



Book	Policy Manual
Section	700 Property
Title	Use of School Facilities
Code	707
Status	Active
Adopted	October 19, 2015
Last Revised	August 3, 2020

### **Purpose**

It is the desire of the Board to make available school facilities for use by the citizens of the Susquehanna Township. School facilities shall be available without discrimination and in accordance with this policy, when such use will not conflict with the regular school program and will result in general community betterment. This policy is intended to make possible the maximum educational return, based upon the community's financial investment in school plans and equipment.

### **Authority**

The Board shall establish a schedule of fees for the use of school facilities by approved groups.[\[1\]](#)

### **Categories of Applicants**

The Board shall permit the use of school facilities when permission has been requested in writing and has been approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee. The district's facilities shall not be used for parties or celebrations, which are essentially private in nature. This exclusion is inclusive of, but not limited to birthday, anniversary, wedding and other similar parties or celebrations. Below is a priority listing of applicants permitted to use district facilities.

Group 1 – School-sponsored student activities (including official clubs, musical groups and intramural and interscholastic sports teams of the district).

Group 2 – School-related organizations (including alumni association, PTO, booster clubs, and teachers' associations).

Group 3 – General community groups from within the bounds of the district such as nonprofit, civic and service.

Group 4 – Universities and colleges to use facilities for educational purposes.

Group 5 – Any other individual, group or entity.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Superintendent or designee shall implement administrative regulations or procedures for requesting and granting permission for use of school facilities and shall distribute the necessary information to individuals affected by them.

Any facility use requests must be submitted to the Facility Lease Coordinator. The building principal shall be authorized to initially approve or recommend rejection of applications from applicants in Groups 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5. Following this approval/disapproval facility lease application requests must be presented to the Superintendent and Business Manager for final processing. To assure timely processing, all applications should be submitted sixty (60) days in advance of requested usage date. The building Facility Lease Coordinator is responsible to communicate all requests to the Business Office, Director of Operations and Maintenance and Athletic Director.

### **Guidelines**

Any organization granted the use of school facilities must comply with the following conditions:

1. To seek initial approval from the building principal.
2. To inform the Business Manager regarding all necessary arrangements.
3. To comply with this policy and established rules and administrative regulations regarding the use of facilities.
4. To assume full responsibility for damage to or loss of school property in connection with the use of school facilities.

All arrangements for the use of school facilities shall be subject to the provisions of this policy and district rules and administrative regulations.

### **Application**

The Facility Lease Coordinator must provide written application for the use of school buildings or grounds to the Business Manager at least one (1) month prior to the date of the requested use. If the facilities are to be used by a group or organization, the application shall be made in the name of the organization and signed by an officer or authorized representative.

Along with the completed application, the individual or group must submit the following:

1. Payment of the specified rental fee when applicable.
2. Evidence of organizational liability to limits required by district guidelines.
3. Documentation evidencing the school district shall be held harmless by the user for any liability that arises from use of the facilities by the individual or group.

### **Application Evaluation**

No application to use school facilities shall be approved if the proposed activity would result in any of the following:

1. Conflict with any school-sponsored activity.
2. Access to school facilities closed due to renovations, maintenance, cleaning, the school calendar or Board action.
3. Access to school facilities containing equipment or furnishings which would be detrimental to the operation of a district program if damaged or operated by an unqualified operator.

4. The proposed use would prevent or encumber district personnel from preparing school facilities for their primary purposes, because of the nature or duration of the activity.

#### Availability

All applications for facilities shall be dependent upon the availability of the facilities. The school program and its organizations have prior right to use all facilities. School maintenance programs shall also enjoy priority. Approved nonschool groups will be assigned space according to the order of receipt of the application. School facilities normally will not be available on holidays.

#### Insurance

The applicant agrees to assume all responsibility for damage, claims or liability of any kind arising out of or by reason of its use of the school facilities and further agrees to save and hold the school district harmless from any claims, liability, expense or cost in connection with that use of the school facilities. Dependent upon the category of the application, the applicant may be required to furnish a bond or a certificate of insurance to guarantee or assure performance of this assumption of liability and indemnification agreement but failure to do so shall not be deemed a waiver thereof. The school district is insured for liability damage hazards, but this insurance may not cover the applicant.

#### Subletting

After the application has been approved and signed by or on behalf of the district and by the applicant, it shall become binding upon the applicant. The applicant may not assign, sublet or transfer its right or privileges to any other individual, group or organization.

#### Taxes

Any taxes to local, state or federal government shall be paid by the organization using the school facility.

#### Responsibility

The applicant will assign one (1) person to direct and be responsible for the use of the facility during occupancy. The assigned person shall be present during the time the building is being used.

#### Expiration

The permission extended to any applicant to use the school buildings or grounds within any school year shall expire automatically at the end of that year (June 30).

#### Payment

In those instances when the fees associated with the lease application have not been pre-paid, a statement for the use of facilities and services rendered will be forwarded to the applicant within one (1) week after the event. Payment will be due upon receipt of the statement. All checks should be made payable to the Susquehanna Township School District.

#### School Supplies or Educational Equipment

1. The building principal and Superintendent shall identify and prepare an inventory of any equipment or school supplies available for use by outside groups.
2. Use of all other school supplies and education equipment, not included in the mentioned inventory, including physical education or other special purpose equipment such as computer, is prohibited.
3. Users shall be required to sign an inventory form before the equipment is released.

4. Arrangements for the use of the dressing rooms, public address system, A.V. equipment, stage crew, etc., shall be made on the application for use. All arrangements shall be made well in advance of the performance.
5. No equipment is to be brought into the school building or onto district facilities without prior approval.
6. There shall be no installations of equipment or alterations to existing facilities or equipment by the applicant without prior approval of school officials.

### Decorations

All decorations used within the buildings must be fireproof and are subject to the approval of school officials. No open flame decorations or equipment shall be permitted. No decorations shall be fastened to the walls or ceilings with nails, screws, scotch tape or other fastener that would damage the finish of the wall. No use of pyrotechnics is allowed. All usage will comply with B.O.C.A. Code when applicable. No decorations shall be permitted on or over mural artwork.

The applicant, under the direction and supervision of the school custodian, shall remove all decorations, furnishings and equipment provided and installed by the applicant.

### Cafeteria and Kitchen

The cafeteria and/or kitchen shall be available to the public provided certain conditions are followed such as:

1. Kitchen equipment shall not be loaned to outside groups unless by specific approval of the building principal.
2. The kitchen shall not be opened or used, except as part of the regular school program, unless special permission is granted by the Superintendent.
3. Only members of the cafeteria staff, school staff or those persons in the outside group preparing and serving food shall have access to the kitchen. In the event that any kitchen appliances or utensils are used, a cafeteria worker shall be present and shall be paid by the outside group on an hourly basis equal to the hourly rate paid to the employee by the school district.
4. Facilities will be available for special school or community events when such use will not disrupt normal daytime operations and when they are within the capacity of cafeteria personnel and facilities.

### Auditorium

1. All apparatus, equipment and devices owned by the school shall be operated by school employees at the expense of the applicant. An employee of the school district directs and official stage crew, which is properly trained to operate the stage, house lights, stage curtain, sound equipment, projector and school-owned props. The crew will not participate in loading equipment for the program, but will help arrange stage settings and work during the program on the operation of equipment.

### Time of Use

The time of use and procedure for use shall be as follows:

1. During the school year, district facilities usage will be limited to times when school is not in session. Exceptions must be specially arranged within the district.
2. Buildings will be opened one-half hour before the scheduled time of the program and closed one-quarter hour after the scheduled end of the program.

3. For summer use, usage will be at the discretion of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

### Services

A district custodian or other responsible personnel must be on duty at all times when a facility is in use. A custodial fee will be charged to all applicable applicants.

These services include unlocking the building; turning on such lights as hall, house outside, etc.; unlocking doors for the area being used and making certain that they are free of obstructions; turning on exit lights; making certain police and fire regulations are met; setting up chairs and, after the meeting, normal cleaning and arrangement of rooms/areas for regular school use.

### Revocation

The Business Manager may revoke permission for use of the facility for violations of district rules and administrative regulations or provisions of this policy.

### Prohibited Activities

The following activities are strictly prohibited in school facilities when individuals and community groups are granted written permission to use said school facilities:[\[2\]](#)

1. Possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs and/or alcoholic beverages.
2. Possession of weapons.
3. Conduct that would alter, damage or be injurious to any district property, equipment or furnishings.
4. Conduct that would constitute a violation of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code, and/or state and federal laws and regulations.
5. Gambling, games of chance, lotteries, raffles or other activities requiring a license under the Local Option Small Games of Chance Act, unless such activity has been expressly authorized by the Board or administration.[\[3\]](#)[\[4\]](#)
6. Use of tobacco and vaping products, including the product marketed as Juul and other electronic cigarettes.[\[5\]](#)[\[6\]](#)[\[7\]](#)[\[8\]](#)

The Board may designate specific areas for tobacco use by the public on property owned, leased or controlled by the district that is at least fifty (50) feet from any school building, stadium, bleachers or athletic field.

### Violations

The school district reserves the right to remove from school district premises any individual or community group who fails to comply with the terms and conditions of this policy and established procedures.[\[2\]](#)

In the event an individual or community group violates this policy or the terms under which permission was granted to use school facilities, that individual or community group forfeits the right to submit future written requests to use school district property, unless otherwise decided by the Board.

### District Activities Calendar

A "district activities calendar" will be maintained to record all requests for the use of school facilities. With exception to In Season Interscholastic Athletic Activities, all School-Sponsored Activities Groups

(Group 1) and School-Related Groups (Group 2) must submit facility lease applications for use of the district's facilities and posting to the district activities calendar in order to avoid scheduling conflicts.

In Season Interscholastic Athletic Activities requests are processed as follows:

1. During the SEASON of any interscholastic athletic activity (football, basketball, baseball, etc.) it is not necessary to submit lease application requests to the Facility Lease Coordinator to reserve any of the schools facilities and for posting to the "district activities calendar." The reservation of such in season activities must however, be requested in written form and submitted to the Facility Lease Coordinator within a timely manner for posting to the "district's activity calendar."
2. Interscholastic athletic activity (football, basketball, baseball, etc.) requests OUTSIDE of the typical SEASON must be submitted via the standard facility lease application.

All school events must be checked with the district calendar and recorded before being announced to the public.

Every effort should be made by those who schedule events to avoid conflicts with athletic schedules, Board meetings, music activities, Open House, PTO, school plays and other school-related activities where parents/guardians attend.

Legal

1. 24 P.S. 775
2. 24 P.S. 511
3. 10 P.S. 328.101 et seq
4. 61 PA Code 901.701
5. 18 Pa. C.S.A. 6306.1
6. 20 U.S.C. 7972
7. 20 U.S.C. 7973
8. Pol. 904
- 24 P.S. 510.2
- 24 P.S. 779
- 61 PA Code 901.1
- 20 U.S.C. 7971 et seq
- 20 U.S.C. 7905