

Lower Merion School District

Policy No.: 713
Section: PROPERTY
Title: ACCESS TO DISTRICT FACILITIES
Date Adopted: 7/21/86
Date Last Revised: 4/24/17; 6/14/10; 1/24/05

713 ACCESS TO DISTRICT FACILITIES

District facilities should be made available to student organizations, Approved Parent/Staff Organizations (inclusive of Booster Clubs) and Community Groups so long as the proposed use is appropriate to the facility, does not interfere with the educational-intended purpose of the facility and otherwise does not operate to the detriment of the District.

“Approved Parent/Staff Organization” means any school-related organization of parents and staff recognized by the District pursuant to Policy No. 915 and Booster Clubs pursuant to Policy No. 916.

“Community Group” means any not-for-profit, community-wide educational, cultural, civic, recreational, character development, charitable, or social service agency whose membership includes any person who is not a student in the District. To the extent permitted by law, in order to be considered a community-wide educational, cultural, civic, recreational, character development, charitable, or social service agency, the activities and services of the organization must be available to all school district residents without restriction to race, creed, national origin, sexual orientation or political affiliation and may not have a charter or admission policy that violates federal or state law.

“District Community Group” means the participants in activities sponsored by these Community Groups predominantly (more than 50%) reside in the District.

“Non-District Community Group” means a Community Group that is not a District Community Group.

“Incidental Users” means (1) use by four District residents or fewer, or (2) unorganized and sporadic use of, unoccupied or unreserved sports fields, running tracks, tennis courts, or playgrounds during hours as authorized by the District administration when school is not in session, provided such use does not damage the field, surface, or property in any way. Incidental Use does not require the user to request a permit to access such unoccupied or unreserved sports fields, running tracks, tennis courts, or playgrounds. Incidental Use does not include for-profit activities.

“Others” means a category of user not falling into one of the defined categories above.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent shall develop and promulgate administrative regulations readily available to the public implementing this policy which provide for the following:

1. A process for approval of permit applications including procedures for:

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- a. Referring individuals and groups seeking access to District facilities to the Director of Operations for technical assistance as to the permitting and leasing process;
 - b. determining whether an organization qualifies as a District Community Group;
 - c. providing preferential status for District Community Groups involving school aged children over other District Community Groups in terms of availability of facilities;
 - d. providing preferential status for District Community Groups over Non-District Community Groups in terms of fees and availability of facilities;
 - e. providing Superintendent discretion for use of facilities by Others based upon events having significant impact on the school community and/or provide a clear benefit to District students; and
 - f. establishing a system to determine allocation of facility space to insure, to the extent possible, equitable use by all eligible organizations, groups, and individuals requesting access.
2. Rules of use for District buildings by organizations, groups, and individuals after school hours and other District property at any time, including under what circumstances, if any, fundraising and/or the sale of concessions is permitted.
 3. Evidence of adequate insurance as determined by the Business Manager in consultation with the District's insurance broker and Solicitor.
 4. Supervision of facilities use.
 5. Availability of facilities, including whether use is permitted during times when District schools and/or offices are closed.
 6. A schedule of fees in accordance with the above classifications, inclusive of additional costs for required supervision/security, set up/cleaning, and/or other technical support.
 7. Limitations on the ability of one group to overuse District facilities.
 8. Access during evenings as opposed to during the school day.
 9. Rules for decorum and behavior by users.
 10. Prohibition of political campaigning while permitting
 - a. current and past political figures to speak on issues outside of campaigning context to preserve the District's status as non-partisan,

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- b. use of District facilities for partisan political forums sponsored by nonpartisan groups, and
- c. campaigning on Election Days in the portion of District facilities specifically designated as polling places by the Board of Elections, pursuant to rules established by law.

Leasing of District Facilities

Typically, users of District facilities will be required to use the permitting process described above. However, the Board reserves the right, at its discretion, to enter into leases, licensing agreements or other contractual relationships with for-profit and not-for-profit organizations with respect to District facilities as determined to be in the best interests of the District. All such agreements must be in writing and approved by the Board of School Directors pursuant to Board resolution at a public meeting.