



Lawrence Public Schools Policy

Non-school Use of Facilities

Policy

Section K: School / Community Relations

KF

Subject: Community Use of School Facilities

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Policy Statement

(Replaces K-8)

Lawrence Public Schools (LPS) believes its buildings and facilities are community assets, and as such their availability and use beyond their primary educational purpose is to be encouraged. To ensure maximum community benefit and the safe and responsible use of buildings while continuing to prioritize the needs of Lawrence's K-12 students, this policy shall apply to all LPS facility use by non-school parties.

- Availability of specific buildings and spaces for application to rent or use is at the sole and final discretion of the District.
- All applications for the non-school use of school buildings or grounds must be made through the Facility Use Application Form, which requires agreement with the Terms and Conditions for use of LPS facilities.
- Completed applications which meet the requirements outlined in the Terms and Conditions will be forwarded, along with District recommendations, to the District's governing body for action.
- Applications must be submitted with sufficient notice for consideration, as specified in the Facility Use Application Form. Exceptions may be made for City use of buildings in emergency circumstances, such as shelter required in response to a natural or other disaster.
- Applicants will be required to carry and maintain insurance as a condition of their use of any District facility.
- The needs of LPS students and schools will, in all cases, preempt outside rental requests. No rental of any school facility will be approved if it conflicts or interferes with educational activities or school-related functions, and no outside events will be considered during normal school operating hours of 7am-4pm during the academic year. Weekday rentals (Monday-Thursday) shall not extend beyond 10pm.

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- Facility usage fees shall be assessed for use of school facilities, as outlined in the Application Form's terms and conditions. The rates will be reviewed annually by the District.
- Exemptions of fee requirements may be made for:
 - Use of LPS property as a place of assemblage of citizens to hear candidates for public office via Candidate Forums/Nights, which shall be considered a civic purpose
 - Municipal/governmental use of facilities for informational and community meetings or forums
 - Activities that are part of a school-based partnership
- Equipment and staffing requirements will be determined by the District, including for technical, custodial and safety needs. This may include both LPS and non-LPS employees – such as Lawrence Fire or Police personnel – and all associated costs will be assessed to the applicant.
- The District or its governing body reserve the right to revoke a use permit, for just cause, at any time.
- No use agreements for school facilities will be made with any individual under the age of 21.
- On days when schools have been closed due to emergency conditions, the school buildings will not be available, and all scheduled use is automatically canceled. The City of Lawrence and/or the Lawrence Public Schools shall not be responsible for the cancellation of an application for use of school property in case of an emergency which results in the closing of schools.

Legal References Massachusetts General Laws: 71:71; 30B:1-12

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