

## Nonprofits get 50% discount on district rentals

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### Content

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Lancaster County School District is giving nonprofits a big break on the cost of renting school facilities.

The district's updated facility rental application for district indoor and outdoor spaces, presented at the June 13 board meeting, cuts the nonprofit fee by 50%.

High rental prices for school facilities have been a topic of discussion, particularly during conversations surrounding Hope on the Hill.

"The price that we (Hope on the Hill) charge for rent is like one-half of what you could rent a school facility for; it is utterly ridiculous," said Hope on the Hill Executive Director Rev. Wayne Murray in January.

"We also had a similar concern in Indian Land where a similar parent chain peewee football team had to rent out Indian Land for \$4,000 or \$5,000," said school board member Melvin Stroble. "It is a county-wide concern."

Elizabeth Phillips, district administrative assistant for facilities, said the demand from nonprofit organizations makes up a large part of district facility rentals. The new application distinguishes between rental fees for the general public and fees for nonprofits.

"We wanted to work with organizations with a 501c," Phillips said.

Prices have mostly remained the same for the general public. The most expensive rental fees are \$100 per hour for cafeterias and gymnasiums and \$150 per hour for gymnasiums, multipurpose buildings and auditoriums. Athletic facilities like tracks and fields are \$80 an hour and flex classrooms are \$60 an hour. Individuals and organizations can also rent parking lots for \$100 a day.

Nonprofits will now get a 50% discount on all rental spaces.

When renting personnel services, the fees are the same for both groups. Custodians are \$32 an hour, after-event cleanup services are \$60 for two hours, \$40 an hour for administrator attendance and \$40 an hour for technicians.

Last year, Phillips said the facilities department assisted in organizing spaces for over 1,000 internal and external events. She also said the new application is more user-friendly.

She said organizations and individuals should rent spaces well in advance to give the district office time to coordinate.

“Working around school schedules and their activities and getting the information needed in a timely manner so the space is prepared and ready” is the hardest part of that, Phillips said. Coordinating an event in a district space involves many factors that people may not think about like security, custodial teams and additional personnel.

“It’s not a money-making thing for anybody, it’s just being able to have those funds available if something does happen, and also the wear and tear,” said Superintendent Dr. Jonathan Phipps. “Even though we changed the prices back in ‘17 or ‘18, we did that because it was a sinking ship; we were losing a tremendous amount of funding.”