

**Policy**

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**LIGHTNING POLICY**

The board of education wishes to maintain a safe environment for all of our students, staff, and visitors. Therefore, all school employees who are supervising outdoor activities will adhere to the following procedures when thunderstorms are in the area.

**Evacuation Criteria**

The sounding of the alarm or horn signifies that thunder or lightning is in the vicinity. Immediate action must be taken. For a supervised student activity, the appropriate action to be taken is defined in the emergency procedures set forth by the District. Any spectators at these activities *must* seek the nearest available safe structure or shelter/cars. In addition to the items below, the staff member in charge has the discretion to remove students from an outside activity if they perceive any danger from inclement weather including but not limited to the threat of lightning.

**A. Siren and Flashing Light**

Once the siren goes off, the initial alarm or horn will remain activated for a period of approximately eighteen (18) seconds followed by the activation of a strobe light. The strobe light will stay on for about 30 minutes past the last lightning detection.

Students/staff/spectators on the field *must* evacuate to the nearest safe structure.

Resumption of the outdoor class/game will be made by the official, coach and/or teacher in charge of the activity *after the strobe light ceases to flash. The strobe light flashes for 30 minutes from the last lightning detection*

**B. Activity Stoppage**

Practice or school activity: The decision regarding stoppage of an outdoor practice or activity will be made by the staff member in charge of the activity. On-site administrators have the right to stop the event using the criteria listed above.

**C. Interscholastic Event or Competition**

The decision regarding stoppage of play of an official game or contest is the domain of the on-site officials *using the criteria listed above*. This authority is unchallengeable and was set forth by the New Jersey Interscholastic Athletic Association. All coaches, officials, and administrators need to abide by this to ensure the safety of all athletes, coaches, games management, spectators, and all others who may be present.

**\*\*It is important to note that blue skies and no rain are not protection from lightning. Lightning can strike from a distance as far as 10 miles.\*\***

**D. Shelter**

1. Safe areas *may* include:

- a. Enclosed buildings;
- b. Fully enclosed metal vehicles with a hard metal roof and windows up;
- c. Low ground areas as a last resort (ditches, bottom of hill) – assume a crouched position – minimize your body area – do not lie flat.

LIGHTENING POLICY (continued)

2. Unsafe areas include:
  - a. Open fields;
  - b. Golf carts/gators;
  - c. Metal bleachers (on or under);
  - d. Fences;
  - e. Umbrellas, flag poles, light poles;
  - f. Tall trees;
  - g. Pools of standing water.

Adopted: January 14, 2014

Key Words: Pupil Safety, Safety, Student Safety

Legal References: N.J.S.A. 52:27D-123.9 et seq. Definitions relative to playground safety  
 N.J.A.C. 5:23-11 to 11.4 Playground Safety Subcode  
 N.J.A.C. 6A:16-1.1 et seq. Programs to Support Student Development  
 N.J.A.C. 6A:19-6.1 et seq. Safety and Health Standards  
 N.J.A.C. 6A:19-6.5  
 N.J.A.C. 6A:26-12.1 et seq. Operation and Maintenance of Facilities  
 N.J.A.C. 6A:27-11.1 et seq. Safety

Possible

Cross References: \*1410 Local units  
 \*3000/3010 Concepts and roles in business and noninstructional operations  
 \*3516 Safety  
 \*3541.33 Transportation safety  
 \*4112.4/4212.4 Employee health  
 \*4131/4131.1 Staff development; inservice education/visitations/conferences  
 \*4231/4231.1 Staff development; inservice education/visitations/conferences  
 \*5124 Reporting to parents/guardians  
 \*5141.1 Accidents  
 \*5141.2 Illness  
 \*5141.21 Administering medication  
 \*5142 Student safety  
 \*6114 Emergencies and disaster preparedness

References: National Athletic Trainers' Association: [www.nata.org](http://www.nata.org)  
 "Position Statement: Lightning Safety for Athletics and Recreation" Walsh, K; Bennett, B; Cooper, **MA; Holle,** R; Kithil, R; Lopez, R; Journal of NATA, 2000/Dec Vol 35, No. 4  
 New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) Handbook (2008-2009) – Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules & Regulations

Resources:

National Weather Service: [www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov](http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov)

National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS): [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org) NHFS Sports Medicine Handbook

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA): [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)