

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES AND GROUNDS

The Gorham School Committee recognizes that the primary purpose for use of its facilities is to deliver its education programs. The School Committee also recognizes the capital investment the community has made in its school buildings and facilities. The School Committee believes that such facilities should be available for use of the Gorham community as provided herein for short-term social, community, service and recreational purposes when such uses will not interfere with school programs or activities. For the purpose of this policy, references made to school facilities and grounds include all buildings, auditoriums, gymnasiums, playing fields, walkways and parking lots.

The School Department retains the right at all times to make individual decisions regarding the use of school facilities and may revoke permission for use of its facilities at any time without prior notice or liability.

The Superintendent shall be responsible for the overall implementation of this policy and for developing any necessary administrative procedures concerning facility use. The Facilities Use Coordinator is responsible for administering this policy on a day-to-day basis and shall report to the Director of Facilities Management.

PRIORITY USE OF FACILITIES

The use of school facilities for school educational activities and authorized extra-curricular activities shall, at all times, take precedence over any community use of said facilities. The Facilities Use Coordinator is authorized to approve and schedule the use of school facilities by non-school organizations in accordance with this policy and related procedures. At all times, use of school facilities as needed by the Town of Gorham for the purpose of voting in municipal elections or an emergency shelter shall take precedence. The School Committee shall define facilities use categories and priorities as defined therein:

PRIORITY I. SCHOOL

A. School Activity

The individual leading the activity/program is under the direct supervision of the Gorham School Department and has been given a supervisory responsibility in the program.

B. Gorham Adult Education

Groups organized and sanctioned by the Gorham Adult Education Program.

PRIORITY II. MUNICIPAL/RECREATION

A. Municipal

Groups organized and controlled by the Town of Gorham municipal government.

B. Recreation

Gorham Recreation Department sponsored groups and activities.

PRIORITY III. SCHOOL BENEFACTORS

Groups that are intended to directly support school activities through donation of time and/or services. Examples include, but are not limited to, Gorham Educational Foundation, PTA, USM, Sports Officials and Booster groups.

PRIORITY IV. GORHAM NON-PROFIT YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

Non-school activities/groups composed primarily (at least 80 %) of Gorham school-aged youth. Examples include, but are not limited to, Girl/Boy Scouts and Little League.

PRIORITY V. GORHAM NON-PROFIT ADULT ORGANIZATIONS

Gorham based adult groups and organizations. Examples include, but are not limited to, church groups, fraternal groups and political organizations.

PRIORITY VI. GORHAM FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Gorham based youth or adult organizations composed primarily (at least 80%) of Gorham residents in which the intended activity may involve an admission charge, donation, sales made or any other direct income.

PRIORITY VII. NON-RESIDENT ORGANIZATIONS

A. Non-Profit Youth or Adult Organizations

Non-school activities/groups composed (of less than 80%) Gorham residents.

B. For-Profit Youth or Adult Organizations

Community groups, organizations and businesses composed of less than 80% Gorham residents in which the intended activity may involve an admission charge, donation, sales made or any other direct income.

CONDITIONS OF USE

1. Applicants must complete a written Facilities Use Form at least two (2) weeks in advance requesting to use school facilities. The Facilities Use Form includes a release and indemnity provision and an agreement that the applicant will comply with all School Department policies and rules.
2. No community application for use of school facilities, other than auditoriums, shall be approved more than six (6) months in advance of the intended use. Applications for use of school auditoriums may be approved up to twelve (12) months in advance.
3. The School Committee shall approve a schedule of fees for use of school facilities utilizing actual cost as data in the determination of and are subject to change without notice. Waivers of fees or reductions of fees may be granted at the discretion of the Facilities Use Coordinator. Requests must be received in writing.

4. If the Facilities Use Coordinator deems it necessary for school personnel to be present at a community event, school personnel shall be paid at the expense of the user.
5. The hours during which school facilities are used will, to the extent possible, coincide with the hours during which custodians are regularly scheduled. Users may be required to pay for custodial services if the event requires custodial support over and above the normal custodial schedules and duties.
6. All applications involving a rental fee require a deposit at the time of application and that the balance be paid in full prior to use.
7. All individuals or groups using school facilities are responsible for the preservation of order and must meet all requirements of state statutes, ordinances, conditions and policies and procedures of the Gorham School Department. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in the revocation of use privileges.
8. Organizations or individuals not covered by either the Town of Gorham or the Gorham School Department liability policy shall be required obtain their own insurance coverage and must provide a certificate of insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000 (liability) and \$25,000 (damages) naming the Town of Gorham and the Gorham School Department as additional insureds.
9. Applicants applying for facilities use as a non-profit organization must provide evidence of tax-exemption at the time of application.
10. All applicants granted use of school department facilities shall hold the Gorham School Department free and without harm, from any loss or damage liability or expense that arise during or be caused in any way by such use or occupancy of district facilities. The applicant further agrees to make restitution promptly for any loss or damage occurring during use of said facilities and equipment.
11. Use of equipment is limited to the items specified on the application form and a fee or deposit may be assessed for said use. Installing decorations or scenery, moving equipment or other furniture is prohibited unless special permission is obtained in advance from Facilities Use Coordinator.
12. School facilities or equipment used by the applicant will be examined before and after use. It is the responsibility of the persons or organizations using school facilities to leave them in the same condition in which they were obtained. If this is not done to the satisfaction of the Facilities Use Coordinator, a charge may be levied for any required clean-up costs, in excess of any fees otherwise applicable.
13. The person or organization designated on the Facilities Use Form shall be the only group using the facility for the specified event or activity. The duly authorized representative of the organization or group must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age and shall assume responsibility of the activity.
14. All fees, rentals and payment for staff services shall be made to the Gorham School Department. Tipping of custodians or other school personnel is not permitted. Under no conditions shall payment be made directly to custodial or staff members.

15. For community events with a projected attendance of 500, the Facilities Use Coordinator, in conjunction with the Gorham Police Chief, will determine the need for police security. Payment for police services will be the responsibility of the individual or group using the facility for the specified event of activity.

16. All injuries and accidents must be reported immediately to the Facilities Use Coordinator.

PROHIBITED/RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES

1. No school facility shall be made available to any group that advocates unconstitutional or illegal acts, or are contrary to the best interest of the Gorham School Department or the welfare of students and employees.
2. No school facility shall be made available for any purpose that may present a risk of damage to any school building, grounds or equipment.
3. School Department facilities shall not be used for religious worship unless the group in question is in active pursuit of obtaining or constructing its own facility.
4. The possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs or tobacco products is prohibited on school grounds. School grounds include all buildings, athletic fields, parking lots and recreational fields.
5. No weapons are allowed on school grounds.
6. All School Department facilities are latex free.
7. Animals are not allowed on school property except with prior authorization from the Facilities Use Coordinator.
8. No use of open flame, including candles, fireworks or other special effects, will be allowed.
9. The Superintendent reserves the right to cancel any event scheduled in school facilities if weather or other conditions warrant.

Adopted: August 27, 1973
Amended: March 15, 1976
May 21, 1980
August 13, 1980
May 26, 1982
January 20, 1993
September 11, 1996
May 12, 1999
May 8, 2002
Reviewed: March 10, 2004
Amended: June 10, 2009