

Community Relations

Use of School Facilities

The Ledyard Board of Education recognizes that the school buildings and grounds are valuable public resources. The Board is committed to making these facilities available to the community as much as possible under proper and appropriate conditions when such use does not conflict with school activities and functions. The Board shall grant the use of school facilities for activities of an educational, cultural, civic, and other non-commercial uses consistent with the public interest when such activities do not interfere with the school program or school-sponsored activities.

Consistent with the guidelines in this policy, the Superintendent shall develop and promulgate regulations and associated forms governing use of school buildings by community and other groups. Organizations or individuals requesting to use school facilities shall be provided with a copy of the rules regarding use of such facilities and shall be informed of the potential consequences of violating such rules.

Any group intended to serve youth under the age of twenty one (21) listed in Title 36 of the United States Code, which includes, but is not limited to, Big Brothers & Big Sisters of America, Boy Scouts of America, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Civil Air Patrol, Girl Scouts of America, Little League Baseball, Inc., and Naval Sea Cadet Corps, may use school property upon payment of suitable fees and costs according to the Board approved fee schedule.

If a community group is denied the use of any Ledyard Public School facility by a building administrator, the group may appeal that decision to the Superintendent and, if necessary, appeal the Superintendent's decision to the Board.

Eligible Organizations and Priority of Use

1. Educational programs.
2. Student activities.
3. Administrative, faculty, or staff activities (includes Parent-Teacher groups).
4. Town department or agency activities (Parks and Recreation activities top priority).
5. Activities sponsored by and for organizations promoting the physical or political or cultural wellbeing of the citizens of Ledyard.
6. Private organizations, private businesses or enterprises located in or taxpayers to the Town of Ledyard.
7. Out-of-town organizations.

The Superintendent's approval is required for all facility usage requests submitted by out-of-town organizations, private organizations, private businesses or enterprises, or any other for-profit groups. All other requests may be approved by the appropriate Building Administrator.

Restrictions on Use of School Facilities

1. Illegal activities will not be tolerated and any violations may justify permanent restriction of the organization(s) involved.
2. Use or possession of alcoholic beverages or unauthorized controlled substances shall not be permitted on school property. There shall be no smoking or use of any tobacco products in school buildings or on school grounds.
3. Vendors shall be prohibited in school buildings or on school grounds, unless specifically approved by the Superintendent.
4. Inappropriate advertising and/or decorations shall not be allowed.
5. Activities which engender racial or religious prejudices or which are inimical to

democracy are prohibited. No school facilities may be used by any individual, group or society which advocates a social or political change by violence or revolution.

6. School facilities may not be used for the promotion of any commercial interest or private or corporate gain other than by a duly organized and recognized charity, unless specifically approved by the Superintendent.
7. The Board, and/or its designee, reserves the right to determine the need for: (a) the applying organization to have additional liability insurance; (b) police protection and traffic control; (c) a food service representative to be present when cafeteria equipment is in use; and (d) the presence of custodian(s) during the activity.
8. Permission shall not be granted for the purpose of providing sectarian instructions or dissemination of religious doctrine during the normal school day. To further provide for separation of church and state, use of school facilities for sectarian purposes may not begin until fifteen (15) minutes after the dismissal of students has occurred in the school.
9. Unleashed animals are not permitted on school grounds, and no animals are allowed in school facilities, with the exception of seeing-eye dogs, unless specifically approved by the Building Administrator. All owners are required to clean up after their animals while on school property.
10. Each organization approved to use school facilities is expected to fully comply with all applicable Board policies, rules and regulations regarding the use of school facilities. The organization shall be held responsible and accountable for the behavior and actions of the individuals attending the activity. Violation of Board policies, rules or regulations may result in immediate termination of the activity and may justify permanent restriction of the organization involved.

Use of School Grounds for Recreation

The grounds at Ledyard Public School facilities, whenever possible, shall remain open and available for play and informal recreation at the user's own risk. Such use must not interfere with the safe and orderly operation of the school or other school-approved activities and is restricted to times outside the normal school day.

No unauthorized use of school grounds, including parking lots, will be permitted after 9:30 p.m.

Fees

Use of school facilities by all community-based, non-profit groups shall be without fee charge. This does not, however, automatically relieve the user from any associated costs for proper use of those facilities (i.e., police for security, kitchen staff for cooking, custodians, etc.). Such costs shall be the responsibility of the user and shall be at the current contractual or prevailing rates, whichever is applicable, in accordance with the "School Usage Fees" schedule as approved annually by the Board.

Businesses or private groups and organizations approved to use school facilities shall be charged in accordance with the approved "School Usage Fees" schedule.

The Superintendent or his/her designee may waive charges or fees for the use of school facilities if the requested usage is deemed to be in the best interests of the school system and/or the Town.

All fees for the use of school facilities by all community-based, non-profit groups shall be paid directly to Ledyard Public Schools, and the funds shall be deposited in the associated school's Student Activity Fund and are to be used for the direct support of student programs. Fees collected from businesses or private groups and organizations approved to use school facilities shall be forwarded to the Town Treasurer.

Responsibilities

Building Administrators shall submit copies of each facility use approval to the Superintendent. Building Administrators shall also, at the end of each school year, submit to the Superintendent a list of all facility usage approved during the previous school year, which specifies the organization involved, facilities used, purpose for which the facility was used, and total number of hours of use by each group or organization.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall meet regularly with representatives from the Ledyard Public Libraries and the Town's Parks and Recreation department to coordinate the availability of school facilities for community use.

After the conclusion of each school year, the Superintendent shall provide to the Board a summation of the usage of school facilities by community-based and other organizations.

Related Policies:

0521.2 – Commitment to Religious Neutrality

1314 – Soliciting Funds from and by School Personnel

1316 – Conduct on School Property

1324 – Soliciting Funds from and by Students

1331 – Tobacco Free Environment

1700 – Firearms Prohibited on School Property

6145 – Extra-Class Activities – Limited Open Forum

3. Comprehensive Improvement Plans/Schedules

Connecticut General Statutes

10-221g. Instructional time and facility usage assessment.

10-222a. Boards to have use of funds from repayment and insurance proceeds for school materials and from payment for custodial services for use of school facilities.

10-239. Use of school facilities for other purposes.

53a-185. Loitering on school grounds: Class C misdemeanor.

Title 20, United States Code Sections 4071-4074 – “Equal Access Act”
Section 7905 – “Equal Access to Public School Facilities”

Title 36, United States Code, Subtitle II – Patriotic and National Organizations

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LEDYARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Ledyard, Connecticut