



Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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**TO: Members, Board of Education
Dr. Albert Roberts, Superintendent**

FROM: Chris Jasculca, Director of Policy, Planning and Communication

RE: Adoption of Policy 8:20 (Community Use of School Facilities)

DATE: July 9, 2013

On June 25, 2013, the District 97 Board of Education conducted a first reading of policy 8:20 (Community Use of School Facilities). This first reading was the result of the board's decision on June 11, 2013 to table the adoption of the policy after several members of the community raised concerns that the policy committee's proposed revisions to the policy language might result in increased costs and reduced access for PTOs and other school-related organizations that host a variety of events and activities in our schools.

At the board's request, the policy committee reviewed the changes again to determine if additional revisions could/needed to be made that would:

- Successfully align the policy with the district's current practices and procedures.
- Reaffirm the district's longstanding commitment to provide school-related organizations with priority access to our facilities whenever possible, as well as the limit the cost these organizations would incur in conjunction with hosting events or activities in our schools, since altering this commitment was never meant to be one of the intended outcomes of revising the policy.

The policy committee also took the board's suggestion to revisit the district's former facilities use policy (9700.01 – Access to School Facilities for Community Groups) to determine if it contained language that would address the concerns of the community members.

After reviewing its proposed changes and revisiting the district's former facilities use policy, the policy committee submitted a recommendation to the board on June 25 that the language regarding fees that was featured in the final two paragraphs on the last page of policy 9700.01 be incorporated into policy 8:20. More specifically, that the second paragraph be changed from:

Student groups and school-related organizations may be granted the use of school facilities at no cost. Other organizations granted use of facilities shall pay fees and costs.

To two paragraphs that read:

Recognized community groups may use school facilities free of charge when such use does not require the school district to incur costs for staff overtime. Otherwise, a fee shall be charged for the use of school facilities pursuant to schedules which shall be approved annually by the Board of Education.

Community recreation organizations that charge fees for participation in their programs will also be expected pay appropriate costs for using school facilities.

The policy committee also recommended that the revision it proposed on June 11, 2013 regarding the access to facilities remain unchanged. This recommendation was to change the second sentence of the first paragraph from:

The use of school facilities for school purposes has precedence over all other uses.

To:

The use of school facilities for school purposes has precedence over all other uses unless those other uses have been approved by the District via a written agreement with a local government or other organization that is not affiliated with the school or District.

Like the language about fees, this change reflects the district's current policies and practices regarding access to our facilities—more specifically, the policies and practices spelled out in the intergovernmental agreements we have with the Park District of Oak Park regarding the use of the fields at Irving and Longfellow.

During the first reading on June 25, one of the board members noted that the word to was missing in the second paragraph of the proposed new language regarding fees. As a result, the policy committee is recommending this evening that the paragraph be changed from:

Community recreation organizations that charge fees for participation in their programs will also be expected pay appropriate costs for using school facilities.

To:

Community recreation organizations that charge fees for participation in their programs will also be expected to pay appropriate costs for using school facilities.

There were no additional changes requested or questions raised by the board in conjunction with the first reading.

Attached is the revised version of policy 8:20 (Community Use of School Facilities) that is being presented tonight for adoption.

Attachments:

- Policy 8:20 (Community Use of School Facilities)