



# Board Policy Equity Lens Tool

**Title of board policy being reviewed:**

KG-Use of MESD Facilities

**Describe the purpose of this policy:**

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the use of MESD facilities by the district and the broader community. It affirms that facilities may be used for educational, civic, and service purposes when such use does not interfere with MESD operations, ensures compliance with nondiscrimination laws, and clarifies that facility use does not constitute district endorsement of outside groups or activities.

**What is your experience with this policy:**

We have extensive experience reserving MESD facilities and coordinating room use for both internal district programs and external community groups. This includes supporting scheduling, approvals, and use of space in alignment with district policies. That experience informs our understanding of how this policy functions in practice and highlights the importance of clear procedures, consistent application, and equitable access for all groups seeking to use MESD facilities.



**What is the plan to communicate this policy to staff, students, and/or families?**

**What is the plan to communicate this policy to linguistically diverse students and their families?**

**Is this policy:**

Easy to locate for staff?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Accessible to students and families?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Included in onboarding, intake, or other training?

Yes. This policy can be included in onboarding and ongoing training for relevant staff, particularly those responsible for facility scheduling, approvals, and community engagement. Incorporating the policy into intake processes, administrative guidance, and periodic refreshers can help ensure consistent understanding, lawful application, and equitable access to MESD facilities.



Clear and easy to understand?

Yes, the policy is generally clear in its intent, but it could be easier to understand with minor improvements. Clarifying approval processes, expectations for facility use, and key terms would improve readability and help ensure consistent and equitable application.

## People

How are people affected positively or negatively by the policy? What potential barriers might people encounter? What barriers might be reduced by this policy?

### **Environment created:**

The policy seeks to create an inclusive, community-oriented environment that balances access with responsibility and legal compliance. When implemented transparently, it can foster trust and collaboration. If applied inconsistently, it may create perceptions of exclusion or favoritism.

### **Barriers to equitable outcomes:**

Barriers may include managerial discretion without clear criteria, financial costs associated with facility use, limited staffing to support community partnerships, and lack of multilingual communication or outreach.

Can you identify the racial or ethnic groups affected by this policy, program, practice, or decision? Do you know the potential impacts to these populations? If you don't know, how will you find out?

This policy affects all racial and ethnic groups, with particular relevance for communities of color, immigrant and refugee communities, and culturally specific organizations that rely on affordable public spaces for meetings, programs, and services.

### **Potential impacts:**

Equitable access to facilities can support culturally responsive programming,



community organizing, and family engagement. Conversely, unclear processes or cost barriers may disproportionately limit access for historically underserved communities.

**If impacts are not fully known:**

MESD can review facility use data by type of organization served, gather feedback from community partners, and engage culturally specific organizations to understand barriers and opportunities for more equitable access.

Were these populations involved in any way, at any point in the development, implementation, and evaluation of this policy? If so, when and how?

There is no indication that specific racial or ethnic communities were directly involved in the development of this policy. Implementation has occurred through district administrative processes.

Opportunities to strengthen equity include engaging community-based and culturally specific organizations in reviewing facility use procedures and incorporating feedback into administrative practices.

What priorities and commitments are communicated by this policy?

This policy communicates MESD's commitment to community engagement, shared use of public resources, and access to facilities for educational, civic, and service purposes. It prioritizes responsible use of district property while safeguarding MESD's core operations and affirming compliance with nondiscrimination laws.

**Place**

What kind of positive or negative environment are we creating?

What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes? (e.g. mandated, political, emotional, financial, programmatic or managerial)



**Positive impacts:**

The policy expands access to MESD facilities for a wide range of educational, nonprofit, civic, and public-serving organizations, which can strengthen community partnerships and increase opportunities for learning, collaboration, and service delivery.

**Negative impacts:**

Without clear, transparent procedures for approval, some groups may experience uncertainty or perceive inequitable access. Smaller, grassroots, or culturally specific organizations may face challenges navigating facility use requirements.

**Potential barriers:**

Barriers may include administrative complexity, lack of clarity around approval processes, scheduling constraints, insurance or cost requirements, and limited awareness of facility availability.

**Barriers reduced by the policy:**

By explicitly allowing use by nonprofit, educational, and public-serving organizations, the policy reduces barriers to accessing public space and affirms that MESD facilities are a shared community resource when not needed for district operations.

## Power

How is the power of decision-making shared with those it affects?

How have you intentionally involved the communities affected by this policy, program, practice, or decision?



### **Power-sharing in decision-making:**

Decision-making authority for community use of MESD facilities primarily rests with the district through its approval and oversight processes. While MESD retains final authority to ensure facilities are used responsibly and in compliance with law, community groups participate by submitting requests, outlining intended uses, and engaging in communication with district staff throughout the approval process.

### **Intentional community involvement:**

The policy itself does not explicitly outline intentional involvement of affected communities in its development or evaluation. Opportunities to strengthen equity include engaging community-based and culturally specific organizations in reviewing facility use procedures, gathering feedback on access and barriers, and incorporating that input into administrative practices to ensure more inclusive and equitable use of MESD facilities.

## **Process**

Does the policy, program, or decision improve, worsen, or make no change to existing disparities?

Does it create other unintended consequences?

The policy has the potential to **reduce disparities** by making public facilities available to a broad range of community and nonprofit organizations. However, without equitable implementation practices, it may **maintain existing disparities** related to access, cost, or awareness.

Potential unintended consequences include unequal access based on organizational capacity, confusion about approval standards, or underutilization by communities unfamiliar with district processes. Ongoing monitoring and inclusive outreach can help mitigate these risks.



## Plan

How will you reduce the negative impacts and address the barriers?

Negative impacts and barriers will be reduced through clear, consistent, and equitable implementation practices. MESD can develop transparent facility use procedures with clearly defined criteria, timelines, and expectations, and ensure these are communicated broadly. Providing multilingual information, accessible application processes, and staff support can help reduce language, knowledge, and administrative barriers.

Additional strategies may include reviewing and adjusting fees or requirements that disproportionately affect smaller or culturally specific organizations, offering guidance or technical assistance during the application process, and regularly reviewing facility use data and community feedback to identify and address inequities. These steps support more equitable access while maintaining responsible use of MESD facilities.