

USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

The Morehouse Parish School Board recognizes the functions of school buildings and grounds shall be to accommodate approved school programs for students and to assist in meeting the educational, cultural, civic, social and recreational need of communities. Use of school buildings by the community shall be considered a secondary function so as not to interfere with regular school-day programs of the students.

The sale and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages in school facilities and on Morehouse Parish School Board property shall be prohibited at **all** times.

The use of any tobacco product, smokeless tobacco, or any smoking object/device, including but not limited to electronic cigarettes, advanced personal vaporizers, vape pens, vape mods and similar devices, shall be prohibited on and in all School Board property and vehicles, and at all school-sponsored or school-approved functions. However, this prohibition shall not be applicable to any tobacco product approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for sale as a tobacco cessation product and which is marketed and sold solely for such purpose.

School Board property shall include any elementary or secondary school buildings or grounds, buildings, portable buildings, field houses, stadiums, equipment storage areas, vacant land, or any other property owned, operated, or leased by the School Board.

1. Use of Schools as Voting Precincts

The principals whose schools have been designated as voting precincts shall determine where on the campus voting shall be held. When the voting place is moved from its usual location for any reason, the principal shall have suitable signs placed to direct voters to the new place designated.

When elections occur on school days, all schools shall remain open unless determined otherwise by the Superintendent. Otherwise, arrangements for opening and closing of facilities shall be made with the principal of the school.

2. Use of School Facilities by School Personnel Groups

Requests for use of school facilities by school personnel groups for meetings shall be submitted to the Superintendent or designee for approval. School faculty members may post on the bulletin board, or other appropriate area, information relative to the operation of their organization.

3. Use of Schools for Dances

Dances in which only students and faculties participate may be held in the schools. Outside groups wishing to hold dances in the school, shall, by written request, secure permission first from the principal, and then from the Superintendent or

his/her designee.

4. Use of School Building Facilities

- A. The term *school facilities* as used herein shall mean and include all school buildings, school grounds, or other buildings, property, or equipment, or any part thereof, belonging to, in the possession of, or operated by the school system.

The term *person* as used herein shall mean and include the terms person, group, firm, association, corporation, organization, and all other similar terms.

- B. Any person who is a resident of Morehouse Parish may be permitted to use school facilities for meetings, programs, or other activities which are not prohibited by the laws of the State of Louisiana or the United States of America, except as otherwise provided below.

No person shall be permitted to use school facilities for any meeting, program, or other activity the primary purpose of which is the personal, financial, or pecuniary benefit of such person.

No person shall be excluded from any meeting, program, or use because of that person's race, color, creed, national origin, sex, religious or political preference.

- C. All applications for the use of school facilities procedures set forth herein shall be considered for approval by the principal, subject to final written approval of the Superintendent or his/her designee. Generally, the application will be granted unless it is determined that the proposed use of the facility by the applicant shall be detrimental to the orderly operation of the school system. The Principal shall make a reasonable investigation of the application, person, club or organization and purpose of the use of such facility and shall notify the applicant in writing of his/her decision.

- D. No person, club, or organization granted permission to use school facilities shall bring, or permit to be brought, into or onto or about such school facility any alcoholic beverage, drug, or weapon as defined by the laws of the State of Louisiana and/or policies and regulations of the School Board.

- E. The usage of *school facilities* by any person, group, or organization shall be based on a properly documented application and governed by a signed lease agreement between the person, group, or organization and the School Board. The lease agreement shall contain, but not be limited to, the following:

- 1) A statement that the person signing the application has read and understands all policies, regulations, and procedures relating to the use of school facilities and that such person, club, or organization meets all requirements thereof necessary to obtain permission to use such school facility, as well as that the purpose of such use also complies with all of such policies and requirements.
- 2) All persons attending the function or use of the school facility requested shall also be required to obey all rules and regulations of the School Board relating to school facilities, and the person, group, or organization shall be responsible for the conduct of all such persons.
- 3) The person, group, or organization shall agree to:
 - a. Be responsible for any and all damages of every nature whatsoever to the school facility or the school system resulting from its use by such person, group, or organization.

The person, group, or organization shall see that the facility used is left free of debris and in a reasonable, clean condition.
 - b. Waive any and all rights of recovery from the School Board, its members, and the school district for any injuries or damages resulting from the use of school building facilities or grounds. The person, organization, or group shall provide a certificate of insurance showing insurance coverage for the event being held, with a minimum of \$500,000 general liability per occurrence. The Morehouse Parish School Board, individually and collectively, and the School District as a separate legal entity, shall be listed on the policy as an *additional named insured*. A certificate verifying the purchase of such insurance should be presented to the School Board at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to use of the facilities.
 - c. The School Board reserves the right, through the Superintendent, principal or other designated person to cancel the use of any School Board-owned or operated facility at any time when deemed in the best interest of the school system.
- 4) The falsification of any information required or the failure to comply with all policies, regulations, and procedures shall result in the person, group, or organization being prohibited from using any school facility in the future.

F. Fees

Rental fees for the use of *school facilities* shall be approved by the School Board. It should be noted that the School Board cannot legally absorb any cost for use of its facilities by persons, groups, or organizations not considered part of the school, as this would be a donation of public funds which is prohibited by the state constitution.

All fees, once calculated, shall be paid directly to the principal, who after deducting for custodial services and any other personnel charges shall deposit the balance in the Facilities Rental Account. One-half of these funds shall be paid to the Morehouse Parish School Board for utilities cost at the end of the school year. The remaining monies shall be utilized for any improvements to the school's facilities deemed necessary by

5. Use of School Grounds

The public shall be allowed to use school grounds (excluding buildings) for recreational or sport purposes **only** during daylight hours and only during the time when classes or other school or school-sponsored or approved activities are not being held. No motor vehicles of any type, firearms, or explosives or other dangerous weapons or alcoholic beverages shall be allowed on any school grounds. All activities of a non-recreational or non-sports nature, such as political rallies, gatherings, or meetings shall be prohibited.

No supervisory personnel shall be provided during this time, and any person who uses the school grounds for the limited purposes set forth herein does so at his/her own risk. The School Board shall assume no liability for any accident, injury, or loss suffered by any person using the school grounds under the permission herein granted.

The person, group, or organization shall provide the required certificate of insurance prior to the use of school grounds.

The School Board reserves the right to refuse any request to use facilities which:

1. Concerns any activities prohibited by state and/or School Board policies;
2. Is made by any persons or organizations which have failed to follow procedures developed by the Superintendent or his/her designee; or
3. Is considered in any way contrary to the best interests of the school system.

Approved: June 3, 2025

Ref: Constitution of Louisiana, Art. VII, Sec. 14(A); La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§14:63, 14:63.3, 14:63.4, 14:91.7, 14:328, 17:81, 17:240, 40:1291.2, 40:1291.3, 40:1291.11, 40:1291.21; Board minutes, 6-3-25.