

STUDENTS

Policy 2216

Lightning Safety

The McCall-Donnelly School District (MDSD) prioritizes the safety of students, staff, and community members by implementing clear procedures for lightning safety. This policy applies to all outdoor school activities, including athletic events, practices, recess, field trips, extracurricular programs, and all district-sponsored events held at MDSD facilities or off-site locations.

All outdoor activities must be suspended immediately when lightning is detected within a 10-mile radius of the event location, or when thunder is heard, a cloud to ground lightning bolt is seen, or the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike the location of the activity. Activities may only resume once 30 minutes have passed since the last detected lightning strike within that area. District administration or Athletic Director is responsible for ensuring that each school and athletic site has access to a reliable weather monitoring system. They must also provide annual training to coaches, teachers, staff, and event supervisors on lightning safety procedures. Site administrators and event supervisors are required to monitor weather conditions before and during activities, make timely suspension and evacuation announcements, ensure all participants reach safe shelter, and track the 30-minute waiting period before resuming activities.

Teachers, staff, coaches, and volunteers must follow all suspension and evacuation directives immediately, ensuring students remain in designated shelters until it is deemed safe to continue. Lightning activity will be monitored through tools such as National Weather Service alerts, mobile apps, and NOAA emergency alerts. When lightning is detected within 10 miles, the “30-Minute Rule” goes into effect.

Upon detection of lightning all outdoor activities must stop immediately. The site supervisor, teacher, staff, or coach will issue a suspension announcement through the PA system or other communication channels. Everyone present must move to a safe shelter, such as fully enclosed buildings with wiring and plumbing (school buildings, gyms) or vehicles with metal roofs (school buses, cars). Unsafe areas include open fields, metal bleachers, dugouts, under trees, and areas near water. Activities remain suspended for 30 minutes following the last lightning strike within 10 miles, with each new strike resetting the 30-minute clock.

Once 30 minutes have elapsed since the last strike, the site supervisor, teacher, staff, or coach may authorize the resumption of activities, and staff will be notified through designated communication channels such as PA announcements. The Athletic Director must designate a site administrator at athletic events to monitor weather data, communicate suspension and resumption notices, and coordinate with coaches, officials,

and transportation in case of delays or cancellations.

All coaches, teachers, staff, and outdoor supervisors are required to receive annual training on lightning safety procedures and monitoring tools, while students will receive age-appropriate education on weather safety awareness.

Policy History

Adopted: December 2025