COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES POLICY
Policy Identifier: CUSF201511 Published: November 2015

1. **What is this policy about?**
   1.1. This policy outlines the positive obligation on Directorate school based employees to ensure ACT public school facilities are made available for community use when the facilities are not in use by the school.

2. **Policy Statement**
   2.1. Canberra Public Schools are ACT Government facilities and these facilities are to be made available for community use when not in use by the school.
   2.2. Positive partnerships between community organisations and schools can contribute to strong relationships and improved student learning.
   2.3. Provision of school facilities for community use should not adversely affect the operation and management of the school’s core business. Neither should it require significant works to segment school property for provision of facilities for community use.
   2.4. Individual school principals may waive and/or reduce hire rates based on the marginal costs of usage or in consideration of non-cash benefits to their individual school, students and community (e.g. community sport organisations coaching of students, supporting the school in providing alternative activities to their students and wider community).
   2.5. For schools with security fencing this means making arrangements with the community for appropriate outside school hours access. The community use aspect for after school access will outweigh security concerns unless there is a real and apparent security issue.

3. **Who does this policy apply to?**
   3.1. This policy applies to all ACT Education and Training staff responsible for school facilities management.

4. **Context**
   4.1. The Directorate encourages members of the local community and education groups to access their facilities when they are available. This may enable schools to improve curriculum and learning programs through access to a wider range of specialist services, resources and talents in the community.
   4.2. Chapter 3 of the *Education Act 2004* provides general principles of public schools. ACT public schools are based on principles of equity, universality and non-discrimination. The public school system is committed to responsiveness to community needs, innovation, diversity and choice. This policy supports these principles by strengthening and increasing partnerships with the community.
   4.3. The *Copyright Act 1968* is the Commonwealth legislation which protects the legal rights of owners of copyright over creative works. These creative works exist in many various forms. Provision is provided within the legislation to use this material within specific guidelines as set out under special amendments in the Copyright Act (1968).
   4.4. The Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011 (ACT) (WWVP Act) requires people who have contact with vulnerable people (children and vulnerable adults) while engaging in certain regulated activities or services to be registered with the Office of Regulatory Services (ORS). Fact sheets on ‘Regulated Activities’ and the WWVP Act can be found at the following link: [Working with Vulnerable People | Office of Regulatory Services](http://www.det.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policy_a-z).

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5. Responsibilities
5.1. Policy Owner: The Director, Strategic Finance is responsible for this policy.

6. Monitoring and review
6.1. The Policy Owner monitors the policy. This includes an annual scan of operation and review. A full review of the policy will be conducted within a three year period.

7. Contact
7.1. For support contact Strategic Finance on (02) 6205 9115 or email ETDStrategicFinance@act.gov.au.

8. Complaints
8.1. Any concerns about the application of this policy or the policy itself, should be raised with:
   • the school principal in the first instance;
   • the Directorate’s Liaison Unit on (02) 6205 5429;
   • online at http://www.det.act.gov.au/contact_us;
   • see also the Complaints Policy on the Directorate’s website.

9. References
9.1. Definitions
   • Community organisations: mean not-for-profit community groups.
   • Commercial users: mean organisations which trade for a profit or charge a fee for services.
   • Community use rates: mean minimal charges associated with the use.
   • Commercial use rates: mean minimal charges to recover costs attributed to the use including utilities, additional wear and tear and the use of specific items or equipment.
   • Directorate: means the Education and Training Directorate.
   • Facility Hire Agreement: is a written agreement between schools and hirers for the use of school facilities.
   • Schools: mean ACT public schools.
   • School facilities: mean school buildings and school grounds.

9.2. Legislation
   • Education Act 2004
   • Copyright Act 1968
   • Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011

9.3. Implementation Documents
   • Community Use of School Facilities – Procedures for School Staff

9.4. Related Policies and Information
   • Alcohol Policy – Possession and consumption in schools and at school-related activities
   • Child Protection Policy
   • Corporate Sponsorship Policy
   • Critical/Non-Critical Incident Management and Reporting Policy
   • Electrical Safety Policy
   • Hydrotherapy Pools – School Use Policy
   • Providing Safe Schools P-12 Policy
   • Working with Children and Young People Volunteers and Visitors (Interim) Policy