

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES
(Equal Access)

Although the basic purpose of public school premises is to provide the youth of the community a sound educational program, the complete function of education is not achieved until the school premises are made to serve the entire community. To accomplish this objective, when school premises are not in use for school purposes, the Board shall, upon payment of the prescribed fee and subject to the requirements of applicable regulations, permit the use of school premises for auxiliary, educational, recreational, cultural, civic, social, religious or other Board-approved purposes.

[Adoption date:]

LEGAL REFS.: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act; 20 USC 1221 et seq.
Title VIII, Section 801
ORC 3311.215
3313.75; 3313.76; 3313.77; 3313.78; 3313.79
3320.01; 3320.02; 3320.03
4303.26

CROSS REFS.: KGB, Public Conduct on District Property
KI, Public Solicitations in the Schools

NOTE: A brief policy on Community Use of School Premises suffices when it is accompanied by fairly extensive regulations approved by the board. Many policies, however, also contain the basic principles that govern premises used by outside groups.

House Bill 164 enacted the “Ohio Student Religious Liberties Act of 2019.” The act allows students enrolled in a public school to engage in religious expression before, during and after school hours in the same manner and to the same extent that a student is permitted to engage in secular activities or expression before, during and after school hours and removed the previous language in statute allowing the board to limit a student’s exercise or expression of the pupil’s religious beliefs to lunch periods or other noninstructional time periods when pupils are free to associate. Districts also must grant the same access to school facilities to students who wish to conduct a meeting for the purpose of engaging in religious expression as is given to secular student groups, without regard to the content of a student’s or group’s expression.

Districts cannot prohibit a student from engaging in religious expression as defined by law, in the completion of homework, artwork or other written or oral assignments. Assignment grades and scores must be calculated using ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance, including any legitimate pedagogical concerns and cannot penalize or reward a student based on the religious content of a student’s work.

One or more special subcategories may need to be added to take care of statements on special use of premises or use of special facilities (such as swimming pools, stadiums). Such statements can be coded and added following the standard KG sequence by coding KG-R-2-3, etc.

THIS IS A REQUIRED POLICY