

Phil Francis, Head Athletic Trainer - Dallas ISD

Herbert Stephens, Director of Athletics - Fort Worth ISD

Becky Spurlock, Assistant Director of Athletics - Keller ISD

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