



Keeping Students and Staff Safe from Severe Weather

Lawrence Academy, Groton, Massachusetts

"I need weather information to be accurate and timely."

Frank Mastrangelo,
director of campus safety and security

Founded in 1793, Lawrence Academy is one of the oldest independent schools in the United States. This private college preparatory school focuses on grades 9-12 and serves about 400 residential and day students. Its 140-acre campus, located 45 minutes outside of Boston, features 11 academic and athletic buildings, nine dormitories, eight playing fields, 10 tennis courts, and a cross-country course.

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Frank Mastrangelo, director of campus safety and security

What they were up against.

Lightning is a big concern for the school. When severe weather rolled through the area, Frank Mastrangelo, Lawrence Academy's director of campus safety and security, didn't want to rely on potentially inaccurate apps to make important calls, like whether or not to suspend play and pull teams from the fields. This was especially important to him as he previously served in leadership roles in the academy's athletic program.

The academy tried a few lightning detection devices, including ones mounted on one of the facility's roofs, but they didn't find the products reliable. For Mastrangelo, accurate and timely information was paramount; they needed something that would accurately predict their local weather conditions with enough lead time to allow proactive measures.

Winter weather conditions were also a concern, and events like nor'easters and blizzards are common seasonal threats across New England. Knowing when to call maintenance crews to sand, salt, and plow — or when to delay or cancel classes — is essential to ensuring safety and accessibility for day students, residential students, and staff.

What we did to help.

Lawrence Academy selected the Platinum sports edition of [WeatherSentry®](#) from DTN, plus its [meteorological consulting services](#). Together, these solutions provide reliable information to inform confident, timely decisions in all kinds of weather.

In particular, the consultations with the company's skilled meteorologists have proven to be the most helpful ahead of storms. The academy's staff can get many specifics, such as expected road temperatures, anticipated

snowfall amounts, clearer timeframes for precipitation, and more. Mastrangelo said that the speed of the meteorologists' replies and their level of accuracy really set DTN apart from its competitors.

Mastrangelo long feared having someone struck by lightning, but the reliable, commercial-grade WeatherSentry and its patented alerts have alleviated his fear. The solution instantly notifies him of approaching risks, allowing time for appropriate action — and as needed, consultation with a DTN meteorologist for more detailed guidance, which provides reassurance from a liability standpoint.

What the impact was

For Mastrangelo and his staff, having accurate, advanced insights into expected weather conditions is key; it allows for better planning and more proactive responses. The lightning tracking feature and alerting tools are especially valuable for sporting events and team practices, supporting appropriate decisions around delays and cancellations. Not only does this improve safety, but it also reduces losses by allowing enough time to cancel services like busses and police details, which helps the academy avoid the costs of those unused services.

The level of accuracy also allows Mastrangelo to send alerts to external vendors, like maintenance crews and others working around campus, with enough notice for those individuals to seek shelter from potential lightning strikes. This helps ensure Lawrence Academy remains safe for students, staff, and vendors.

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