

Descriptor Code:

Use of School Facilities

The Houston County Board of Education will permit its school facilities to be used by associations or organizations located within the county for appropriate activities which do not interfere with any activity of the school system, under the following conditions:

- 1) School-sponsored activities will have first priority in the use of school facilities. Further, those groups or organizations which exist solely to support the school or a school program, such as parent/teacher organizations and booster clubs, shall have second priority with regard to the use of school facilities. Such groups shall be allowed to use school facilities without charge.
- 2) Any other governmental entity in the county will be allowed to use school facilities in accordance with this policy or in accordance with any existing intergovernmental agreement between the school district and the other governmental entity.
- 3) System facilities will not be made available to individuals or families for any use including, but not limited to, funerals, wakes, weddings or family reunions. Funerals may be allowed for enrolled students and active staff without fees.
- 4) Any organization, association or business located in the county or composed primarily of the county residents may request to use the facilities of the school system by filing with the principal of the school an application on a form prepared and maintained by the system's facility department. The application shall include a fee schedule indicating the facilities of the school subject to use under this policy and the charge or charges associated with that use. These charges shall also include an amount sufficient to pay school system employees for any services, such as janitorial, maintenance or kitchen services, to be necessary in connection with the use of the facility. The form will designate the contact person who will be the person accountable for complying with the requirements of this policy.
- 5) No direct payment shall be made by the school or renting party to Houston County school system employees. Overtime hours will be reported on the individual's regular time card and payment will be included in the next regular salary check.
- 6) Permission to use school system facilities does not constitute the endorsement by the Board of Education or the school system of any organization, the beliefs of the organization, nor the expression of any opinion by the organization or any of its representatives.
- 7) The system reserves the right to withhold approval or to cancel any approved use of school facilities when it is determined that such use would be disruptive to the mission or purpose of the school system or if cancellation is necessary for the best interests of the school system or its students.
- 8) An application for use of school facilities must be filed with the facilities rental committee in accordance with this policy at least ten business days in advance of the anticipated use. The application must be approved by the principal and by the facilities rental committee. Any and all fees due for the use of the facility must be paid at least five days in advance of the use of the facility.

- 9) As a part of the application form, all applicants for use of the facility must execute an agreement to hold the Board of Education harmless from any and all loss or damage that may arise during or be caused in any way by the use of the facility. This hold harmless agreement shall include the indemnification for any damages done to the building or property owned by the Board of Education as well as any claim of damages made by anyone else. Further, the agreement shall include a specific release on behalf of the organization using the facility.
- 10) The facilities committee may, as a condition of use of the facility, require the organization to secure adequate police protection if deemed necessary.
- 11) The organization seeking to use the facilities will be required to furnish evidence of sufficient insurance in an amount to protect the school district from liability for any bodily injury or damage to property which may occur during the use of facilities by such group or organization.
- 12) Multi-day or long-term use of system facilities by any organization is prohibited. Any request to use school facilities will be made and approved for only a single day or portion of a day. The only exception to this provision will be when there exists an intergovernmental agreement such as referred to in paragraph 2 above.
- 13) The organization using the facility is responsible for insuring that the facility is returned in a state of cleanliness and in the same condition as when made available for use. Any and all activities conducted on school facilities shall be in compliance with all local, state and federal laws and shall conform to existing and relevant school board policies. Illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages and all forms of tobacco are prohibited in school facilities and on school grounds.
- 14) McConnell-Talbert Stadium will not be rented except for the following: 4th of July Celebration, Optimist Bowl, and Golden Olympics.
- 15) Gymnasiums shall be rented only to intergovernmental agencies.
- 16) School-connected groups may petition the School Food Service Department for preparation of banquet meals. If approved, the petitioning group will reimburse the School Food Service Department for all actual expenses, including cost of food and overtime salaries for personnel.