

Community Use of Schools

1.0 Rationale

- 1.1 The property of the Durham District School Board including school buildings, grounds, parking lots, fields and equipment are primarily for the use and benefit of students. However, the Board recognizes that it is in the interest of the public that the fullest possible use be made of the District's facilities. Therefore, the District may permit their use of facilities and grounds outside of normal school hours in accordance with the terms of this Policy and the Procedure adopted under this Policy.

2.0 Policy Objective

- 2.1 The objective of this Policy is to establish the parameters for community use of District property and facilities. In doing so, the Board adopts the following principles for Community Use of Schools:
- I. Hate and Bias will not be tolerated - The Board values the rich diversity of our communities and strives to promote inclusiveness for all individuals and communities that access our schools. In order to promote safe environments, free from hatred, prejudice or discrimination, the District shall not permit space to hate groups or individuals that engage in hatred, violence, discrimination or bias against any groups or individuals based on prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Human Rights Code.
 - II. School Activities Take Priority - School activities, extra-curricular activities and parent involvement activities organized or administered by the school or school board have priority use of school space during and after regular school hours.
 - III. Schools are Hubs - Schools are the hubs of their communities and offer an effective use of space by providing citizens with a place to come together, volunteer, build skills, access community programs, become physically active and build strong and healthy communities.
 - IV. Support for a Positive Climate for Youth Community Use of Schools supports and promotes healthy, active lifestyles for community youth.
 - V. Fair Equitable Access - Schools are welcoming and inclusive environments and offer parent groups and community organizations fair and equitable access to use of school space at affordable rates for community purposes, outside of regular school hours.
 - VI. Respect for Roles and Responsibilities - Community Use of Schools partners and stakeholders respect each other's roles, responsibilities and obligations to the community and education system.
 - VII. Not-For-Profit organizations to be charged affordable rates - after school user fees for school facilities are to be affordable for Not-For-Profit users.
- 2.2 This policy is to be interpreted and applied in accordance with the District's commitment to the Ontario Human Rights Code in providing services and workplaces that are safe, welcoming, respectful, inclusive, equitable and accessible, and that are free from discrimination and harassment under applicable legislation.

3.0 Definitions

In this Policy,

- 3.1 Board refers to the Board of Trustees for Durham District School Board.
- 3.2 District refers to the corporate entity of Durham District School Board.
- 3.3 Staff refers to any individual who is employed by Durham District School Board.

(Definitions of hate and prejudice are included in the body of the Policy (section 5.6)).

4.0 Responsibilities

- 4.1 **Trustees:** Trustees are responsible for setting the strategic direction and developing and maintaining policies. They are also responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of policies developed by the Board in supporting the Multi-Year Strategic Plan.
- 4.2 **Director of Education:** The operations of the District are the responsibility of the Director of Education (and designates) and include measures to operationalize and ensure compliance with Board policies by adopting and implementing appropriate procedures and by providing professional learning and training to staff to support implementation. A focus on enhancing understanding of Indigenous rights, human rights, anti-oppression, anti-racism and anti-discrimination, and addressing discriminatory assumptions, stereotypes, biases, barriers, experiences and outcomes is required.

5.0 Policy – Rules and Requirements

5.1 Buildings, Grounds and Equipment

- 5.1.1 Permit holders shall be responsible to the District for all damages they may cause and shall agree to indemnify the Board and to provide proof of liability insurance in accordance with the Procedure adopted under this Policy. The District assumes no liability for any items stored on Board property.
- 5.1.2 Smoking/vaping of tobacco or cannabis is not permitted within 20 metres of District property. The consumption of alcoholic beverages is not permitted on District property with the exception of licensed events at the Education Centre.
- 5.1.3 Permission to charge an admission fee and/or to sell refreshments or other goods may be granted by the District, in accordance with any Procedure adopted under this Policy.
- 5.1.4 The issuance of any permit under this Policy shall not establish any form of lease or rental contract between the District and any person or entity. Subject to the terms of any Procedure adopted under this Policy, the District may, at any time whatsoever and regardless of whether a fee has been paid, withdraw the use of any facility or property if in the opinion of the District (in its unfettered discretion) the use to which the facility or property is to be or is being put, is not in the best interests of the District or community or is not aligned with the District's commitment to advancing human rights.
- 5.1.5 Permit holders shall not represent in any way that they are affiliated with the District by virtue of the permit and shall not reference the name of the school or District property or facility in any notice, sign or advertising without also confirming, with the same prominence, that the permit holder is not affiliated with the District and subject to approval of District staff in accordance with

the Procedure adopted under this Policy.

- 5.1.6 Permit holders shall not advertise products, businesses or other services and shall not solicit business while on District property.
- 5.1.7 School audio visual equipment and sports equipment may be made available, at the discretion of District staff in accordance with the Procedure adopted under this Policy.
- 5.1.8 No changes or additions to electrical wiring are to be made without written pre-approval of the District in accordance with the Procedure adopted under this Policy.
- 5.1.9 In the interest of health and safety, animals, with the exception of Service Animals that may be permitted under the relevant policies and procedures of the Board, shall not be permitted in the school buildings.
- 5.1.10 A cafeteria may be made available for community use under the terms of this Policy and any Procedure adopted under this Policy; however, neither the kitchen area nor servery shall be made available for community use.

5.2 Supervision & Security

- 5.2.1 The use of any facilities or property shall, at all times, be subject to the supervision of District employees, unless the District authorizes otherwise in accordance with the Procedure adopted under this Policy.
- 5.2.2 A custodian shall be on the premises at all times when a facility is used by a permit holder unless otherwise approved by the Associate Director, Corporate Services.

5.3 Facility Permits – School Board/Use

- 5.3.1 School/student programmes requiring facilities after 6:00 p.m. shall obtain a permit for the space through Community Use of Schools in accordance with the terms of any Procedure adopted under this Policy.

5.4 Facility Permits – Community Use Groups

- 5.4.1 Any and all community use of District property or facilities shall only be pursuant to a permit issued by the Community Use of Schools office in accordance with the terms of the Procedure adopted under this Policy. The minimum age of a permit holder shall be 18 years of age. Permits are not transferrable.
- 5.4.2 Any permit for use shall be subject to being pre-empted by a school or District use in accordance with the terms of any Procedure adopted under this Policy.
- 5.4.3 Children's programmes shall be given priority in the Procedure adopted under this Policy.
- 5.4.4 Provided there is compliance with section 5.6 of this Policy, and any related terms and conditions of the Procedure adopted under this Policy, a permit may be granted to an organization or group of persons associated with a religious or spiritual belief.
- 5.4.5 School gymnasias or similar facilities may be made available to municipal clerks as polling stations. School gymnasias or similar facilities may be made available to Elections Ontario and Elections Canada pursuant to any agreement entered into between the District and Elections Ontario or Elections Canada as the case may be.

5.5 Fees

- 5.5.1 Reasonable fees may be levied for all use of school facilities in accordance with the Procedure adopted under this Policy. All community use permits shall be subject to an administrative processing fee that is not refundable once a permit is processed. Charges may be levied for custodial overtime in accordance with the Procedure adopted under this Policy.

- 5.5.2 The Procedure adopted under this Policy shall provide a process for consideration of exemptions for all or a portion of fees and charges associated with any permit based on the financial ability of the applicant and based on the Board's commitment to advancing equity, inclusion and with a view to providing opportunities for group that are discriminated against, marginalized or minoritized.
- 5.5.3 In any case, no fees or charges shall be levied (except for extra custodial services) for use Monday to Friday in respect of:
- i) Board sponsored activities or staff programming.
 - ii) School Advisory Committee Meetings or school related parents' groups meetings.
 - iii) Community Recreation Department Programmes that have reciprocal agreements with the Board for shared use of space.
 - iv) Meetings of any local unit of a union or federation with members employed by the District.
 - v) Staff professional groups (Example: Librarian Associations, Union Committee) for regular meetings.

5.6 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

- 5.6.1 The Board values the rich diversity of our communities and promotes inclusiveness for all individuals and communities that access our schools. In order to promote safe environments, free from hatred and prejudice, the Board will not permit space to hate groups or individuals that promote hatred, violence, discrimination or bias against any groups or individuals based on prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Human Rights Code.
- 5.6.2 All permit holders shall, and shall confirm in any permit application that they will, promote equitable, safe and accepting practices consistent with the Provincial Code of Conduct and the Ontario Human Rights Code. Copies of the Provincial Code of Conduct are available at the [Ministry of Education's website](#).
- 5.6.3 All permit holders are prohibited from engaging in or permitting any activity on any District property that is motivated by bias, prejudice or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other protected ground under the Human Rights Code. All permit holders are prohibited from engaging in any behaviour that threatens or harasses staff, students or anyone else while on District property.
- 5.6.4 The Procedure adopted under this Policy shall provide for a process to review and consider complaints of breach by a permit holder of this Policy or the Procedure adopted under this Policy which shall allow for permits to be revoked without notice. The Procedure shall also provide for consideration of special or extenuating circumstances in relation to an alleged breach of this Policy.
- 5.6.5 Hate includes expressions of bias, prejudice and bigotry that are carried out by individuals, groups, organizations and states, directed against stigmatized and marginalized persons and groups in communities, and intended to affirm and secure existing structures of domination and subordination. Hate activities and incidents represent some of the most destructive forms of human rights-based discrimination by promoting hatred against identifiable groups of people. Some hate incidents are also considered criminal offences committed against a person or property and motivated, in whole or in part, by bias or prejudice based on real or perceived race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status, socio-economic status or disability/ level of ability/ or any other prohibited ground under the Human Rights Code. Prejudice is the pre-judgment (usually negative) of groups or individuals, or preconceived notions about them, based on misinformation, bias, or stereotypes.

6.0 Evaluation

- 6.1 This policy may be reviewed and updated as may be deemed necessary or appropriate, but it shall be reviewed at least every 5 years.

7.0 Reference Documents

- 7.1 Procedure
- 7.2 Other Documents (Legislation, Provincial Regulations, Etc.)
The Provincial Code of Conduct
The Ontario Human Rights Code
The Education Act

8.0 Appendices

None

Appendix:

None

Effective Date:

1969-04-14

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1973-12-10

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