

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES  
(Equal Access)

The Board recognizes that the public schools are owned and operated by and for the citizenry. It further believes that the first priority for use of such facilities is to provide for the education of the students in this District. Once arrangements have been made to provide for this obligation, it is the Board's belief that the physical facilities of the District should be utilized as much as practicable by community organizations for the encouragement of education, recreation, culture and social interest.

It shall be the policy of the Board to make available to community groups the use of school facilities and to cooperate with such groups as fully as possible. Since the Board believes that public school funds must be used for the regular school program, it is necessary to establish appropriate service charges and personnel fees for the use of school facilities by outside groups.

The right to authorize use of school facilities shall be retained by the Board and/or the Superintendent or his/her designees. Determination as to use will be made according to guidelines specified within this policy and procedure on a first-come, first-served basis with the understanding that building usage by outside groups or associations may be only at such times as the facilities are free from District curricular and extracurricular activities.

Classifications of Uses:

1. use of a facility for educational purposes or purposes considered beneficial to the entire community; no admission charge is made or no collection taken. (For example, school-related activities, parent groups, boosters, educational association, etc.; employee is paid.)
2. use by community organization or civic groups of a public nature when no admission charge is made. (e.g., Chamber of Commerce, industrial groups, churches, et al.; employee is paid.)
3. non-profit organizations when holding a fund-raising activity for the purpose of the public good; employee is paid.
4. use by commercial or private organizations or individuals for promotion of personal interest is discouraged; however, if the activity is considered in the interest of the school or community, rental will be considered.

Conditions Governing Use

The Board reserves the right to establish criteria for building rental and hereby denies the use of the building to any group or individual for the purpose that is not consistent with the best interest of the community.

1. When facilities are used, the building principal is responsible for arranging the proper supervision of facilities by the renting group.
2. No individual or organization shall use public school facilities for personal gain.
3. The Board and its duly authorized personnel will not be held liable for any claims for damages or injuries to persons or properties that are incurred during the use of the facilities. The contracting party shall accept all responsibility for such claims for damage.
4. Any or all damages to equipment or facility will be charged to the contracting party or organization.
5. Insurance coverage for the contract group is required to protect the District from losses resulting from liabilities or physical damages. Proof of liability insurance shall be requested from all groups sponsoring physical activities or charging admission. A minimum is required: \$300,000, bodily injury; \$300,000, aggregate; \$100,000, property damage; \$100,000, aggregate.

General Procedure and Regulations

1. Written application for permission to use school facilities shall be made to the building principal of the facility requested (agreement for use of school facilities).
2. The building principal is responsible for maintaining an accurate calendar of uses of school facilities by school and community groups and for the coordination of personnel necessary to supervise approved activities. The renting group is responsible for supervision.
3. The school administrators shall determine whether or not authorization may be granted for use of facilities as outlined in this policy or whether such requests must be approved by the Board due to exception from the guidelines established herein.
4. Sponsoring organizations or groups shall provide sufficient adult and/or special supervision. The extent of such supervision will be agreed upon at the time the authorization is issued. Adequate law enforcement will be provided by the renting group as determined by school officials.

5. Alcoholic beverages will not be permitted in school facilities or on school property at anytime; smoking is prohibited on school district property.
6. All applicants for use of District facilities shall hold the Board and its employees free and without harm for any loss, damage, and liability or expense that may arise relative to use or occupancy of District facilities by outside groups, organizations or individuals.
7. Damages to facilities will be assessed by the building principal and verified by the Superintendent or his/her designee. Such damage list will result in a bill for damages being presented to the responsible group.
8. Any or all use of District facilities shall be totally free from controversial and disruptive activity. In the event a question occurs in this regard, the Superintendent may refer the request to the Board for action. Should an objection be lodged against a specific use of District facilities by any group, said objection is valid only if it is made in writing to the Superintendent and bears the signature of the individual or group of individuals lodging the complaint. When such valid complaint is lodged, the following shall apply:
  - A. Use of facilities by the applicant may be suspended temporarily to afford the Superintendent time to meet with the Board and concerned parties for the purpose of a hearing.
  - B. The Superintendent, the Board, the complainant and the applicant shall meet at a specified time and location to determine the validity or nonvalidity of the complaint. The Board shall be the deciding authority. The Board's decision shall be final. A copy of the decision may be obtained by either the complainant group or the applicant group by request and payment of the cost of copying.
9. Agreements for use of school facilities must be obtained in advance of the activity from the principal. Payment charges, as appropriate for building usage, should be made available to the renting group prior to use.
10. Request for regular utilization of school facilities for a prolonged period of time must be considered for approval by the Board. Such prolonged regular usage of school facilities will generally be restricted to emergency situations.
11. It should be understood that in time of cold weather when the District is under the restriction of a fuel curtailment, the temperatures in school facilities may be inappropriate for some types of activity. No additional heat will be provided beyond the regular school day without special permission from the Superintendent or his/her designee. Factors such as this should be considered when seeking to rent facilities.

12. Invited guests are permitted access only to the immediate area of the designated activity.
13. All persons on Board property are expected to follow all Board policies and regulations. Violators may be asked to leave the premises.
14. Applicants and their visitors and guests are expected to keep the building and grounds clean.

Fees Schedule

Bellaire Middle School Gym,	-	\$50. per hr.
Cafeteria		
Dining area		\$30. Per hr.
Kitchen		\$25. Per hr. + staff
Bellaire Elementary School Gym	-	\$25. per hr.
Cafeteria		
Dining area		\$30. Per hr.
Kitchen		\$25. Per hr. + staff
Bellaire High School Old Gym	-	\$25. per hr.
Bellaire High School New Gym		\$50. per hr.
Bellaire High School Cafeteria		
Dining Area	-	\$40. per hr.
Kitchen Facilities	-	\$25. per hr. +staff
Bellaire High School Auditorium	-	\$50. per hr. + electric + staff
Any Classroom	-	\$20. per hr.
Nelson Field*	-	\$750. (4 hr. max) + staff
All-weather track*	-	\$500. (4 hr. max) + staff

In addition to the service charge listed, it will be necessary for the group or organization utilizing the facilities to pay for services of any school employee required to be present at such time, which necessitates an extension to their workday. Fees shall be determined by the rate per hour, at time and one-half for the employee (including retirement, workers' compensation and other appropriate costs).

In cases which involve uses of cafeteria facilities for the preparation of food, it may be necessary for a member of the food service staff of the District to be present to supervise.

In cases which necessitate services of a custodian for either supervision or cleanup activity, charges will be made for actual time spent.

Responsibility for coordination of building rentals and identifying appropriate supervision personnel rests with the building principal, who will, when necessary, contact department heads or supervisors in food service or maintenance in order to secure appropriate personnel.

Fees paid to compensate noncertified employees for activities sponsored by outside organizations will include a two-hour minimum at time and one-half compensation when the situation requires the employee to make a return trip to the facility after the regular work shift. Retirement, worker's compensation and other appropriate deductions will be taken from the employee's rate. Normal payroll deductions will be subtracted from the amounts paid when employees are paid through the Treasurer's office.

It is necessary that a contract for use of school facilities by outside groups be signed by the individual representing the group. The contract will specify terms for the rental. Contracts shall be completed in triplicate with one copy being given to the organization's representative, one copy to the building principal and the third copy to be filed in the Treasurer's office.

School facilities will not be made available to individuals or groups from outside the District unless approval is secured from the Board on a specific request basis.

(Approval date: August 13, 1997)

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