

Policy Code: 5030 COMMUNITY USE OF FACILITIES

General Principles

The board endorses the goals of the Community Schools Act. The use of school facilities by community groups should be consistent with the educational program and the goals and objectives of the board and school system. Priority for facility use will be given to community groups as outlined below in the section **Priority in Use**. For Profit groups are not permitted to use school facilities other than the Alexander County Auditorium (ACA).

Use of school facilities will not be approved for activities that do any of the following:

1. violate federal, state, or local laws;
2. violate board of education policies or regulations;
3. advocate imminent violence;
4. damage or have the potential to damage school buildings, grounds, or equipment; or
5. are in conflict with scheduled school activities.

Priority in Use

Priority for the use of school facilities shall be for school sponsored curricular and extracurricular activities. School-sponsored groups and activities such as school athletic events, school drama, and choral productions, and scheduled meetings of student organizations, including organizations permitted to meet under the Equal Access Act, will have first priority in the use of school facilities.

Priority in the use of school facilities by other groups and the fee structure for such groups will be in accordance with the following user categories. Priority in use among groups within the same user category will not be based upon the viewpoints of the groups. All groups within the same user category will be charged for facility use according to the uniform fee structure.

1. In accordance with [G.S. 163-129](#), priority will be given to the Board of Elections for school facilities agreed upon to be used as a polling place on election days. School sponsored curricular and extracurricular activities will be recognized as priority during non-election use. This use shall be recognized as Category 1 and no fees will be assessed.

2. School-related groups (formal organizations specifically formed to support the school in some manner, such as the PTA/PTO, teachers' and principals' organizations, and booster clubs) will be recognized as Category 2. The following fees may be assessed or covered by school funds: Key Holder Fee, School Nutrition Fee, and Convenience Fee.

3. In accordance with [G.S. 115C-527](#), political parties for the express purpose of annual or biennial precinct meetings and county and district conventions will have priority of school facility use and will be recognized as Category 3. Local government departments/agencies will be recognized as Category 3. The following fees may be assessed: School Nutrition Fee, Supervisor Fee, and Convenience Fee.

4. Youth organizations and non-profit organizations including civic and service clubs, churches and other religious organizations, and political parties recognized by a state or county board of elections for use other than those outlined in Category 3 will be recognized as Category 4. The following fees may be assessed: Facility fees, School Nutrition Fee, Supervisor Fee, and Convenience Fee.

5. For-profit groups/business will be allowed to use school facilities only in exceptional circumstances. The use of any school facility by any group or organization engaged in a business for profit shall be authorized only if the superintendent or designee determines that the intended use involves public school students and their parents or the local community, and is beneficial to the educational program provided by the Alexander County Schools. This will be recognized as Category 5.

The superintendent shall submit changes to the fee structure indicating the amount or method of calculating rent and fees to be charged for facility use.

Seasonal Use or Extended Use

Use of facilities for limited but ongoing activities such as the Recreation Department's use for team practices and games will be recognized as a partnership allowing for a recreation designee to be the supervisor (gymnasium only) and the supervision fee waived.

Use of facilities by groups or organizations in Categories 3 & 4 may allow for waived supervision fees during the time frame immediately after school while staff members are still on campus (not to extend beyond 5:00 p.m.)

Non-profit groups and churches using the facilities for student activities may apply for a Community Partnership Agreement by August 31 each school year. Agreement compliance entitles legal non-profit groups and churches a reduced rate.

Alexander County Athletic Travel Teams

Athletic Travel Teams that include Alexander County School Students are eligible to register and use facilities. Each travel team must register by completing the required application, provide a current copy of the Certificate of Insurance made payable to Alexander County Schools, and provide a team roster.

Sanctioned teams requesting to use the facilities for tournaments, games, or competitions must complete the school facility use application and comply with all regulations.

Requests for Use of Facilities

Eligible groups or organizations may apply by submitting an application to the principal of the school in which the facility is located. Facility use applications will be available online and in the school office. The application request is not complete until approved by the superintendent or central office designee.

Community Schools Fee Structure

The superintendent or designee shall submit a fee structure indicating the amount or method of calculating rent and fees to be charged for facility use for approval to the board. Other school facilities may be used only in exceptional circumstances based on a justified need and as approved by the superintendent or designee. The superintendent or designee is authorized to determine the fees for the use of facilities in such circumstances.

Facilities Available for Use

The board permits eligible groups or organizations to use the facilities of those schools designated by the board as “community schools.” A list of community schools and the facilities at each site that are available for community use will be available to the public at the superintendent’s office and each principal’s office with a fee structure.

The superintendent is authorized to develop a list of school facilities available for community use. Among the types of facilities that may be available for community use are auditoriums, athletic fields, dining areas, kitchens, designated classrooms, gymnasiums, and media centers.

Other school facilities may be used only in exceptional circumstances based on a justified need and as approved by the superintendent or designee. The superintendent is authorized to determine the fees for the use of facilities in such circumstances.

Rules Governing Use of School Facilities

The superintendent shall develop regulations consistent with this policy. The regulations will include an application process, and provisions regarding the supervision of groups using

facilities, the care of facilities, prohibited conduct and other issues deemed appropriate by the superintendent. A copy of the regulations will be provided to all applicants at the time they receive the facilities use application form. In addition to the regulations established by the superintendent, users of school facilities must comply with the following rules:

1. Users must comply with all federal, state, and local laws and all rules established by the board, the superintendent or designee, and the principal.
2. Users must comply with the requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) (particularly Subchapter III pertaining to Public Accommodations and Services Operated by Private Entities) and the federal regulations that have been adopted for the implementation of the ADA.
3. Users must comply with board policy and legal requirements forbidding the use of tobacco products in school facilities and on school grounds (see policy 4320/5026/7250, 100% Tobacco Free Schools).
4. Users must not consume or possess alcohol or drugs on school grounds (see Policy 5025, Prohibition of Drugs and Alcohol).
5. Users must not possess weapons or explosives while on school grounds (see Policy 5027/7275, Weapons and Explosives Prohibited).
6. Users are responsible for planning, managing, and supervising their activity and the people present at their activity.

A user's violation of the provisions of this policy or any applicable regulations is grounds for suspending and/or revoking the user's privilege to use school facilities for a period of time deemed appropriate by the principal, subject to the review of the superintendent and the board of education.

Damages and Liability Insurance

Users of school facilities are responsible for all damages to school facilities, including property or equipment that occurs while the facility is being used by the group, regardless of who caused the damage. Users also are responsible for the conduct of all persons involved in the users' activities while on school property.

All user groups, except school-sponsored groups, must furnish a certificate of insurance for general liability coverage with a total limit coverage of \$1,000,000 payable to Alexander County Schools for each claim made. The superintendent or designee will require the user group to execute a waiver of liability that states that no liability will attach to the board of education, individually or collectively, for personal injury or personal property damage by

reason of use of the school property.

Term and Acceptance of Lease

The superintendent is authorized to enter into agreements with community groups for the lease of school property for terms of one year or less. All such leases must be reviewed and approved in advance by the board attorney. The superintendent shall inform the board of the execution of any lease at its next regularly scheduled meeting. Leases may be renewed following the same process.

Only in the event of unusual circumstances, will leases be granted for a term longer than one year. A lease for more than one year must be approved in advance by the board. Long-term exclusive leases are subject to the provisions of Policy 9400, Sale, Disposal and Lease of Board-Owned Real Property.

Use of Outdoor School Facilities by the General Public

Outdoor property and facilities of the school system will be open to limited use by members of the general public in accordance with rules to be established by the superintendent or designee. Public use will be permitted only to the extent that it 1) is not inconsistent with the proper preservation and care of the outdoor school property; 2) does not interfere with the safe and efficient operation of the schools and school activities; and 3) does not conflict with use by any community group operating under a facility use agreement described in this policy. The superintendent is authorized to establish all terms, conditions, and rules necessary to regulate the use of outdoor facilities by members of the general public consistent with these requirements.

General Regulations Governing Community Use of Alexander County School Facilities

General procedures, guidelines and rates are available on-line at www.alexander.k12.nc.us and at the Alexander County Board of Education located on 700 Liledoun Rd. Taylorsville, North Carolina.

Review of Decisions Concerning Use of School Facilities

Any person or organization may request a review of any decision made by a school employee pursuant to this policy in accordance with policy 1740/4010, Student and Parent Student Grievance Procedure.

Legal References: Americans with Disabilities Act, [U.S.C. 12101 et seq.](#), [28 C.F.R. pt. 35](#); Equal Access Act, [20 U.S.C. 4071-4074](#), [28 C.F.R. 36](#); Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, [20 U.S.C. 7905](#), [34 C.F.R. pt. 108](#); [36 U.S.C. 20101 et seq.](#); [G.S. 14-269.2](#); Community

Schools Act, [G.S. 115C-203 to -209.1](#); [115C-524, -527](#); [160A-274](#); [163-129](#)

Cross References: Student and Parent Grievance Procedure (policy 1740/4010), Prohibition of Drugs and Alcohol (policy 5025), 100% Tobacco Free Schools (policy 4320/5026/7250), Weapons and Explosives Prohibited (policy 5027/7275), Sale, Disposal and Lease of Board-Owned Real Property (policy 9400)

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ALEXANDER COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY MANUAL