



I. Policy Statement

Public school facilities in Howard County are devoted primarily to instructional programs and school-sponsored activities. Nonetheless, the Board of Education of Howard County recognizes that facilities paid for by the taxpayers of Howard County should be utilized to the fullest extent possible. It is the determination of the Board that the interests of the Howard County community merit the use of the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) facilities. Thus, the use of school facilities for community purposes is encouraged by the Board and is in accordance with the Annotated Code of Maryland.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a uniform procedure to establish processes that provide for the use of public school facilities in Howard County.

III. Definitions

Within the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. Adult Sports – Athletic programs offered for participants 18 years and older.
- B. Day Care – A nonprofit licensed or government-sponsored child care program for which a fee is charged and which serves school age children on a regularly scheduled basis as a supplement to the parent's primary care of the child.
- C. Educational Programs – Activities that provide instruction to students.
- D. Energy Fee – The amount assessed to cover the cost of modifying prescribed temperature settings stated in the Guidelines for Energy Conservation.
- E. Facility Fee – Cost assessed for the use of a specific room or area within a school facility to cover the cost associated with the basic maintenance of the room.
- F. Meetings – Assemblies sponsored by organizations such as civic associations, political groups, home owner associations, religious groups, etc.

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- G. Nonprofit Activities – Activities or meetings whose objective is to provide a community service and which neither profit from nor promote the personal gain of an individual or a group of individuals.
 - H. Nonprofit Organization – An organization, institution, association, society, club, and/or corporation that is exempt from taxation under Maryland Law 501 classification of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. Section 501 or any successor law), or under another tax-exempt, non-stock corporation.
 - I. Performing Arts Activities – Activities involving arts or skills that require performance.
 - J. Recreational Activities – Leisure programs or activities of a nonsports nature.
 - K. School-Related Support Organization – An entity incorporated as a nonprofit organization whose primary purpose is to support the HCPSS, an HCPSS school, or an HCPSS school club, and one that carries liability insurance. These include PTAs, PTSAs, and Booster Clubs.
 - L. School-Sponsored Program – An activity, event, or meeting developed or organized by the HCPSS, with the knowledge and approval of the associated school principal, that is under the direction and control of an authorized HCPSS employee working within the scope of one’s duties, where the HCPSS assumes full responsibility and liability for the program, event, or action.
 - M. Staffing Fee – Cost assessed to cover the cost of school personnel presence and/or services at a school facility. Staffing fees will be charged in accordance with the costs incurred by the Board as determined by the Superintendent/Designee.
 - N. User(s) – Agency, organization, or legal entity utilizing public school buildings and grounds.
 - O. Youth Organization – An incorporated, non-profit, solely youth-oriented group for participants who have not attained 18 years of age.
 - P. Youth Sports – Athletic youth organization programs offered for participants who have not attained 18 years of age.

IV. Standards

- A. Application Process
 - 1. Nonprofit organizations may use school buildings and grounds for educational, civic, social, religious, and recreational activities.

2. Users will conduct activities that are:
 - a. Orderly and lawful
 - b. In compliance with federal, state, and local laws as well as the policies, rules, regulations, and procedures of the Board
 - c. Not of a nature to incite others to disorder.
3. School facilities may only be used at times that will not interfere with regular school sessions and/or other activities and programs of the HCPSS.
4. Profit-making organizations will be limited to using school facilities for nonprofit activities such as athletic programs, fund-raising activities for charitable purposes, and employee support activities.
5. Any group or organization using school property will indemnify and hold harmless the Board and/or any officer, staff member, or agent, of the said Board (herein referred to as indemnities) from any and all lawsuits, claims, demands, or actions that may be brought against the aforementioned indemnities as a result of the use of school property by such group, organization, individual, or such suits allegedly arising out of the use of school property by such group or organization, or any person affiliated with the said group or organization. The indemnification and hold harmless obligation will include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Reimbursing the indemnities for attorney's fees, court costs, and all other defense costs
 - b. Full payment of any judgment, decree, award, decision, compromise, or settlement rendered against the indemnities
 - c. Any group or organization using school property will make all reasonable efforts to maintain the said property in the same condition it was prior to the use of the property, and the group or organization will compensate the Board fully for any and all costs of normal and/or extraordinary maintenance, repair, or replacement to school property which the Board determines is necessary as a result of the use of school property by such group or organization.
6. An employee of the Board must be on duty at all times when a school building is being used. If damage should result, it will be reported promptly to the Use of School Facilities Office by the principal/designee. All damages will be paid in full by the using organization.
7. Users may be required to have public liability and property damage insurance if it is deemed in the Board's best interest to insure adequate protection against

damages to property and/or liability claims by members of the public against the Board, its officers, agents, and/or employees.

B. Scheduling Priorities

1. HCPSS programs and activities including, but not limited to, curriculum and extracurricular activities are given priority in determining use and scheduling of school facilities.
2. Regularly scheduled school-related support organization meetings will be accommodated before scheduling any other activities.
3. Community activities will be assigned in accordance with the priority rankings indicated in the facility use schedules in the implementation procedures of this policy.

C. Fee Structure

1. Users may be charged fees for use of school facilities.
2. Users will not be discriminated against based upon race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age, and/or any other legally protected status.
3. The following organizations are exempt from the charge of a facility fee:
 - a. Board meetings and activities
 - b. HCPSS meetings and activities
 - c. HCPSS employee organizations
 - d. School-related support organizations
 - e. Howard Community College
 - f. Howard County Government and Departments
 - g. Nonprofit youth organizations.
4. The following organizations will be charged a facility fee for use of school facilities:
 - a. Schools other than the HCPSS
 - b. Churches/religious organizations
 - c. Nonprofit organizations, except as provided in C.3.g. above, sponsoring events where an admission or participation fee is charged, or at which participants engage in activities to raise funds or other items of value for the organization, regardless of the intended or actual use of any receipts
 - d. Profit-making organizations holding nonprofit activities
 - e. Nonprofit adult organizations such as partisan political groups, civic associations, social/fraternal groups, and square-dancing groups.

5. All users, with the exception of HCPSS programs and activities, including all school-related support organizations and community groups, will be charged staffing fees when:
 - a. Use occurs on weekends or holidays (when schools and offices are closed)
 - b. Use of school facilities for activities results in overtime costs for school personnel
 - c. Use requires staffing services beyond the staff members' normal working schedule.
 6. All users, with the exception of HCPSS programs and activities, will be charged an energy fee when a change in the prescribed temperature is requested. All requests must be made in writing. The Use of School Facilities Office will provide the user, upon request, any pertinent energy management policies, procedures, and associated costs.
 7. All fees associated with the use of school facilities will be reviewed by the Board annually.
- D. Permitted use of a school building/grounds and future use of school building/grounds by any organization are contingent upon:
1. The organization taking proper steps to protect the school property and to ensure complete safety
 2. The payment of any HCPSS expenses to the Finance Office.
- E. Groups claiming nonprofit status may be required to provide a letter of determination from the Internal Revenue Service or incorporating state explaining their nonprofit status and/or a copy of their bylaws or incorporation papers.
- F. Exceptions
1. The Superintendent/Designee may refuse and/or disapprove the use of any school facility for the purposes stated in the Public School Laws of Maryland.
 2. Any exception or special request not covered under these regulations will be referred to the Use of School Facilities Office for a decision.
 3. Energy fees may be waived or reduced by the Superintendent/Designee for school-related support organizations, considered in consultation with representatives of those organizations.

V. Compliance

- A. The Use of School Facilities Office will be responsible for coordinating the use of all HCPSS outdoor areas and facilities.
- B. The principal/athletic and activity manager is responsible for submitting school needs within the established timetable.

VI. Delegation of Authority

The Superintendent is authorized to develop appropriate procedures to implement this policy.

VII. References

- A. Legal
 - Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. Section 501)
 - COMAR 13A.02.04.01--.07
 - Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 14
 - Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, §7-108, §7-109, §7-110
- B. Other Board Policies
 - 1000 Civility
 - 1040 Safe School Environments
 - 1050 Tobacco-Free Environment
 - 6060 Community Improvements to School Sites or School Facilities
 - 7050 Drug Use by Employees: Illegal Drugs, Drug Paraphernalia, and Controlled Substances
 - 9240 Student Use and Possession of Tobacco Products
 - 9250 Weapons
 - 10010 Distribution and Display of Materials and Announcements
- C. Other
 - Application for Use of School Facilities
 - Cancellation - Use of School Facilities Permit

ADOPTED: November 25, 1975

AMENDED: July 13, 1989

July 8, 1993

March 23, 1995

May 23, 2002

February 10, 2011

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I. Requirements for Use

- A. The use of school facilities is subject to the approval of the Superintendent pursuant to this policy statement and the implementation procedures.
- B. All activities must be open to the public and cannot discriminate on the basis of location of residence within Howard County.
- C. All organizations wishing to use the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) facilities must submit a completed application. The individual submitting the application must be 18 years of age or older. The approved application for facilities is not subject to transfer, assignment, and/or subleasing.
- D. Adequate and appropriate supervision will be provided by the using organization. HCPSS personnel assigned as custodians, or any other school representatives, will not assume any of the supervisory responsibilities related to the activity.
- E. No decorations will be used in the buildings unless they are of fireproof material. There will be no use of flammable materials nor open flames in school buildings or on school grounds.
- F. For any public assembly where 250 or more persons are anticipated, the using organization is required to have one certified adult crowd manager present for every 250 people as specified by the Howard County Fire Marshal.
- G. When any organization is meeting in a school facility, or when any activity involving people is in session in the school, all exits which in any way serve the area(s) being used must be free of padlocks, chains, or other obstructions. There must be free egress for all persons in the event of an emergency. The using organization will establish these conditions with the aid of the assigned custodian or school representative. The above-stated conditions will be maintained by the organization, during the period of its occupancy.
- H. Motor vehicles will be parked only in designated areas; no driving or parking will be permitted on field areas.
- I. Each using organization will have a standard procedure in case of an emergency. Leaders of respective organizations will be familiar with contact procedures of the police, ambulance, and fire department.

- J. Equipment and materials owned by the user may be stored with permission in schools at the user's risk. The Board will not be liable for their abuse, damage, or theft.
- K. Any sale of food must be approved in advance by the Use of School Facilities Office and be in compliance with the Howard County Health Department regulations.
- L. Grass cutting and grounds maintenance will be performed by HCPSS personnel only.
- M. Any alteration or installation of equipment (goals, backstops, fences, etc.) must have prior written approval from the Use of School Facilities Office.
- N. All soccer goals must be staked or properly weighted at all times, whether in storage or during use.
- O. Games such as soft toss, which result in baseballs/softballs being driven into backstops or fences, are prohibited.
- P. The using organization will leave assigned areas as clean and in as good working order as the areas were found. Violations may result in:
 - 1. Denying further use
 - 2. Charges for cleaning and/or repair services.
- Q. The use of tape on any surface, e.g., carpet, tile, wood floors, is prohibited.

II. Facility Use Schedule

- A. After meeting the program and activity needs of the school system and school-related support organizations, priority will be given to community-based activities in the following manner:

CHART A

SEASON: FALL – WINTER – SPRING – Activity Period				
INDOOR AREAS: WEEKDAY PRIORITY				
TIME	AREA	1	2	3
7:00AM-9:00AM	CAFETERIA	Day Care	Rec. Activity	All Other Requests
	GYM	Day Care	Youth Sports	All Other Requests
	AUX. GYM	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity	All Other Requests
	AUDITORIUM	Performing Arts	Meetings	All Other Requests
	CLASSROOM	Educational Activity	Meetings	All Other Requests
2:30PM-6:00PM	CAFETERIA	Day Care	Rec. Activity	All Other Requests
	GYM	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity	All Other Requests
	AUX. GYM	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity	All Other Requests
	AUDITORIUM	Performing Arts	Meetings	Educational Activity
	CLASSROOM	Educational Activity	Meetings	All Other Requests
6:00PM-8:00PM	CAFETERIA	Rec. Activity	Meetings	All Other Requests
	GYM	Youth Sports	Adult Sports	Rec. Activity
	AUX. GYM	Youth Sports	Adult Sports	Rec. Activity
	AUDITORIUM	Performing Arts	Meetings	Educational Activity
	CLASSROOM	Educational Activity	Meetings	All Other Requests
8:00PM	CAFETERIA	Rec. Activity	Meetings	All Other Requests
	GYM	Adult Sports	Rec. Activity	Youth Sports
	AUX. GYM	Adult Sports	Rec. Activity	Youth Sports
	AUDITORIUM	Performing Arts	Meetings	Educational Activity
	CLASSROOM	Educational Activity	Meetings	All Other Requests
WEEKEND PRIORITY				
7:00AM-9:00AM	CAFETERIA	Rec. Activity	Meetings	All Other Requests
	GYM	Adult Sports	Youth Sports	All Other Requests
	AUX. GYM	Adult Sports	Youth Sports	All Other Requests
	AUDITORIUM	Performing Arts	Rec. Activity	All Other Requests
	CLASSROOM	Educational Activity	Meetings	All Other Requests
9:00AM-6:00PM	CAFETERIA	Rec. Activity	Meetings	All Other Requests
	GYM	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity	All Other Requests
	AUX. GYM	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity	All Other Requests
	AUDITORIUM	Performing Arts	Educational Activity	Meetings
	CLASSROOM	Educational Activity	Rec. Activity	All Other Requests
6:00PM	CAFETERIA	Rec. Activity	Meetings	All Other Requests
	GYM	Adult Sports	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity
	AUX. GYM	Adult Sports	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity
	AUDITORIUM	Performing Arts	Meetings	Rec. Activity
	CLASSROOM	Educational Activity	Meetings	All Other Requests

CHART B

SEASON: SUMMER Activity Period				
INDOOR AREAS: WEEKDAY PRIORITY				
TIME	AREA	1	2	3
7:00AM-9:00AM	CAFETERIA	Day Care	Rec. Activity	Meetings
	GYM	Day Care	Youth Sports	Adult Sports
	AUX. GYM	Adult Sports	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity
	AUDITORIUM	Performing Arts	Meetings	Rec. Activity
	CLASSROOM	Educational Activity	Rec. Activity	Meetings
9:00AM-3:00PM	CAFETERIA	Rec. Activity	Day Care	Meetings
	GYM	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity	Adult Sports
	AUX. GYM	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity	Adult Sports
	AUDITORIUM	Performing Arts	Rec. Activity	Meetings
	CLASSROOM	Educational Activity	Rec. Activity	Meetings
3:00PM-6:00PM	CAFETERIA	Day Care	Rec. Activity	Meetings
	GYM	Day Care	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity
	AUX. GYM	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity	Adult Sports
	AUDITORIUM	Performing Arts	Rec. Activity	Meetings
	CLASSROOM	Rec. Activity	Day Care	Educational Activity
6:00PM	CAFETERIA	Rec. Activity	Meetings	Rec. Activity
	GYM	Adult Sports	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity
	AUX. GYM	Adult Sports	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity
	AUDITORIUM	Performing Arts	Rec. Activity	Meetings
	CLASSROOM	Educational Activity	Rec. Activity	Meetings
WEEKEND PRIORITY				
7:00AM-9:00AM	CAFETERIA	Rec. Activity	Meetings	All Other Requests
	GYM	Adult Sports	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity
	AUX. GYM	Adult Sports	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity
	AUDITORIUM	Performing Arts	Rec. Activity	Meetings
	CLASSROOM	Educational Activity	Rec. Activity	Meetings
9:00AM-6:00PM	CAFETERIA	Rec. Activity	Meetings	All Other Requests
	GYM	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity	Adult Sports
	AUX. GYM	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity	Adult Sports
	AUDITORIUM	Performing Arts	Rec. Activity	Meetings
	CLASSROOM	Educational Activity	Rec. Activity	Meetings
6:00PM	CAFETERIA	Rec. Activity	Meetings	All Other Requests
	GYM	Adult Sports	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity
	AUX. GYM	Adult Sports	Youth Sports	Rec. Activity
	AUDITORIUM	Performing Arts	Rec. Activity	Meetings
	CLASSROOM	Educational Activity	Rec. Activity	Meetings

CHART C

SEASON: FALL – SPRING – SUMMER – Activity Period				
OUTDOOR AREAS: WEEKDAY PRIORITY				
TIME	AREA	1	2	3
9:00AM-6:00PM	Baseball/Softball Fields	Youth Sports	Adult Sports	All Other Requests
	Multipurpose Fields	Youth Sports	Adult Sports	All Other Requests
	Tennis Courts	Youth Sports	Adult Sports	All Other Requests
	Track	Youth Sports	Adult Sports	Adult Sports
6:00PM	Baseball/Softball Fields	Youth Sports	Adult Sports	All Other Requests
	Multipurpose Fields	Youth Sports	Adult Sports	All Other Requests
	Tennis Courts	Adult Sports	Youth Sports	All Other Requests
	Track	Youth Sports	Adult Sports	All Other Requests
WEEKEND PRIORITY				
9:00AM-6:00PM	Baseball/Softball Fields	Youth Sports	Adult Sports	All Other Requests
	Multipurpose Fields	Youth Sports	Adult Sports	All Other Requests
	Tennis Courts	Youth Sports	Adult Sports	All Other Requests
	Track	Youth Sports	Adult Sports	All Other Requests
6:00PM	Baseball/Softball Fields	Youth Sports	Adult Sports	All Other Requests
	Multipurpose Fields	Youth Sports	Adult Sports	All Other Requests
	Tennis Courts	Adult Sports	Youth Sports	All Other Requests
	Track	Adult Sports	Youth Sports	All Other Requests

B. Sports program scheduling will be prioritized based on season as follows:

1. Indoor

- a. Fall
 - i. Volleyball/Basketball
 - ii. Wrestling
 - iii. All Others
- b. Winter
 - i. Basketball/Wrestling
 - ii. Soccer/Volleyball
 - iii. All Others
- c. Spring
 - i. Baseball/Softball
 - ii. Soccer/Volleyball
 - iii. All Others
- d. Summer
 - i. Baseball/Softball
 - ii. Soccer/Volleyball
 - iii. All Others

2. Outdoor
 - a. Fall
 - i. Soccer/Football
 - ii. Field Hockey
 - iii. All Others
 - b. Spring/Summer
 - i. Baseball/Softball
 - ii. Lacrosse
 - iii. Soccer
3. Any organization, including schools, wishing to use a field and/or facility will apply to the Use of School Facilities Office. Applications will be received and acted upon in accordance with the priority schedule and following deadlines:

a. Outdoor Areas

Scheduled Activity	Submission Date	Confirmation to School/User
Sept. 1-Dec. 1	June 1 (fall prog.)	July 1
April 1-Sept. 1	Jan. 1 (spr./sum.)	February 1

No field or grounds will be scheduled during the period December 1 – March 31.

b. Indoor Areas

Scheduled Activity	Submission Date	Confirmation to School/User
Sept. 1-Dec. 31	June 1	July 1
Jan. 1-March 31	October 1	November 1
April 1-June 30	January 1	February 1
July 1-August 31	April 1	May 1

- C. Applications received after the submission dates will be acted upon on a first-come, first-served basis. These will be submitted at least seven working days prior to the start of the activities.

III. Administrative Guidelines

- A. To ensure coordinated, maximum public utilization of all facilities, a master schedule shall be established by the Superintendent or his/her designee and maintained at the Department of Education by the Superintendent or his/her designee. Each school will develop its own master calendar of building use and submit it to the Use of School Facilities Office by the established date. This will enable coordinated maximum public utilization of all facilities.
- B. If a principal/designee feels that the building is being misused by any user:
 1. The principal/designee will point out the misuse to the user.

2. The principal will also notify the Use of School Facilities Office, in writing, of the misuse.
 3. If misuse continues, the principal/designee will stop the activity.
 4. The principal will report the misuse to the Use of School Facilities Office who will (in cooperation with the appropriate department head if educational matters are involved) investigate the complaint and determine whether the user should be prohibited from any further use of county schools and/or charged for the damages. Users will be notified of the decision prior to the charge.
 5. Users will request reinstatement of facility use privileges by writing to the Use of School Facilities Office.
 6. All determinations will be made by the Use of School Facilities Specialist.
- C. Occasions arise when school facilities, which have been assigned for use by community organizations, are needed for school purposes.

If it becomes necessary for the school to preempt the use of the facility for a certain period of time, the following will be in effect:

1. The principal/designee will notify the user scheduled for use as to the school's need.
 2. The "Cancellation - Use of School Facilities Permit" form must be completed by the school and sent to the Use of School Facilities Office for action.
 3. The above form should be completed a minimum of one week in advance of the time when the school wishes to use the preempted facility/area.
 4. In instances where day care programs are affected, adequate alternate space will be provided. Specific alternative areas will be indicated on permits issued on a seasonal basis.
- D. A shared use agreement for the James Rouse Theatre for the Performing Arts at Wilde Lake High School operates under the terms specified in the Memorandum of Understanding approved by the Board.

IV. Exclusions

The following are not permitted by users:

- A. Parties, celebrations, recitals, etc., that are essentially personal or private in nature. This exclusion includes birthday, wedding, anniversary, and other similar activities.
- B. Public dances and car washes unless sponsored by the HCPSS or a school-related support organization.
- C. Firearms, weapons, or ammunition in school buildings, consistent with any related statutes and/or regulations.
- D. The possession, use, or distribution of intoxicants and/or controlled dangerous substances.
- E. The use or sale of tobacco in any form at all times. The using group has the clear and definite responsibility for ensuring a tobacco-free environment during their usage.
- F. Rocket or balloon launches and other activities which result in the release of helium-filled balloons into the atmosphere. This includes balloon bouquets and presentations, which also may result in release into the atmosphere.
- G. There will be no signs, banners, pennants, or the like placed in or on school buildings or school grounds by any user, except those associated with activities sponsored by or for the school community or school-related support organization. Other users may place temporary identification signs on school grounds only during the actual hours the building is being used. At the conclusion of the use of the school, the user must remove the signs.
- H. Food and beverages are prohibited from classroom areas, auditoriums, and gymnasiums. The sole exception is that athletic teams may have sports drinks in gymnasium team areas.

V. Payment

- A. All payments will be made to the Finance Office.
- B. Remittance of charges must be paid to the HCPSS within 10 days after receiving invoice.

- C. If, for any reason, the facilities are not used at the time requested and approved, indicated charges for costs incurred by the Board will be paid to the Finance Office unless the Use of School Facilities Office is notified of a cancellation at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled activity.

VI. School Closures

- A. All use of school facilities will be canceled when schools are closed for the full day or dismissed early due to emergency conditions or emergency measures.
- B. In the case of inclement weather, a permit may be suspended in order to prevent damage to grounds/facilities.
- C. If a snow emergency plan for Howard County is in effect at 7:00 a.m. on Saturday, Sunday, or on a day when schools are closed for students, all community programs and activities scheduled to take place in school facilities are canceled. Should the snow emergency plan go into effect after 7:00 a.m., programs and activities that are in progress may be completed. All programs scheduled to begin after the time that the snow emergency plan went into effect are cancelled.
- D. Groups are under no obligation to hold activities in the event that schools are open for community and school use during inclement weather. If the user group wishes to cancel prior to or during an activity, they may do so without penalty upon notification to the Use of School Facilities Office. The user group is responsible for notifying the participants.

VII. Restrictions

- A. Use of specified areas and equipment including, but not limited to, computer labs, computers, tents, inflatables, lifts, ladders, stadiums, field hockey fields, kitchens, weight rooms, auditoriums, and therapy tanks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- B. Cooking classes are restricted solely to the family and consumer science room, cafeteria, or the specific recreation activity room designed for food preparation.

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