

Deerfield Township Board of Education

District Policy Manual

Community Relations
Use Of School Facilities

Series 1000
Policy 1330

Date Adopted: November 15, 2005 Date Revised: April 25, 2012

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The district facilities belong to the community, which paid for them for the primary purpose of offering a full educational program for its children. Prudent use and management of school facilities outside of the regular operating schedules providing that such use does not interfere with the orderly conduct of a thorough and efficient system of education allows the community to benefit more broadly from the use of its own property.

The Board will permit the use of school facilities when such permission has been requested in writing and has been approved by the Board for:

- A. Uses and groups directly related to the school and the operations of the school;
- B. Uses and organizations indirectly related to the school;
- C. Departments or agencies of the municipal government;
- D. Other governmental agencies;
- E. Community organizations formed for charitable, civic or educational purposes.

General Requirements

The school and facilities shall be made available to the public as freely as is consistent with state statutes and policies of the Board of Education. The buildings will not normally be available during holidays or vacations, or if the programs interfere with cleaning and maintenance schedules.

All groups and organizations must submit a completed application form to the school office for approval. If approved, a permit will be issued by the Board for use of the facility.

Applicants for use permits must satisfy the Chief School Administrator that:

- A. they are responsible persons and officially represent responsible organizations;
- B. they will guarantee orderly behavior and will underwrite any damages due to their use of the premises;
- C. their program is of a nature suitable for presentation in a public school;
- D. the proposed activity is lawful and in conformity with regulations of the Board of Education.

Responsibility for use of facilities and observance of regulations shall rest upon the applicants. Custodians or other designated representatives of the Board of Education, on duty in the schools at the time, are required to report all irregularities to the Chief School Administrator.

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Inaccurate or untruthful statements made in application or violations of any district or state regulation may place the responsible persons or organizations or both on an ineligibility list. Subsequent applications of such ineligible persons will be referred to the Board of Education, which will determine whether disqualification shall be temporary or permanent.

The permit holder must agree to save and hold harmless the said public schools and must agree to assume responsibility for all liabilities arising incident to occupancy. A certificate of insurance coverage should be presented at the time of application for facilities use. Insurance coverage must be at least \$500,000.

Applications not covered by these policies will be referred to the Board of Education for action.

The Board of Education may refuse to grant the use of a school building whenever in their judgment there is good reason why permission should be refused. The Board shall not be required to give a reason for such refusal.

Smoking is not permitted in any school facility. Intoxicating beverages and the use of illegal drugs are prohibited on all school properties at all times, and any person under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs shall not be permitted to remain thereon. All facility use shall comply with state and local fire, health, safety and police regulations. Responsibility for these controls rests upon the party signing the application.

All meetings involving children must be in charge of responsible adults, the number of supervisors varying according to the number of participants. Adequate supervision and leadership must be provided throughout the period authorized for use. Recommended ratio is 1-15 or less.

Political Activities

As used in this section, "school property" shall mean a building or buildings used for school operations.

In accordance with the provisions of NJSA 19:44A-19.1, candidates for elective public office, holders of elected public office or their agent or representative are prohibited from soliciting campaign contributions on school property. No person shall make contributions, directly or indirectly, to or on behalf of any candidate for elective public office, or the candidate committee or joint candidates committee of any such candidate, while on school property.

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This shall not apply to persons or groups reserving or renting school property for a nongovernmental purpose as a meeting location.

Any person in violation of this section of this policy may be reported to the Election Law Enforcement Commission and liable to a penalty of not less than \$5000, for each violation.

Use of school facilities for games of chance or the use any scheme or device, which encourages or suggests gambling or games of chance, is prohibited.

Use of school equipment in conjunction with the use of school facilities must be specifically requested in writing and may be granted by the procedure by which permission to use facilities is granted. The user of school equipment must accept liability for any damage to or loss of such equipment that occurs while it is in use. Where rules so specify, no item of equipment may be used, except by a qualified operator.

Use of any materials on floors or other parts of the building without specific approval of the Superintendent is strictly prohibited.

Organizations and groups using the building or facilities without charge must set up and restore, if moved, all furniture and equipment and leave them clean.

Any decorations shall be erected in a manner that will not be destructive of school property, and such erection shall be in accordance with local and state fire marshal regulations and approved by the Chief School Administrator or designee on duty. All decorations shall be removed from the building before 8:00 A.M. on the day after the building has been used.

Permit holder shall assume responsibility for securing necessary police supervision, if so directed by the school administration.

Permit holder shall be fully responsible for all damage or loss of school property, including that belonging to students and employees, as well as his own property, occurring during the time the building is in use under the permit.

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Permission for use of special or extra equipment must be included in the application. If such equipment is desired, it must be within the school property and arrangements made at the time of application. Extra compensation must be paid for employees to operate or supervise special or extra equipment or transfer it from another building. No equipment is to be loaned or rented for use outside public school property.

Future school facility use will not be permitted if charges are not paid within 30 days after statement has been rendered.

Basis of Charges

Charges and rentals of school property shall be determined by the status of the requesting group with regard to the following classifications:

Class A

For the purposes of this policy, Class A shall be defined as a classification of users of district facilities that includes those individuals or groups typically referred to as either not-for-profit or school based, such as, but not limited to, PTO groups, school sponsored clubs or groups, employee organizations, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, civic groups, senior citizen organizations, local sports teams, and other local agencies. Class A users shall not be assessed fees for the use of district facilities, but will be charged for custodial and/or cafeteria worker costs, and energy fees. Security costs will be charged if the user is non-school group.

Class B

For the purposes of this policy, Class B shall be defined as a classification of users of district facilities that includes those individuals or groups that are commercial in nature as well as those who may use the school facilities for events including but not limited to performances, such as plays, performances, concerts, or exhibitions as well as those groups who charge an admission fee. This class must pay a facility usage fee plus custodial and/or cafeteria worker costs.

The Board will set fees annually for both Class A and Class B groups. Fees may be waived at the discretion of the Board of Education.

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Application Procedures

- A. Any individual group conforming to Class A of the preceding section which plans to use school property shall obtain a permit application form from the school and complete and return it no later than thirty days prior to the event. If the group is deemed to conform to Class A status and the requested facilities are available, the Chief School Administrator or designee will notify the group prior to the event. The Chief School Administrator or designee shall act as a central clearinghouse for reserving and checking dates. The Board shall receive a report of all facility use at each regular meeting. Those groups refused Class A status may appeal in writing to the Board of Education through a letter to the Chief School Administrator.
- B. An application for a permit to use public school facilities by groups conforming to Class B status shall be filed and submitted to the office at least forty days prior to the date for which the building is to be used. The application shall include the time of the opening and closing of the event, the date and time of rehearsal, if any, and the materials, rooms and outside equipment, such as extra and special lighting to be used. The application shall contain the name, address and telephone number of the person in charge, who shall assume responsibility of the group, the purpose and scope of the activity and the number and description of the individuals to be involved. The Board of Education reserves the right to limit or deny the use of facilities if the Board feels in its judgment there is good reason for refusal.
- C. The application shall then be submitted for Board consideration at its next regular meeting. The Chief School Administrator or designee shall notify the group of the action of the Board, with a statement of the fee to be paid if approval is granted. Full payment for the use of the building shall be made at the time of permit approval.
- D. In cases where use of the building or grounds is unforeseen or necessary between Board meetings, the Chief School Administrator may grant approval upon a favorable response from the Board's Building and Property Committee. All other procedures outlined in this policy will remain in effect.

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Fees

Annually, the Board will set fees for the following:

- A. Gymnasium/Multi-Purpose Room
- B. Cafeteria
- C. Classrooms
- D. Custodian
- E. Cafeteria workers
- F. Stage hands
- G. Stage advisor
- H. Security costs
- I. Any group shall be responsible for any damage that is attributable to the group's negligence.

Sunday or holiday usage requires that all fees be doubled.

Payment

Upon approval of the Board for the use of school property a copy of the contract and a cover letter showing what fees need to be paid, and to whom, will be sent to the person in charge of the group.

- A. A check, made payable to the Board of Education shall be paid for the rent at the time of the approval of the contract.
- B. Custodians/cafeteria workers/stage advisor will be paid through the Board of Education payroll account. The organization renting the facility will be billed for district personnel time.
- C. In the event of overtime usage, a bill will be sent to the group for extra rental or other fees.

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Legal References

NJSA 2C:33-16 Alcoholic beverages; bringing or possession on school property by person of legal age; penalty
18A:11-1 General mandatory powers and duties
18A:20-34 Use of schoolhouse and grounds for various purposes
26:3D-55 et seq. New Jersey Smoke-Free Air Act
19:44A-19.1 solicitation on state property; prohibited – political activity

NJAC 6A:26-12.2(a)4 Policies and procedures for school facility operation

20 U.S.C.A. 4071 – 4074 – Equal Access Act
GOALS 2000: Educate America Act (Pro Children Act of 1994), Pub. L. 103-227
No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub. L. 107-110,
USCA 6301 et seq
Resnick v. East Brunswick Twp. Bd. of Ed., 77 N.J. 88 (1978)
Good News Club v. Milford Central School, 121 S.Ct. 2093 (2001)
Manual for the Evaluation of Local School Districts
New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC)
The New Jersey School Search Policy Manual, New Jersey Attorney General (1998)
A Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials (1999 Revisions)

Possible Cross References

1330, 1420, 3220/3230, 3320, 5125, 5131.5, 5131.6, 5141.1, 5141.4, 5141.6, 5145.11, 5145.12, 6114, 6122, 6145.1/6145.2, 6172, 7110, 7150

