

POLICY

SOMERSET COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Subject: Use of School Facilities	Date Approved: January 15, 1980 June 20, 2006 March 16, 2010 December 14, 2010 November 18, 2014 Effective Date: July 1, 2000 June 20, 2006 March 16, 2010 December 14, 2010 November 18, 2014

1. **PURPOSE**

The Board of Education encourages the use of public school facilities for community purposes. When written application has been made to the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education shall provide the public school facilities for the presentation and discussion of public questions, public speaking, lectures, or for other civic, educational, social, recreational or church affiliated civic purposes, provided that:

- A. Such gatherings do not interfere with regular school sessions or bona fide school activities afterschool or on weekends and
- B. Such gatherings do not interfere with a community emergency need or traditional community event,
- C. Such gatherings or meetings shall be open to the public, and
- D. The requested use is unlikely to create unrest, extreme controversy, or threaten the peace or welfare of the county, and is lawful. (Section 7-108 of Public School Laws)

2. **PROCESS AND CONDITIONS**

- A. **Application** - Organizations and individuals within the community may request the use of buildings, or parts thereof, for meetings or for activities. An Application For Use of School Facilities (see policy guidelines) must be completed and signed by a community member or an officer of the organization making the request. The signed application should be submitted to the building principal along with appropriate payment and documentation ten (10) days in advance of the requested use. The building principal will submit it to the Facilities Supervisor for information and recording purposes.

B. General Conditions

- (1) Permission to use school facilities shall be granted only with the documented understanding that the applicant will assume full responsibility and will reimburse the Board of Education for any damage to the grounds, building, or contents resulting from such use.
- (2) Adequate and appropriate supervision must be provided by the applicant including security if deemed advisable by the building Principal or Facilities Supervisor.
- (3) Any applicant shall comply with all Board policies. The use of alcohol, tobacco, weapons and dangerous devices as well as controlled dangerous substances are absolutely prohibited in all buildings at all times.
- (4) Adequate precaution shall be established to insure both public safety and building safety while the facilities are in use. No decorations may be used in the building unless they are of an approved fireproof nature. Maximum room capacity set by the fire marshal must be observed and proper exits must remain unlocked. There will be no incendiary or combustible devices including fireworks used on school grounds or in our facilities. This does include burning candles.
- (5) All questions related to the use of the school facilities shall be directed first to the building principal, who will involve the Facilities Supervisor.
- (6) A custodian employed by Somerset County Public Schools must be present when the facilities are used by any outside agency. The presence of a custodian is not required for all school related groups, unless directed by the building principal.
- (7) If the kitchen or any of its equipment is to be used, the Food Nutrition Service Manager will also be employed for the duration of facility usage.
- (8) Permission for the use of any school facility may be revoked at the discretion of the Board of Education through the Superintendent of Schools.

C. Fees – Somerset County Public Schools has established a fee schedule for the use of school facilities. The fee to be charged will be determined through application of fees on the Building Use Application. If special services are required, such as technical, custodial, food service or security, an additional charge will be made and paid by separate check.

- (1) Use of the Building
 - \$ 45 per hour with four (4) hour minimum for non profit organizations
 - \$ 65 per hour with four (4) hour minimum for other applicants
 - Note: The superintendent may waive fees for non profit organizations.

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- (2) When any group uses school facilities for activities which result in additional time or work for custodians, the group will reimburse the Board of Education for all costs incurred. A separate check for the custodial time must be made payable to Somerset County Public Schools and turned in with the application. (Estimated costs will be collected at the time of the application.)
- (3) Arrangements for hours worked and work to be done by the custodian are to be handled by the building principal. This will include time set up and take down. If, in the Principal's opinion more than one custodian is needed, another custodian may be added and fees increased accordingly.
- (4) Fees for use of the facilities may be waived by the Superintendent of Schools when there is direct benefit to school-aged students.
- (5) The fees must be paid ten (10) calendar days prior to the use of the facility. Payment must be made to the Somerset County Public Schools. If for any reason, facilities are not used at the time requested and approved, the indicated charge will be forfeited unless notification is received in time for the principal to cancel commitments for custodial services.
- (6) The application, payment, the addendum and the liability certificate must be presented before final authorization of approval to use the school facility.
- (7) No employee is to be paid by an organization using the facilities during that employee's regular work schedule for which he or she is being paid by the Board. Specifically meaning no employee will be paid twice for the same hours of service.
- (8) All applicable fees are to be paid to the building Principal and/or Somerset County Public Schools. No fees should be paid directly to employees.

E. General Liability – Although the school district encourages appropriate community use of school facilities, outside use of school facilities increases the district's exposure for liability. This policy reduces or transfers this risk by requiring the following:

- (1) The applicant using the facility shall agree to maintain general liability insurance coverage during the duration of the event. Coverage shall be at least a combined single limit of \$1,000,000 per occurrence.
- (2) The applicant shall present a certificate of liability endorsed to protect the school district in at least the amount required by this policy, prior to approval for use of facilities.
- (3) An Indemnification (Hold Harmless) Clause shall be executed by the applicant. (See the policy guidelines).