

Community Use of School Property in Missouri



Best Practices for Scheduling



PUBLIC HEALTH
LAW CENTER
at Mitchell Hamline School of Law

April 2017

kchealthykids™



Best Practices for Scheduling

Community Use of School Property in Missouri is available at kchealthykids.org

- A Guide to Implementation
- Success Stories
- A Checklist
- Best Practices for Scheduling
- Paying for Community Use of School Property

This guide was created through a partnership between KC Healthy Kids, Missouri Association of Councils of Government, Missouri Consultants for Education, Missouri School Boards' Association, Missouri State Alliance of YMCAs and Public Health Law Center.

The organizations were convened to promote and sustain community changes that enable healthy lifestyles. Their goal is to accelerate and advance policy and environmental changes in Missouri that encourage healthy eating and active living.

About KC Healthy Kids

KC Healthy Kids rallies the people in our communities to improve access to affordable fresh food and safe places to walk and play. When our neighborhoods support healthy habits, we are less likely to suffer from obesity, which is linked to Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and poor mental health. To make a lasting impact, we shape policies that improve our food system and physical surroundings, and, ultimately, the places where we live, work, learn and play.

About the Public Health Law Center

The Public Health Law Center helps create communities where everyone can be healthy. We empower our partners to transform their environments by eliminating commercial tobacco, promoting healthy food, and encouraging active lifestyles. We believe that our legal knowledge can help bring justice to public health as we support our partners in reducing health disparities. Founded in 2000, the Center is located at Mitchell Hamline School of Law in St. Paul, Minnesota.



Best Practices for Scheduling

Community use of school facilities is an effective practice that fosters positive community relationships and provides a safe, convenient and affordable place for community members to engage in physical activity.

However, community groups and individuals using school property (end users) and school administrators have identified scheduling as a major barrier to community use of school district facilities in Missouri.¹ Having an efficient scheduling system and

well-written policies is necessary to implement a successful community use program.

This resource summarizes “best practices” for planning an efficient scheduling system and for developing effective written policies around scheduling, so that school administrators, end users and other stakeholders can effectively adopt and use community use model policy templates published by the Missouri School Board Association and Missouri Consultants for Education.



How to develop an efficient & easy-to-use scheduling system

Formalize school events

Before time and space is allocated for community use, the school district's student- and school-related events and activities must be formalized on the master school district calendar.

This will prevent confusion and frustration in having to cancel or change community events due to scheduling conflicts.

Centralize the system

The scheduling system should be centralized, either district-wide or building-wide. Streamlining the process for scheduling community use of school facilities is an effective way to ensure that each group/individual has access to the areas requested or offered at the proper time.

Communicate effectively

Once a scheduling system is established for a school or district's community use program, there should be sufficient and efficient communication between scheduling staff, building staff and end users to ensure facility access is available at the reserved times.

Find the right scheduling tool

Districts should research available options to determine the best tool for their scheduling needs. These tools can be a purchased computer software program that connects classes, meetings, events and rental requests into one intricate system; a simple Excel spreadsheet; or a daily paper schedule in the main office of the school building where community members can sign up on a first-come, first-serve basis.

What to include about scheduling in written policies/procedures

Who does scheduling

Include the name of the specific person(s) authorized to complete scheduling and their contact information.

Set time and place

Include specific information on time, site and the specific area of the school/grounds that will be used for each approved activity.

Priority of users and types of use

Include a list of who has priority of use (after all school-related functions). Considerations include:

- 1 Non-commercial status/organizational purpose (e.g. non-profit)
- 2 User groups are located in the district.
- 3 Residents of the district are primary participants.
- 4 School-age children within the district are primary participants.

Changes in schedule

Identify a process to modify the schedule in the case of changes or cancellations.

Conclusion

An effective community use program takes into account all of the components necessary to make scheduling smooth and efficient for both school districts and end users. With an organized scheduling system and well-outlined written policies in place, school districts and community members can work together to make school district facilities a shared asset for the common good.

¹PUBLIC HEALTH LAW CENTER, Missouri Community Use of School Property: School Administrator and End User Survey Report (2015), http://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/Missouri-use-of-school-property.WEB_.1.pdf

