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Louisville, Kentucky

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Kentucky anti-trans laws risky for schools

Possibility of a conflict with federal guidelines

Krista Johnson
Louisville Courier Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Kentucky school districts run the risk of violating federal laws in their attempt to abide by a recently passed anti-trans state law, according to guidance provided by the Kentucky Department of Education.

The guidance released Monday outlines the different aspects of Senate Bill 150 that immediately went into effect at the end of March. Schools can no longer give lessons about sexually transmitted diseases and human sexuality before the sixth grade or lessons "studying or exploring" sexual orientation or gender identity. Teachers also can refuse to use the pronouns a student identifies with, among other requirements.

See **TRANS LAWS**, Page 14A

Biden's 2024 bid: 'Let's finish this job'

Zeke Miller
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON – President Joe Biden on Tuesday formally announced that he is running for reelection in 2024, asking voters to give him more time to "finish this job" and extend the run of America's oldest president for another four years.

Biden, who would be 86 at the end of a second term, is betting his first-term legislative achievements and more than 50 years of experience in Washington will count for more than concerns over his age. He faces a smooth path to winning his party's nomination, with no serious Democratic rivals. But he's still set for a hard-fought struggle to retain the

See **BIDEN**, Page 16A

SAFER SIDELINES

AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT SUDDEN DEATH IN YOUTH SPORTS PART FOUR

Data-driven change is saving young lives

Georgia followed facts in battling heat-related fatalities



Stephanie Kuzydym
Louisville Courier Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

The list of names slowly grew until Georgia led the nation in a terrible category: heat-related deaths of high school football players.

The state lost six players to heat in 29 years.

They lost two athletes on a single day – Aug. 2, 2011. Forrest Jones collapsed during a voluntary workout. Donteria "DJ" Searcy was found unresponsive following a morning practice at the team's football camp in northern Florida.

At the time, Georgia had little regulation of preseason football practice.

"It was not uncommon for a high school to go to some remote location for



Cooper

'camp' and have the athletes participate in as many as six practice sessions in one day," said Bud Cooper, a University of Georgia professor who studies heat's impact on the body.

"It was all under the auspices to, 'get my players whipped into shape and make them better athletes.'"

While at least 25 other states had heat-related deaths of football players over the same 29-year period, 1980-2009, Georgia admitted it had a problem and sought to find a solution.

Through a series of steps, in 2012 it became the first – and still to this day, only – state to adopt a data-driven pol-

See **SAFER SIDELINES**, Page 13A

New Prairie High School educator Tonya Aerts, second from right, helps instruct track team members Camden Ziglar, left, Miguel Mendez, center, and Isaiah King on March 2 during a "sudden cardiac arrest" drill on the track. GREG SWIERCZ/SOUTH BEND TRIBUNE

Inside

Safer Sidelines: 10 safety questions to ask if you're a parent of a youth athlete. **3A**



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Safer Sidelines

Continued from Page 1A

icy to protect high school football players from heat-related illness and death.

Heat is only one of the four main reasons why high school athletes die. The others are tied to: heart (sudden cardiac arrest), head (trauma) and hemoglobin (blood).

The Georgia High School Association, which governs athletics, asked Cooper in 2009 to study the problem. He agreed to do a three-year study to collect information and give recommendations based on the data he gathered. Searcy and Jones' death happened just before the study ended in the fall of 2011.

Based on the data, Cooper recommended they modify or remove equipment, increase hydration and rest breaks, shorten practices based on the "wet bulb globe temperature" and follow an acclimatization period to allow athletes' bodies time to adjust to the heat.

The association accepted every recommendation and hasn't had a heat-related death of a football player since putting the program in place in 2012.

Georgia solved a major piece of the health-and-safety puzzle for high school athletes, even adding fines for not following the policy.

But the 2019 heat-related death of a girls' high school basketball player, and subsequent record-setting lawsuit, demonstrates that the policy works only if it's followed.

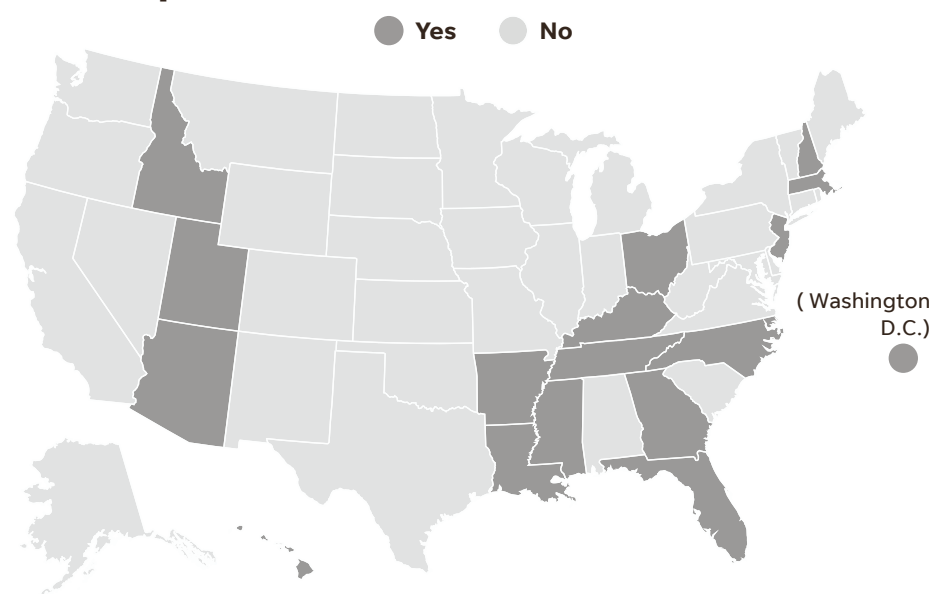
Imani Bell, 16, suffered a heart attack during an outdoor basketball workout in Georgia's August heat, state authorities found. The state policy says outdoor workouts shouldn't happen if the wet bulb globe temperature is over 92 degrees, though it's unclear whether it was taken that day.

The Georgia Bureau of Investigation reported the heat index that day as between 101 and 106 degrees.

"They did not follow the recommendations," Cooper said of Bell's coaches. "When the recommendations are followed, we are batting a thousand."

Nationally, many states are grappling with how to prevent youth athlete deaths, particularly in the wake of the high-profile save of Buffalo Bills safety Damar Hamlin, who went into cardiac arrest during a Monday Night Football game on Jan. 2.

States that require cold-water immersion tubs for practice

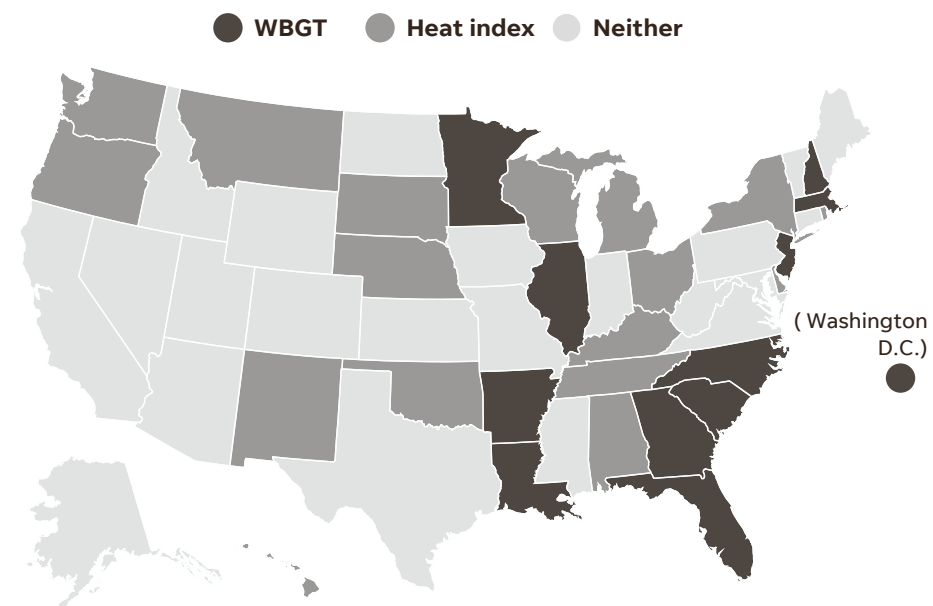


Based on state laws and/or state athletic association requirements

SOURCE Korey Stringer Institute
JENNIFER BORRESEN/USA TODAY

WBGT or heat index

What standards do states use in their heat policies for high school sports?



Based on state laws and/or state athletic association requirements

SOURCE Korey Stringer Institute
JENNIFER BORRESEN/USA TODAY

According to experts, here are the main steps to take to make Hamlin's outcome more common when the worst happens in high school and youth sports:

Wet bulb globe temperature

Georgia and 12 other states have moved to wet bulb globe temperature monitor when deciding whether to modify practices.

Kentucky remains one of 17 states to base its heat policy on the more commonly known "heat index," which is a combination of air temperature and humidity.

The remaining states either have a recommendation regarding environmental monitoring or have no language at all, according to the Korey Stringer Institute, which researches sudden death in athletes.

Cooper said the heat index is a flawed metric when used in this situation.

"The heat index is based on a formula that looks at an individual who is 5-foot-7, weighs 150 pounds, wearing short sleeves and long pants, walking 3 miles an hour in the shade," Cooper said. "That is not a true representation of what we see in athletics."

Wet bulb globe temperature combines air temperature, humidity and radiant heat from the playing field in its measurement.

"When you look at the WBGT calculation, radiant heat and humidity are more heavily weighted than air temperature," Cooper said.

In 2002, the National Athletic Trainers Association adopted WBGT as its standard for heat policies.

The measurement is also endorsed by the NCAA, the NFL, the U.S. Department of Defense, the American College of Sports Medicine and the American Pediatrics Association.

Athletic trainers

An athletic trainer is considered the front line of defense in sports emergency response.

Athletic trainers are educated and trained on everything from injury prevention and rehabilitation to spine boarding, CPR and defibrillator use.

"Coaches shouldn't have to be making those decisions on providing that

Continued on next page

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type of care,” said Kathy Dieringer, NATA president. “That’s what we’re here for.”

Nationally, just 32% of high schools have a full-time athletic trainer. Fifty-seven percent of those athletic trainers are funded by health care or university systems, while 37% are funded by a school.

The NATA has a resource called AT Your Own Risk that helps provide more information about what athletic trainers do and how to get one at your school.

Youth athletic tournaments also happen across the country without athletic trainers.

Doug Casa, the CEO of the Korey Stringer Institute, has two daughters who participate in select soccer tournaments.

“If you just had \$1 per kid competing at the tournament, you could pay an athletic trainer \$100 an hour to be there for the day...,” Casa said. “The cost burden would be literally miniscule when you spread it out over all the teams.”

Venue-specific emergency action plans

Schools have response plans for emergencies that might happen during the school day, but after the school bell rings, it can often be another story.

Thirty-seven states, including Kentucky, require **venue-specific emergency action plans** for after-school sports. Venue-specific means the plans are supposed to be tailored for different venues – for instance, the baseball field vs. the track.

Other than the time to draft them, the policies don’t cost anything. They describe exactly what to do in case of an emergency during an athletic event.

Schools without an athletic trainer or a part-time one may need the athletic director to create emergency plans for every venue.

“There are templates – really good templates,” Casa said. “It just requires you to disperse it, rehearse it and discuss it occasionally with your staff.”

The Korey Stringer Institute has a sample emergency action plan on its website that shows venue-specific EAPs and corresponding maps.

KSI also works with state athletic associations and schools to review their policies and plans.

“When we work with them, (schools) think they have EAP policies ... because the school does have an emergency action plan, but it’s not specific to sports,” Casa said. “These policies need to be now shaped around the sports environment and not just the school environment.”

CPR training

Are you CPR certified? It’s OK if you’re not; you can still save a life.

“When you see a collapse, 90% of people that don’t have CPR certification will not assist somebody because they’re afraid they’ll do it wrong,” Matt Mangine Sr. said. “That’s a fallacy... You don’t need a certification to render life support.”

But there are certain individuals who should be certified. Thirty-three states require CPR, AED and first-aid certification for high school coaches. This includes Kentucky, though enforcement of that certification has been spotty.

Mangine and his wife, Kim, set up a foundation in honor of their son, Matthew Mangine Jr., who died after he collapsed during a Northern Kentucky soccer practice in June 2020. Coaches did not administer CPR.

The Matthew Mangine Jr. “One Shot” Foundation does Take 10 Training: a 10-minute training that teaches you how to deliver chest compressions and how to deliver a shock with an automated external defibrillator or AED.

Following Hamlin’s collapse, the American Heart Association also launched the #3forHeart CPR Challenge, which includes a 60-second video on how to provide CPR.

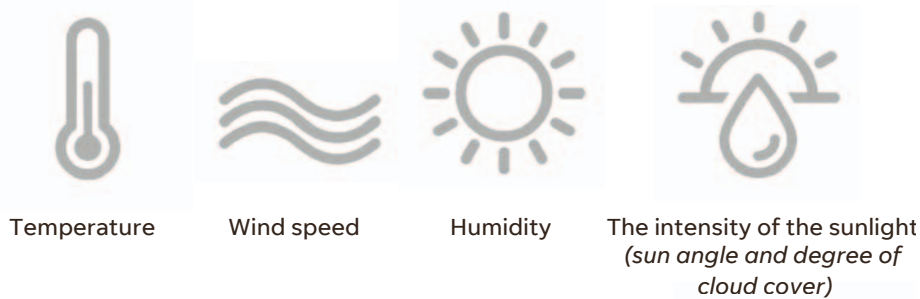


Bud Cooper, a professor at the University of Georgia who researches extreme environmental conditions and its impact on exertional heat illness risk in athletes, demonstrates a wet globe temperature monitor.
PROVIDED BY UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

What is WBGT?

Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) is a way to measure the heat stress on a body in direct sunlight and takes into account many different elements.

WBGT takes into account

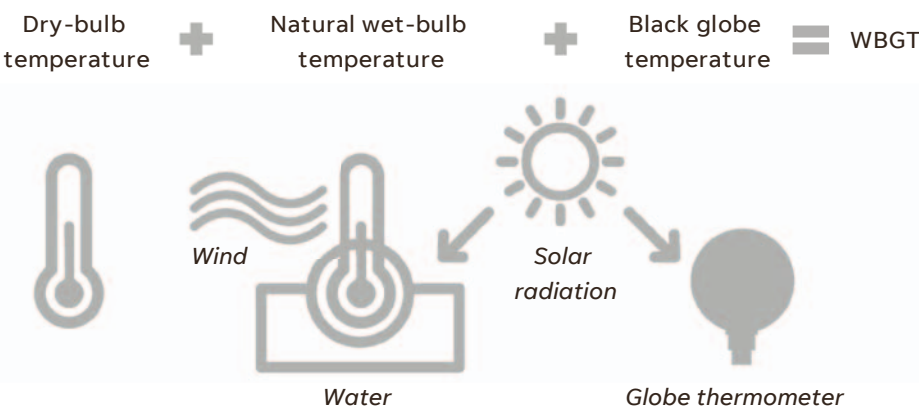


Heat index is calculated in the shade and only takes into account temperature and humidity.

Wet bulb thermometer

Like the heat index, the WBGT takes into account the temperature and humidity of the air. It also considers the effects of solar radiation (heat stress is greater in the sun) and the wind speed (heat stress is much greater when the winds are not blowing).

WBGT has three components that incorporate many factors into one measure of risk.



SOURCE Convergence of Climate-Health Vulnerabilities
JENNIFER BORRESEN/USA TODAY

Sideline AEDs

At least 20 states require AEDs in schools. Others recommend them, and still more are reviewing proposed legislation in the wake of Hamlin’s collapse.

But often, like in Kentucky, those AEDs aren’t for sidelines.

“When we’re working with a superintendent, they think they have AEDs be-

cause there’s one next to the principal’s office or in the nurse’s office, but that doesn’t help us at all during the sports venues when all of the doors are locked,” Casa said.

That’s where an emergency response plan for sudden cardiac arrest can come into play. This plan is often part of a venue-specific EAP, that says exactly how to respond when the injury is sudden

Are you concerned about the safety of your child’s sidelines?

The Courier Journal, in partnership with Spalding University, is holding a special event that will include sports safety resources and solutions. Panelists will include KHSAA commissioner Julian Tackett, Matthew Mangine Sr., co-founder of the Matthew Mangine Jr. “One Shot” Foundation, Dr. Alma Mattocks, Program Director for the Spalding University Master of Science in Athletic Training Program, and Rep. Kim Moser, who worked on recent Kentucky sports safety legislation. The free event will be held from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 17, at Spalding University College Center Ballroom, 812 S. 2nd S. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Free parking is available in the lot next door. Registration is required: <https://usatn.enmotive.com/events/safer-sidelines-2023>

Safer Sidelines

- **Sunday:** Protections for high school athletes are being ignored. Kids are dying as a result
- **Monday:** While lawmakers haggled over cost of safety, young athletes died across US
- **Tuesday:** Most Kentucky schools don’t follow emergency planning law, leaving athletes at risk
- **Today:** Solutions for youth sports safety: How one state used data to make a difference

cardiac related.

Tonya Aerts, a teacher in New Prairie, Indiana, helped create the plan for her school after baseball player Mark Mayfield collapsed and died of sudden cardiac arrest in 2017. His death came four years after and 11 miles from where La Porte, Indiana, football player Jake West died of an undetected heart condition.

Aerts leads seasonal sudden cardiac arrest drills to practice the plan.

“We drill for all the other emergency situations to keep our students and staff members safe in a serious situation,” she said. “Sudden cardiac arrest is something we can respond to, and we should respond to it. ...That level of preparedness can save a life.”

Cold tubs

The key to an overheating athlete is to cool them as quickly as possible, and the best way to do that is with cold water immersion.

That means having a cold tub (a plastic container big enough to submerge an athlete’s core in the water) and access to ice and water – such as from a nearby concession stand.

Cold tubs are very common at the college level, but not nearly as much on high-school sidelines. In Georgia, based on Cooper’s data, a cold tub is required to be on sidelines when the WBGT is higher than 86 degrees.

The University of Cincinnati sets up 11 cold tubs during warm-weather practices. UC athletic trainer Aaron Himmeler said every year for the last decade, he has placed four to five players in a cold tub who could have died had they “not gotten immediate care.”

The gold standard of care for transferring an athlete once they have suffered an exertional heat stroke is to cool first and transport second.

“I call it the magic elixir,” Casa said. “That cold water immersion takes something that could kill you in a few hours or a couple of days and basically causes you to be fine within a day or two, all just from getting your temperature down rapidly.”

This project was produced in partnership with the USC Annenberg Center for Health Journalism’s 2022 Data Fellowship.

Reach Stephanie Kuzydym at skuzydym@courier-journal.com. Follow her for updates to Safer Sidelines on Twitter at [@stephkuzy](https://twitter.com/@stephkuzy).

Trans laws

Continued from Page 1A

In multiple areas of the guidance, the department points out that some sections of the new law contradict federal laws. In reference to one section, the guidance says it “creates some confusion regarding student privacy,” and advises districts “of their obligations under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).”

“To the extent there is any conflict between SB 150 and FERPA, districts should comply with FERPA,” the guid-

ance continues.

The law requires districts to create bathroom policies that forbid trans and nonbinary students from using the school facilities they identify with, which could be interpreted as discrimination that is impermissible under Title IX regulations, the guidance states. It also says not using a students’ preferred pronouns could qualify as impermissible discrimination.

“Districts should consult with board counsel for legal advice regarding usage of requested pronouns and potential liability concerns,” it states.

Kentucky schools were previously required to teach fifth grade students

about the male and female reproductive body parts and about the social and emotional changes that occur during puberty. The guidance states schools can no longer give these lessons until sixth grade, due to the law.

Additionally, schools cannot provide lessons that have the goal or purpose of having “students studying or exploring gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation.”

It is unclear which, if any, courses districts will need to cut or alter due to this requirement. Jefferson County Public Schools spokesman Mark Hebert couldn’t say what changes to coursework are needed to comply with the law.

“We are reviewing the guidance from KDE to ensure we follow the law and better understand its potential impact on our teachers and students,” Hebert wrote to The Courier Journal.

Given the law appears to run afoul of federal laws, it could face legal action. The ACLU of Kentucky has said on multiple occasions it is considering challenging the measure.

“To all the trans youth who may be affected by this legislation: we stand by you, and we will not stop fighting. You are cherished. You are loved. You belong,” the ACLU of Kentucky said after the law passed in March. “To the commonwealth: we will see you in court.”