

BUILDINGS/GROUNDS/PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

FILE: EC

TITLE: Availability of School Facilities to Secondary Students for Meetings

POLICY:

In accordance with The Equal Access Act, the school board authorizes school facilities to be made available to secondary students who wish to conduct meetings during non-instructional time. Non-instructional time shall be defined as the time set aside by the school in the morning before actual classroom instruction begins or in the afternoon after actual classroom instruction ends, exclusive of the optional periods offered by the school board. The use of school premises for these meetings may be approved by the principal in accordance with the following provisions.

- (1) Any such meeting shall meet the following criteria.
 - (a) Be voluntary and student-initiated
 - (b) Not interfere materially and substantially with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school
 - (c) Not be directed, conducted, controlled or regularly attended by nonschool persons
 - (d) Not require additional tax funds
 - (e) Not be otherwise unlawful
- (2) The length of the meeting shall not extend beyond 5 p.m. unless extended by individual school policy.
- (3) Admission fees are not charged during the course of the meeting.
- (4) Application for use of elementary, middle, secondary or postsecondary school premises shall be properly executed by the student initiating the request, utilizing forms that may be secured from the school office where use is being requested.
- (5) There shall be no sponsorship of the meetings by the school, the school (board or its agents or employees. The term "sponsorship" includes the act of promoting, leading or participating in a meeting. The assignment of a teacher, administrator or other school employee to a meeting for custodial purposes does not constitute sponsorship of the meeting. Employees or agents of the school or school board may be present at meetings only in a non-participatory capacity.
- (6) Use of school premises shall not be denied on the basis of the number of participants or on the basis of the content of the speech at such meetings; e.g., religion, political, philosophical. Nothing in this rule shall be construed to limit the authority of the school, its agents or employees to maintain order and discipline on school premises, to protect the well-being of students and faculty and to assure that attendance of students at meetings is voluntary.
- (7) Denial by the principal of the use of school premises to any student-initiated group for the purposes of conducting a meeting during non-instructional time may be appealed to the superintendent.

LAWS IMPLEMENTED:

Sections 1001.33; 1013.10, Florida Statutes; P.L. 98-377, 20
U.S.C. 4071

ADOPTED: 10/12/93