Frequently Asked Community Use Questions w/Answers

Question: How do I make a reservation with a school?

Answer: Any individual, group or organization (i.e. a “user”) wishing to reserve space within Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS) must first register as an Organization Event Coordinator (OEC), by accessing the online application called Community Use. Users will register their organizations and once approved as an OEC, users may then submit their request electronically to the school of their choice. Detailed instructions may be accessed on the Risk Management & Security Services homepage and clicking on Community Use on the left.

Question: What types of activities are allowed?

Answer: Approved community activities may include, but are not limited to: afternoon, evening, and Saturday classes, dinners, concerts, dramas, book festivals, art festivals, dances, parties, and organizational meetings. Activities which do not fall into the above categories and appear to be of questionable nature or games of chance shall be referred to the Office of Risk Management and Security Services for approval.

Question: I see various types of events are permitted, but what about recreational and athletic activities?

Answer: Per the Cooperative Agreement between the Prince William County School Board and the Prince William County Park Authority (PWCPA), sports leagues, those requesting use of the fields, or otherwise seeking to reserve school facilities to hold recreational activities must contact the Sports Services Office at 703.792.7060.

Question: Once a request is submitted, how long does it take to be approved?

Answer: Typically, a request should be processed within five (5) to seven (7) business days. However, there are times when a school may be inundated with other requests and it may take longer to process your submission. To ensure your application is approved in a timely manner, requests should be submitted a minimum of thirty (30) business days in advance for commercial events and fifteen (15) business days in advance for all other activities.

Question: I have a group that meets weekly and we’ll need the same space each month. Is this possible?
Answer: Usually, the answer is yes; however, this is dependent upon whether or not school activities may be taking place during the times of your request. PWCS has in place a community calendar of public events, which can assist you in planning recurring activities.

Question: How do I know how much I will be charged for use of the building?

Answer: A fee schedule, which lists the most current rental fees and their effective date, is available on the web. Depending upon the organization, area requested and any use of equipment, you may be charged a rental, personnel and/or special fees. Invoices are generated by the school and must be paid in advance to the location you wish to use.

Any activity which causes personnel to work outside of their normal work hours, on weekends and on holidays will incur a personnel charge.

Special fees are assessed for use of school equipment, such as microphones, stage lights, speakers and kitchen equipment.

Question: My event was approved, but now I need to make a change to the room/date/time. How do I do this?

Answer: Once the activity has been approved, an OEC may no longer modify the request. Please contact the school at which your activity will be held and request that they make the changes for you.

Question: I submitted a request and checked the availability. The space did not appear to be in use but the school declined my request. Why would this happen?

Answer: There are many school events, which are not always held in all rooms, but the school cannot have community use occurring during those events. Examples of these activities are: Back to School Nights, student orientations, and school athletic events. Parking requirements may also be another reason a request is declined. Another reason for a declined request may be that your activity is scheduled too far in advance. Many schools may only allow events to be scheduled for the current fiscal year, which runs from July 1 through June 30. As schools may not know their calendar that far in advance, booking an activity set to take place after June 30 may result in a declined notice.

Question: What might cause my event to be canceled even though it was already approved?

Answer: When schools are closed due to inclement weather, community use is automatically canceled as well. School activities may need to be rescheduled on a day where community use is already scheduled. In this case, your activity will be canceled.

Question: I have a question about community use that doesn’t seem to be answered here. Who do I contact?
Answer: If you have any general questions regarding community use, feel free to contact the Office of Risk Management & Security Services at 703.791.7435.