

Policy Code: 5030 Community Use of Facilities

A. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Rowan Salisbury 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.

The Rowan Salisbury Board of Education permits public use of school building and facilities for educational, civic, cultural, recreational and other such activities. Although school facilities are available for community use, programs operated by the school system take precedence in the use of facilities. Priority for facility use will be given to community groups as outlined below in Section B. of this policy and in accordance with state and federal law.

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.

B. PRIORITY IN USE/FEE STRUCTURE

School-sponsored groups and activities, such as school athletic events, and school drama and choral productions, and 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 (see policy 1710/4021/7230, Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying). 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](#), as a polling place on election days
2. School-related groups (organizations formed to support the school in some manner, such as the PTA, PTO, teachers' and principals' organizations, and booster clubs, Crosby Scholars, Communities In Schools)
Fees: No 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
Fees: Custodial and facility fees may be charged.
4. Local government and youth organizations, including, but not limited to, scouts and 4-H, YMCA, little leagues, etc.
Fees: Facility use fees may be charged. Custodial, and/or supervisory fees will be charged.
5. All other non-profit groups (all groups not included in the other categories as well as political parties when meeting for purposes other than precinct meetings or county or district conventions)
Non-profit organizations must submit a verification letter of non-profit status.
Fees: Facility Rental, custodial and supervisory fees will be charged.

Prior to the beginning of each school year, the superintendent shall submit for board approval a fee structure that lists the amount or method of calculating rent and fees to be charged for facility use.

C. REQUESTS FOR USE OF FACILITIES

An eligible individual or group that wishes to apply for permission to use a school facility must submit a written application to the principal of the school in which the facility is located. Facility use request forms will be available in the school administrative office.

The principal or building administrator should approve requests to use facilities, provided that the applicant has met requirements for use as delineated in this policy. Requests may be denied for any of the following reasons:

- (1) The application is incomplete or inaccurate;
- (2) The fee is not paid in advance;
- (3) The applicant has not provided a bond or certificate of insurance
- (4) The applicant violated the Community Use of Facilities policy or rules governing use of the facility in a previous use;
- (5) The applicant failed to pay the required fees on a previous occasion;
- (6) The facilities and/or staff are not available on the date(s) or at the time(s) requested; or
- (7) The activity, would cause or be substantially likely to cause damage to school property;

D. FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR USE

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, designated classrooms, gymnasiums, media centers and playgrounds.

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.

E. 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 5026/7250, Smoking and Tobacco Products).
4. Users must not consume or possess alcohol or drugs on school grounds (see policy 5025, Prohibition of Alcoholic Beverages).
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 supervising their activity and the people present at their activity. Users are responsible for maintaining order and safety during their activity.

A user's violation of the provisions of this policy or any applicable regulations is grounds for suspending 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.

F. DAMAGES AND LIABILITY INSURANCE

Users of school facilities are responsible for all damage to school facilities, 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 for each claim made. Alternatively, the superintendent or designee may require the user group to execute a waiver of liability that states that no liability will be attached to the board of education, individually or collectively, for personal injury or personal property damage by reason of use of the school property.

G. 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. Lease forms should be developed in conjunction with the board attorney.

Absent unusual circumstances, leases will not 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.

H. 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 Grievance Procedure.

Legal References: Americans with Disabilities Act, [42 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. pt. 36](#); Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, [20 U.S.C. 7905](#), [34 C.F.R. pt. 108](#); Community Schools Act, [G.S. 115C-203 to -209.1](#), [-524](#), [-527](#); [160A-274](#); [163-129](#)

Cross References: Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying (policy 1710/4021/7230), Student and Parent Grievance Procedure (policy 1740/4010), Prohibition of Alcoholic Beverages (policy 5025), Smoking and Tobacco Products (policy 5026/7250), Weapons and Explosives Prohibited (policy 5027/7275), Sale, Disposal and Lease of Board-Owned Real Property (policy 9400)

Adopted: 1/11/16

Rowan-Salisbury Board of Education