



NON-INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES: Non-Instructional Services

Review and Approval of School-Sponsored Activities

I. Purpose

To provide guidelines for the review and approval of school-sponsored activities in Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS).

II. Definitions

- A. *High-risk Activity* – An activity that may be difficult to control and/or monitor and that may expose the Board of Education of Baltimore County (Board) and its employees to an elevated risk of personal injury, property damage or property loss.
- B. *Non-school-sponsored Activity* – An activity that is not sponsored, approved, conducted, planned and/or supervised by school staff.
- C. *Principal* – The principal of the school or center sponsoring the activity.
- D. *Religious Holiday* – A day or days noted on the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) student testing calendar when state primary test administrations cannot be scheduled.
- E. *School Day* – Each day that schools are open from the opening bell signaling the commencement of the school day until the bell signaling dismissal.
- F. *School-sponsored Activity* – An activity that is sponsored, approved, conducted, planned and/or supervised by school staff regardless of whether the activity takes place on or off school property or occurs during regular instructional hours.
- G. *Social Event* – Any school-sponsored social function including, but not limited to, class or school parties, dances, proms and receptions.

III. Guidelines

## RULE 3160

- A. The school-sponsored activity shall be approved by the principal prior to being scheduled and announced. The principal has the authority to revoke the approval of the activity at any time.
- B. The principal will be responsible for ensuring that the school-sponsored activity is consistent with the educational mission of the school system, extends learning opportunities to participants and that participation in the activity is open to all students.
- C. The school principal is responsible for ensuring that each activity is supervised by a sufficient number of school staff and chaperones and that security personnel are present, as necessary.
- D. In accordance with the Board's Wellness policy, school-sponsored activities and social events that are held in a BCPS school shall follow procedures established by the Office of Food and Nutrition Services that address healthy party ideas and celebrations.

### IV. Scheduling

- A. A school-sponsored activity should not be scheduled the evening before any state-mandated test or the school system administration of the SAT/PSAT, ACT, Advanced Placement (AP) or any other BCPS-approved assessment. Principals should review the MSDE *Student Testing Calendar* and consult with the Department of Research, Accountability and Assessment before scheduling any school-sponsored activity.
- B. A school-sponsored activity shall not be scheduled on a school system, federal or religious holiday. For the purpose of this rule, a holiday begins at sunset on the day preceding the holiday.

### V. Review and Approval Process

- A. Submitting a Proposal  
A written request to approve an activity must be submitted to the school principal and include, at minimum:
  - 1. A description and purpose of the activity;
  - 2. Date, time and place of the activity;
  - 3. Cost of the activity;
  - 4. Financing, including approving fundraising activities;
  - 5. Names of supervising staff;

6. Ratio of chaperones to students;
7. Arrangements for security personnel;
8. A copy of any contract, lease or agreement required for participation in the activity; and
9. Any additional information that may assist the principal in reviewing the request.

B. Risk Management Review

1. The Office of Risk Management will maintain a list of high-risk activities. The principal will deny any activity that is listed as high risk.
2. Those activities not listed as high risk by the Office of Risk Management, but which may expose the Board to an elevated risk of personal injury, property damage or property loss must be approved by the school's community superintendent and the Office of Risk Management.
3. The principal will initiate the review by completing the *Request for Risk Management Review Form* and submitting the form to his/her community superintendent no later than 90 business days prior to the proposed activity.
4. The community superintendent will approve or deny the proposed activity. If approved, the community superintendent will submit a signed *Request for Risk Management Review Form* to the Office of Risk Management at least 30 business days prior to the proposed activity.
5. The Office of Risk Management will approve or deny the proposed activity and forward a copy of the *Request for Risk Management Review Form* to the principal and approving community superintendent.

C. Approval

1. Contracts, Leases and Agreements
  - a. The principal shall ensure that all contracts, leases and agreements for services are approved in accordance with Board Policies, Superintendent's Rules and school system procedures.
  - b. The superintendent or principal shall be the signatory on all such contracts, leases and agreements.
2. BCPS will not be liable or financially responsible for, and has no obligation to perform or reimburse, individuals or businesses for contracts, leases or agreements that lack authorized signatures.

3. The principal shall approve all fundraising activities and ensure that the collection of all funds complies with the *Accounting Manual for School Activity Funds*.

VI. Systemwide Sponsored Activities

- A. Activities sponsored by a BCPS office for participation of students from more than one school must be approved by the sponsoring office's executive director.
- B. The sponsoring office and the approving executive director shall follow the review and approval guidelines as outlined in Paragraph V of this rule.
- C. The executive director shall ensure that all contracts and agreements are approved in accordance with Board Policies, Superintendent's Rules and established school system procedures. The superintendent shall be the signatory on all contracts, leases and agreements.

VII. Social Events

- A. All social events shall be approved by the principal prior to being scheduled or announced.
- B. The use of class time for instructional purposes shall be given primary consideration and social events, generally, shall not be held during school hours.
- C. BCPS will not provide transportation for any social event.
- D. The school principal shall establish guidelines for the attendance and approval of guests at social events.
- F. Social events that include high-risk activities that expose the Board to high risk of exposure for property damage, property loss, personal injury or liability require the advance approval of the Office of Risk Management as outlined in Paragraph V of this rule.
- G. In accordance with the Board's Wellness policy, school-sponsored social events that are held in a BCPS school shall follow procedures established by the Office of Food and Nutrition Services that address healthy party ideas and celebrations.

- H. Venue
  - 1. All social events shall be held in the school, except as authorized by this subparagraph.
  - 2. High school dances shall be held in the school, unless the school facility is not available due to building system failure or other emergency.
  - 3. High school proms may be held in an alternate location after a careful evaluation of alternatives by the principal including, but not limited to, space availability at the home school, cost, security and student safety.
  
- I. Proposal for Off-Campus Social Events
  - 1. The principal is responsible for establishing guidelines for social events that are held off campus. These guidelines shall include, but not be limited to:
    - a. Date, time and venue of the social event;
    - b. Approval by the Office of Risk Management for any high-risk activity;
    - c. Cost per student;
    - d. Financing, including approving fundraising activities and ensuring that the collection of all funds complies with the *Accounting Manual for School Activity Funds*;
    - e. Names of supervising school staff;
    - f. Ratio of chaperones to students;
    - g. Security at the social event; and
    - h. Criteria for approval of students' guests.
  - 2. The principal shall ensure that supervising school staff are advised of procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency, illness or accident during the social event.
  - 3. The principal shall ensure that students and parents are advised of the cost associated with the social event and of expectations for student behavior during the social event.
  
- J. Students and their guests are responsible for maintaining appropriate behavior at all social events. Principals are authorized to refuse admission to and eject from any social event any student or guest who appears to be intoxicated or under the influence of drugs, who is conducting himself or herself in an improper or disorderly manner or for any other reason as deemed inappropriate by the principal.

- K. Law enforcement officials may be notified at the discretion of the principal should such intervention as a result of student or guest behavior be deemed necessary.
- L. A student who is suspended or expelled from school at the time of the social event will be excluded from participating in the social event.

VIII. Non-School-Sponsored Activities

- A. Activities that are sponsored by individuals and organizations other than the school system shall not be planned during the school day, monies shall not be collected in the school and information concerning the trip shall not be discussed or distributed in the school or during the school day.
- B. The Board and the school system shall assume no responsibility or liability for non-school-sponsored activities.
- C. Employees shall not, during the regular school day, participate in, advertise, promote or enroll students for non-school-sponsored activities, non-school-sponsored travel-study programs or non-school-sponsored trips.
- D. Employees shall not use school system funds, resources or equipment to advertise, promote or enroll students for non-school-sponsored activities.
- E. Travel agencies or other organizations shall not be permitted to come into schools for the purpose of advertising, promoting or enrolling students for non-school-sponsored travel-study programs or trips.
- F. Nothing in this rule will preclude a PT(S)A or other established school-sponsored business partnership from disseminating materials about such programs as long as the materials clearly indicate that the activity is not affiliated with, sponsored by or endorsed by BCPS.
- G. Employees who participate in the planning and promotion of non-school-sponsored activities must:
  - 1. Notify student participants and parents that the activity is not school-sponsored and that the Board is not liable for losses incurred as a result of the activity; and
  - 2. Do so outside of the normal work day.

- H. Individuals and organizations who organize or plan non-school-sponsored activities on school property must complete an *Application for Use of Facilities*.
- I. Students who participate in a non-school-sponsored activity and who are absent during all or part of the school day shall be coded as unlawfully absent.

IX. Compliance

All employees are responsible for following Board policies, including the Board's ethics code, rules and established procedures when entering into contracts and agreements for school-sponsored activities.

Legal Reference: *Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article §4-105, Comprehensive Liability Insurance Carried by Board*

Related Policies: Board of Education Policy 1300, *Use of School Facilities*  
Board of Education Policy 3125, *School Activity Funds*  
Board of Education Policy 3150, *Board Insurance Program*  
Board of Education Policy 3160, *Review and Approval of School-Sponsored Activities*  
Board of Education Policy 3215, *Contract Execution*  
Board of Education Policy 5320, *Student Organizations and Clubs*  
Board of Education Policy 5470, *Wellness*  
Board of Education Policy 5500, *Code of Student Conduct*  
Board of Education Policy 5530, *Student Use and Possession of Tobacco*  
Board of Education Policy 5540, *Alcoholic Beverages, Controlled Dangerous Substances, Intoxicants, Prescription and Nonprescription Drugs*  
Board of Education Policy 5550, *Disruptive Behavior*  
Board of Education Policy 6702, *Extracurricular Activities*  
Board of Education Policy 6800, *Field Trips and Foreign Travel*  
Board of Education Policy Sub Series 8360, *Ethics Code*  
Board of Education Policy 8410, *Reporting, Fraud, Waste, Abuse or Unlawful Acts*

