

419R SMUDGING AND PIPE CEREMONIES

Statement of Support

Duluth Public Schools is committed to diversity, inclusion, and creating an open and respectful climate for all. The District recognizes plants such as tobacco, kinikinik, sage, sweet grass, and cedar as traditional American Indian medicines and essential elements of purification and sacred ceremony.

(MN Statute 144.4167) It shall not be a violation of policy for an American Indian adult to light tobacco in a public school as part of a traditional Indian spiritual or cultural ceremony, or to carry loose tobacco in a tobacco pouch intended for spiritual or cultural ceremonial support.

It shall not be a violation for an American Indian student to carry loose tobacco in a tobacco pouch intended for spiritual or cultural ceremonial support with the permission of the student's parent or guardian and with written or verbal notice to the site administrator or principal.

Purpose

- This regulation allows for students, staff, elders, and cultural teachers who are members of an American Indian Tribe* to conduct individual or group traditional practices including but not limited to: Opening/Closing prayers, Individual or Group Smudging, Feasts, Pipe Ceremonies, Pow Wows, and Drumming/Singing.
- The defined procedures provide direction to the Duluth Public Schools' community for engagement in these traditions respectfully.

Smudging and Pipe Ceremonies Procedure

- Duluth Public Schools is committed to creating an inclusive, open, and respectful climate for our diverse community members and guests.
- There are many types or forms of ceremony: individual, as part of engagement with Indigenous pedagogies in a classroom; and for community engagement.
- Regulation includes the use of tobacco, sage, sweet grass or cedar.
- It is assumed that very small quantities are used for individual offices, workstations, and indoor classrooms

Notification requirements

Individual offices or workstations

An American Indian member of the community may conduct smudging in an individual office of work space without prior approval provided he/she:

- Has Office and Work Space pre-approved through the Facilities Department.
- Works in an enclosed space.
- Posts a notice on the door(s) of offices 24 hours in advance.
- Make sure doors are closed.

- Notifies occupants of neighboring offices and classrooms.
- Ask neighbors if they have allergies.

Classroom Spaces

An American Indian teacher, staff member, member of the community, or other cultural/religious groups who plans to conduct smudging or pipe ceremony in a classroom or meeting room shall:

- Ensure the room is reserved through building during the school day, (exemption for classroom teachers that are assigned to that classroom).
- Inform participants/meeting attendees of the intention to use tobacco, sage, sweet grass, and or cedar in the space.
- Post notices on the door(s).
- Make sure the door(s) is (are) closed.
- Provide notice to neighboring classrooms and other spaces.
- Provide the Building Administrators, Building Engineers, and Manager of Facilities with Five (5) business days' notice.
- Consider scheduling set days and times for this practice.

Pre-approved Event Spaces

To conduct smudging or pipe ceremonies at community events on school property, the event sponsors shall:

- Ensure the room is reserved through the Community Education office.
- Inform participants/meeting attendees of the intention to use tobacco, sage, sweet grass, and or cedar in the space.
- Specify in the event advertising and publicity that the event will include the intention to use tobacco, sage, sweet grass, cedar, or other natural plants.
- The event coordinator will notify the building administrator and building engineer via email/phone at least 24 hours in advance of the event, including the room number and time

Responsibilities of the Building Administrators, Engineers, and Manager of Facilities

- Evaluate the fire and ventilation systems in the requested space.
- Inform relevant staff
- In either case, students/staff who claim physical sensitivities to smoke or scent will be allowed to make alternate arrangements with the teacher for class participation or changes to office/space assignments.

Other Considerations

- Facilities will work with the organizers to ensure alarm issues will not disrupt the event; however, it is possible that some building occupants may smell the smoke or odor from the lighted tobacco, sage, sweet grass, cedar, and other natural plants.
- If there is an alarm during a ceremony people should treat it as an actual fire alarm and take appropriate action.
- Maintenance will clear the issue as soon as possible.

- The event manager will take accountability for the people attending and be responsible for making the decision to wait to return to the building or allow participants to leave and cancel the remainder of the event.
- Maintenance will be responsible for calling the event manager with updates.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 144.4167 Subd. 2. (Traditional Native American ceremonies)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 419 (Tobacco-Free Environment)