

Community Relations

Use of School Facilities

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A. General Policy

The school buildings and grounds shall be available for use by Vernon and other Non-Vernon based organizations as well as state and government agencies. The purpose of such use should be in the public interest and must not be detrimental to the purposes of the school system. All groups wishing to use the Vernon Public School Buildings and Grounds must complete a School Use Form and receive approval from the building principal.

1. Priority Organizations

The use of schools for school functions shall have priority and precedence over their use by any outside organization. School buildings and grounds will be made available to **Vernon** and other Non-Vernon based organizations in the order listed below:

- a. Vernon School related organizations such as PTO's, Booster Clubs, Parent Support Groups, Student Organizations, and Board of Education Employee Groups;
- b. Vernon Parks & Recreation Department;
- c. Vernon Based Non-Profit Organizations such as Scouts, Local Youth Athletic Leagues and Civic, Fraternal, Social and Religious Organizations, if in the judgment of the Administration, there is a positive educational, social or cultural value;
- d. Fee-Charging Organizations such as Vernon Chorale, Dance Recitals, and Music or Drama Groups or Non-Vernon Based Non-Profit Organizations, if in the judgment of the Administration, there is a positive educational, social or cultural value;
- e. Profit-Making Organizations, if in the judgment of the Administration, there is a positive educational, social or cultural value.

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General Policy - continued

2. Insurance Requirements

For any group not included under the Board of Education and Town of Vernon's Blanket Insurance, evidence of Liability Insurance coverage is required to comply with the Town's \$500,000 Personal Injury and Property Damage Single Limit Liability. In addition, the Vernon Board of Education is to be named as an additional insured and a Certificate of Insurance must accompany the original application and contract.

When a group stages an activity on school property where live animals are present, and/or rides on animals or mechanical devices are provided, the organization will be required to furnish a special policy for this event in the amount of \$1,000,000 Injury and Property Damage Single Limit Liability.

3. Liability

If the contractor whose activity involves the presence of live animals and/or rides on animals or mechanical devices has Liability Insurance in the above amount, the sponsoring organization will not be required to obtain this special policy, provided the contractor furnishes the Board of Education with a certificate of insurance from an insurance company with a "BESTS" rating classification of B+ or higher, naming the Board of Education as an additional insured.

Organizations are responsible for reporting and paying all federal, state and other taxes and/or fees to the appropriate agencies.

The person or persons applying for use of the buildings and grounds shall agree to indemnify the Board of Education for any damage done to any school property or equipment by any person or persons attending the meetings or other functions.

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4. Authorization for Use of School Facilities

All use of school buildings and grounds is to have the approval of the school principal. This is contingent upon the following criteria:

- a. A positive educational, cultural or social value is recognized.
- b. The activity or event is reasonably expected not to cause damage, destruction, or a riot on school property.
- c. The organization applying for an application understands and agrees to abide by all rules and regulations of this policy.

If the principal has any questions or doubts about the particular event, the Superintendent is to be consulted. Building and grounds use is to be denied if the provisions of this policy are not met. In addition, use may be denied if it is judged that the use of the building and grounds may produce undue wear and tear on the facilities, may be detrimental to the public image of the Vernon School System or may not be in the best interest of the School System or the town.

B. Specific Rules and Regulations Governing Use of School Facilities

1. School buildings and grounds will not be available for games of chance.
2. Food and beverages are only allowed in designated areas as determined by the school principal.
3. Use or possession of tobacco, alcoholic beverages or unauthorized controlled substances is not allowed in school buildings or on school grounds. In addition, advertising or decorations promoting the above are not permitted.
4. Organizations are to assume responsibility for proper parking of cars. Fire lanes and handicapped parking spaces are to be honored.
5. Persons attending any function must confine themselves to the rooms, corridors, and grounds assigned for their use.

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6. Appropriate footwear must be worn by all persons who use the gymnasium for athletic purposes.
7. Police or Fire Department service may be required, as determined by the principal and/or superintendent for any event open to the general public. The fee shall be paid by the organization using the facility. It will be the responsibility of the organization to employ the Police and Fire Department Service. Proof of notification of these agencies must be submitted to the school principal one week prior to the event.
8. Permission must be obtained to move equipment, other than school furniture (e.g. tables, chairs). The organization is responsible for return of all school equipment and furniture to its original location.
9. The Assistant Director of Plant Operations and the principal will determine if a custodian is required for an event. If a custodian is required, he/she must be on duty until the event has ended and the necessary cleanup has been completed.
10. When a custodian is to be hired, the Board's custodial costs shall be paid by the sponsoring organization. The custodian must be available to the group and shall remain in the area being used.
11. Supervision of the activity, the participants, and the audience will be the responsibility of the sponsoring organization.
12. Organizations shall vacate the building at the time agreed to on the "School Use Form".
13. When special equipment is to be used, such as sound systems, projectors, scoreboards, stage lights, etc., it is to be operated only by a qualified person approved by the school.
14. Cafeteria and kitchen facilities are available for use by fully organized groups. A member of the cafeteria staff must be in attendance to aid in the proper use of equipment and to supervise the cleanup following the preparation and consumption of food. The fee for this worker is to be paid by the group using the cafeteria.

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15. Arrangements for use of kitchens must be made by the organization, through the principal's office, with the Cafeteria Director.
16. Each organization granted permission to use school facilities must comply with all fire safety regulations.
17. Multiple Use Organizations are defined as organizations that rent facilities for multiple occurrences/events. Multiple Use Organizations must be able to successfully demonstrate to the Board of Education that their organization provides Vernon Public School students and their parents/guardians with beneficial and helpful educational and/or support services.
18. Organizations requesting use of Vernon Public School facilities must submit school use forms within six (6) months of the expected use date. This requirement is applicable to all priority organizations listed in this policy with the exception of those names in 1a and 1b, and Multiple Use Organizations.
19. Organizations requesting use of Vernon Public School facilities agree, that, as a condition of any approval granted by the Vernon Board of Education, regardless of a waiver of any or all fees, the approved usage is with the complete understanding that such usage may require the organization to share any common facilities used jointly with any organization listed in sections 1a and 1b of this policy.

C. Cancellations

1. By Permittee

In the event of cancellation, the office of the principal or designee shall be advised as soon as possible, but no later than four (4) hours prior to the time the event was scheduled to begin. The principal shall notify the Superintendent's Office of any cancellation involving a fee or labor payment.

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2. By School Department

All permits are issued with the understanding that school activities subsequently scheduled may take precedence in the use of the facility. Cancellation of a permit under this paragraph requires approval of the Superintendent or his designee. Cancellation of a permit shall not be approved within thirty (30) days of the scheduled use except in an emergency.

3. By School Department or by Permittee

If an event is cancelled by the permittee or school department, a refund will be made if the school department has not incurred expenses on behalf of the permittee.

4. School Closure

If schools are closed due to inclement weather, equipment failures, safety concerns, or any other unforeseen reason, the facility use is automatically cancelled. All prepaid fees will be refunded.

D. Permits, Rental Fees and Labor Fees

1. Permits

All groups requesting use of school buildings and grounds must fill out a school use form and be approved by the school principal (as per Section A, Part 4). Permits which require fees will be issued through the Superintendent's Office.

2. Rental Fees

Rental fee schedules are available from the Director of Business and Finance and will be sent to the applicant with their permit application. When rental fees are required, payment must be made at the time the permit is issued. If payment has not been made prior to the event, the permit will be cancelled. Rental fees may be waived for PTO's, Booster

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Clubs, Parent Support Groups, Student Organizations, and Board of Education Employee Groups. Rental fees may also be waived for the Vernon Parks and Recreation Dept. and Vernon-Based Non-Profit Youth Organizations. The Board of Education may consider a 100% waiver or a 50% reduction in rental fees for non-profit organizations that benefit the community.

3. Labor Fees

All organizations must pay labor fees (if applicable). When labor fees are required, a bill will be sent to the permittee and payment is required within two weeks of receipt of that bill.

E. Procedures for Establishing Fees

At the final Board of Education meeting at the end of each school year, the Board shall review and, if necessary, change the existing schedules for fees relating to the use of school facilities. An annual schedule of building rental fees, cafeteria worker's fees, custodial fee charges, multiple usage fees, and special personnel fees established by the Board of Education will be available from the office of the Director of Business and Finance.

F. School Use Activity Fund

The Board of Education will establish a "School Use Activity Fund" for deposit of all rental, personnel, overhead, and fringe benefit payments. All monies received from permittees will be deposited immediately into this special account.

Wage, Social Security, and overhead payments will be paid out of this account by issuing a check for each applicable payroll to the Board of Education General Payroll Account and/or the Vernon Schools Cafeteria Account. These payments will cover the actual wages and Social Security for the employee or employees covering the event and the clerical overhead expenses.

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Workers Compensation costs, at the rates applicable to each class of employee, will be covered on a monthly basis by forwarding a check from the school use activity fund to the insurance company.

Any organization violating the Use of School Facilities Policy may be denied future use of the Vernon Public School Facilities.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes

10-239 Use of school facilities for other purposes.

P.A. 97-290 An Act Enhancing Educational Choices and Opportunities

Revised: January 24, 2005
June 25, 2007
February 11, 2008