

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

PURPOSE:

This policy is established to clarify and delineate the expectations of the North Kingstown School Committee in regards to the use of school facilities by persons outside of those uses directly related to the normal educational programs.

PHILOSOPHY:

The School Committee believes that the public schools should be considered as community schools, and is therefore committed to the concept of making the schools available for use outside normal educational programs whenever possible.

While school facilities are public owned buildings, paid for by tax dollars, the general public should not be considered as having an obligation to fund extra costs for private group use of facilities. It is not unreasonable however, for the School Committee to expect groups authorized to use facilities to pay the minimal costs so incurred by the district for said use.

The Committee further recognizes, however, that there are certain instances wherein the cost for use of facilities should be borne by the School District's general fund.

POLICY STATEMENT:

North Kingstown community groups shall be permitted to use school facilities for worthwhile purposes at times when such use will not interfere with the school program. School related groups shall not be charged for the use of school facilities except for any additional custodial expenses incurred.

Other eligible North Kingstown community organizations, as defined in this policy, shall be required to reimburse the School Department for the use of space requested as presented in the regulations. Groups from outside North Kingstown or any group charging admission or operating for a profit, shall pay a rental fee as presented in the regulations.

Granting Approval

The Supervisor of Plants and Grounds shall act as agent of the Superintendent in receiving applications and scheduling the use of school facilities by eligible community organizations. The Supervisor of Plants and Grounds will be responsible to review all applications, estimate costs for rental, manpower, technicians and any other expenses and approve or disapprove the application.

Eligible North Kingstown Community organizations are defined as any 501(c)(3) organization as defined by the Internal Revenue Service.

The Town of North Kingstown Recreation Department and other town governmental agencies shall receive priority consideration for the use of school properties for after school sponsored activities.

Custodians shall be required for the use of gymnasium and shower facilities, auditoriums, or events for which admission is charged of the general public. Any other personnel requirements shall be determined by the Supervisor of Plants and Grounds.

For Private Gain

The Supervisor of Plants and Grounds shall have the authority to approve the request for use of school facilities by community organizations or others not listed above or operated for private gain. The use of school property for any purpose involving private gain shall be discouraged. The Committee shall be guided in its decision by the realization that the facilities of North Kingstown schools should not be rented in competition with tax paying organizations of the community who are in the business of renting similar type facilities and whose main source of revenue derives therefrom.

The School Committee shall decide, individually, special requests relative to the use of buildings or any deviation from established policy only after considering the recommendation of the Superintendent.

School Equipment

School equipment may be loaned to responsible community groups for a worthy educational, civic or charitable purpose when:

1. The group borrowing the equipment agrees to accept responsibility for repairing or replacing any equipment damaged or lost while in its possession;
2. The equipment is not unusually expensive and not subject to easy damage;
3. The equipment is in good condition;
4. The group will provide a competent operator for any machines loaned.

School Grounds

The North Kingstown School Committee desires to make school buildings and grounds available for constructive use by the community. Because of increased vandalism to buildings and grounds and community complaints regarding certain uses of school grounds, the Committee has found it necessary to adopt the following rules to try to curb costly and wasteful destruction of school buildings and grounds.

1. Use of school property is limited to activities authorized by the Supervisor of Plants and Grounds as outlined herein. Applications for use are available at the building administrative offices or at the School Department administrative offices.

2. Mini-bikes, motorcycles, snowmobiles, and all other motor-driven vehicles, except authorized staff, student, and municipal vehicles and persons on official business, are prohibited from school grounds at all times.
3. The riding of horses and/or ponies or other domesticated animals on school property is prohibited unless authorized in relation to special approved functions.
4. All persons found in violation of posting and loitering shall be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.
5. None of the above exclusions are intended to curb the legitimate use of school grounds and presently practiced nor is special permission needed for such use. Examples would be public use of tennis courts during non-school hours, parents driving on school grounds to pick up their children and other normal and reasonable use of school grounds by individuals, families and small groups.
6. Any use of school buildings or grounds may be limited or prohibited by the school administration when such use would not be in the best interests of the property and the taxpayers. Any disagreement on such matters shall be appealed to the Superintendent of Schools.
7. A quarterly report with the names of the groups renting the District facilities as well as the dates rented, location, and fees charged, shall be sent to the Director of Administrative Services and submitted to the School Committee for review.

Regulations

The Superintendent shall be responsible for developing regulations outlining the procedures, labor rates, rental fees and indemnification or losses of the owner.

ADOPTED: 9/20/77
Amended: 11/5/90
Amended: 4/2/96
Amended: 11/23/99
Amended: 4/21/2009