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June 8, 2023

Dear Matheny School Community:

The Canadian wildfires continue to impact the air quality across the state. The Matheny School has been in contact with the local and state officials to closely monitor the evolving situation. Based upon the air quality forecast as shared with the Airnow service, a partner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the air quality is forecasted to improve today (Thursday, June 8<sup>th</sup>) as compared to the conditions experienced yesterday. There is, however, an increase forecasted in the afternoon, hence, the decision to have an early dismissal at 1:30 pm.

We shall continue to monitor the air quality index in our area and the building conditions to determine if any further modifications to the school schedule are necessitated this week. Please understand that the safety and health of all our students, staff, and other stakeholders is our primary concern and it shall continue to drive our decision making process in the best interest of our entire school community.

Best Regards,

Sean Murphy  
Vice President of Education and Matheny School Principal

# Actions to protect health on poor air quality days

## Poor air quality can result from presence of particulate matter due to wildfires



- Sensitive populations (which includes the elderly, infants and young children, people with lung diseases such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or chronic bronchitis) should remain indoors.
  - Individuals with asthma: Poor air quality may trigger asthma attacks.
  - Individuals with respiratory diseases: Follow physician's recommendations and respiratory management plan.
- People in general should avoid strenuous activities and limit the amount of time they are active outdoors.
- For people who work outdoors or need to be outside:
  - Take more breaks indoors if possible
  - Shorten the length and intensity of any physical activity
- The most effective way to prevent breathing harmful particles from wildfire smoke is to stay indoors with windows and doors closed.
- If an air conditioner is available, run it while keeping the fresh-air intake closed and the filter clean to prevent outdoor smoke from getting inside.
- When outdoor air quality is poor, do not use candles and fireplaces which could add to indoor air pollution. Do not vacuum, because vacuuming stirs up particles already inside your home. Do not smoke tobacco or other products, because smoking puts even more pollution into the air.
- Do not rely on dust masks for protection. Paper “comfort” or “dust” masks commonly found at hardware stores trap large particles, such as sawdust. These masks will not protect your lungs from smoke. People who must be outside can have some protection from an N95 mask if worn properly.