

PUBLIC USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

The Board of Education encourages community groups and outside educational and youth-serving organizations to use school facilities for worthwhile purposes when such uses will not interfere with the school program, constitute an extreme public nuisance, or represent excessive use by a single organization. School facilities to which this policy refers includes all school property, athletic facilities, buildings and lawns. All uses of school buildings and grounds shall be consistent with Section 414 of the Education Law. When scheduling and approving the use of school facilities, consideration will be given to the impact of such events on the activities of other community organizations.

Such use may take place during school hours only if, in the opinion of the Board of Education, the use will not be disruptive of normal school operations. Both during and after school hours, all such use should pertain to the general welfare of the school and/or community, in compliance with the Education Law. Any such use, however, shall not be deemed an endorsement of the activity or purpose for which the facilities are used.

Eligible Organizations

A community group shall be defined as non-profit, non-sectarian organization which draws a large majority of its membership from the school district and has its local headquarters within the district. All other groups shall be considered 'outside organizations.'

Emergency Use of Facilities

In case of an emergency, all buildings will be available to the American Red Cross.

Liability Insurance

Any group using school facilities is required to present evidence of liability insurance, with the district named as an additional insured, in an amount deemed adequate by the Superintendent or Director of Finance & Support Services.

Uses Encouraged for District Residents

In accordance with state Education Law, the following uses of school buildings and grounds are acceptable:

1. for instruction in any "branch of education, learning or the arts;"
2. for "social, civic and recreational meetings and entertainments, and other uses pertaining to the welfare of the community;"
3. as polling places for holding primaries and elections and for the registration of voters;
4. for "civic forums and community centers;"
5. for graduation exercises held by not-for-profit elementary and secondary schools, provided that no religious service is performed; and
6. to provide child care services during non-school hours, provided that the cost of such care shall not be a school district charge but shall be paid by the person responsible for the support of such child; the local social services district as authorized by law; or any other public or private voluntary source.

Prohibited Uses of School Buildings and Property

State Education Law and the New York State Constitution specifically prohibit the following uses of school buildings and property:

1. for any purpose that will in any way interfere with the use of school buildings, grounds, or other school property by the school;
2. for any activity in which money is risked by participants (i.e., person or profit-making organization) in the hope of gaining financial or material return;
3. for holding a social, civic or recreational meeting or other use pertaining to the welfare of the community, unless such meeting, entertainment or use shall be non-exclusive and open to the general public;
4. for a meeting, entertainment, or occasion where admission fees are charged, unless the proceeds thereof are to be expended for an educational or charitable purpose approved by the Board; and/or
5. for a meeting, entertainment or occasion where admission fees are charged, if such meeting, entertainment or occasion is under the exclusive control and the proceeds are to be applied for the benefit of a society, association, or organization of a religious sect or denomination, or of a fraternal, secret or exclusive society or organization, other than any organization of veterans or of volunteer firemen or volunteer ambulance services.

Limitations on the Use of School Grounds

Activities which are potentially detrimental to the facilities or dangerous to other uses, are prohibited, including, but not limited to the following:

1. use of rollerblades or skateboards is not allowed anywhere on school property before, during or after regular school hours, including periods when school is not in session.
2. playing or practicing golf is not allowed, except in organized village recreation or physical education classes under an instructor's supervision;
3. the driving of any motorized vehicle on school lawns and playgrounds is prohibited except those required for maintenance of facilities and delivery. Specifically prohibited shall be: motorcycles, mini-bikes, all-terrain vehicles, and automobiles.
4. snowmobile use will be allowed when sanctioned by a recognized snowmobile club and after providing the District with the necessary certificates of insurance.

The curfew times which are in effect for village parks and playgrounds will apply also to school grounds.

Use of Equipment Outside the Building

School equipment may be loaned to responsible community groups for a worthy educational, civic or charitable purpose under the following conditions:

1. the group borrowing any equipment agrees to accept responsibility for repairing)S or replacing any equipment damaged or lost while in its possession;
2. the equipment is not unusually expensive or subject to easy damage;
3. the equipment is in good condition; and
4. the group will provide a competent operator for any equipment loaned.

The use of school buses will be allowed only for municipal recreation commissions. A fee will be assessed and procedures adhered to according to the "Schedule of Fees."

Use of school equipment by individuals, school employees, or profit-making organizations for private gain or personal use is expressly forbidden.

Use of School Facilities by School Personnel

Any use of school facilities for school-related activities will be scheduled through the Principal. Any other use outside the regular school week will be scheduled through the Superintendent of Schools.

Recognized collective bargaining units may use school facilities to conduct meetings as specified in the collective bargaining agreement(s).

No students are allowed in a school building unless appropriate school personnel is on duty. Scheduling in advance will ensure that the space requested is available and not given to outside groups.

Schedule of Fees

The schedule of fees for the use of various school facilities and equipment will be updated annually at the first Board meeting in July and distributed along with the "Building Request Forms". The Board reserves the right to change the "Schedule of Fees" when circumstances warrant.

Exceptions - Little League Football

Each team will be allowed once per year to use the lights without charge. This exception is subject to change based upon the District's cost for lighting the field.

Consequences of Policy Violations

Any violation of this policy may include a verbal warning, denial of access to school facilities or equipment or a charge of trespass with appropriate legal and civil law enforcement.

Cross-ref: 1511, Advertising in the Schools

8416-R, Special Uses of School Buses Regulation

Ref: Education Law.414

BOE Approved 12-3-03

First Reading – March 2, 2016

Second Reading – March 16, 2016

Approved – April 6, 2016