

Field and Gym Allocation Policies

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Public Comments and FCAC Response to the Comments

FAP – Field Allocation Policy
 GAP – Gym Allocation Policy

Section	Topic	Comment	FCAC Response
FAP II.B GAP II.B	Enforcement and Discretion	CRS must fully enforce all aspects of the policy. Implementation of the policy should not be left to the Director’s discretion. Sections II.A and II.B contradict each other regarding the policy’s implementation.	We agree that the policy must be enforced. Discretion, however, may be necessary as situations change or unintended consequences of the policy arise. Until the policy can be updated to address those situations or consequences, we expect CRS to use discretion in a fair and consistent manner.
FAP II.B	Enforcement and Discretion	Exceptions to the policy should not be made for “partners.”	New language in the policy (FAP VIII.D.7; see below) explains how MOUs and adoption agreements fit into the policy.
FAP II.B GAP II.B	Enforcement and Discretion	The county does not verify residency information, so the requirements are meaningless.	Rosters are required and CRS has the authority to request additional information when necessary.
FAP III.A.1	Community Use Hours	Senior softball receives allocations during hours not included in the definition. Wording should be changed to allow for this allocation.	Park Authority policy allows CRS to schedule the use of senior softball and private schools, which traditionally use hours prior to community use time, and exempts such use from the FCPA rental fee.
FAP III.A.1 GAP III.A.1	Community Use Hours	The updated definition will provide clarity on scheduling authority.	This will help identify proper scheduling authority.

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FAP III.A.2 GAP III.A.1	Community Use Hours	FCPS community use hours should be stated in the policy.	These hours are set outside of the policy, but CRS will ensure that the community use hours are more clearly identified on applications and in other materials.
FAP III.D GAP III.D	Revenue-Based Activities	The regulations on revenue-based activities will provide clarity.	This will help identify proper scheduling authority.
FAP IV.Q GAP IV.T	Non-Profit Definition	Requiring donations from members should be considered a non-customary fee.	Many organizations dedicate a portion of registration fees to be used for projects and other aspects of club development. This does not contradict the Athletic Council's vision of a non-profit community sports organization.

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FAP V.A.2 GAP V.A.2	Residency Requirements	<p>Leave as is (90% per team) or make it more stringent. If the county truly has a field shortage, letting in more non-county residents will not help.</p> <p>Why should space be given to non-residents, who do not contribute to facility development and maintenance?</p> <p>The policy should prohibit non-resident participation. Kids should play where they live and where their parents pay taxes.</p> <p>90% per club is too high for clubs that function only at the elite level and need non-county residents to fill rosters. 80 or 85% would be more appropriate.</p> <p>There is an expectation that facilities developed with bond dollars are to be used to benefit county residents only.</p> <p>The percentage should be applied to each team, not to an aggregate for the entire club.</p> <p>Groups should be able to self-enforce a per-team residency requirement.</p>	<p>The 90% per organization requirement strikes an appropriate balance between ensuring that the vast majority of those enjoying the county's resources are county residents and providing organizations the opportunity to participate at the highest levels of youth competition.</p>
FAP V.A.2 GAP V.A.2	Residency Requirements	<p>Teams that include non-residents should not receive as high a priority as teams made up entirely of county residents.</p>	<p>The policy assigns space to organizations as opposed to individual teams. It is up to organizational leadership to allocate game and practice space among its teams.</p>

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FAP V.A.2 GAP V.A.2	Residency Requirements	The proposed change will allow groups to bring in even more non-residents, because they can cancel it out by simply signing up even more young house players.	Groups currently serve as many young children as they can and highly value that participation. We do not expect to see drastic changes in house program participation.
FAP V.A.2 GAP V.A.2	Residency Requirements	The 75% per individual team requirement needs to be clarified, as it is confusing.	New language (FAP V.A.2; see below) has been added to clarify this requirement.
FAP VI.A GAP VI.B	Application Deadlines	The spring deadline should be moved to at least December 15, as December 1 is too early. Much of our spring participation projection is based on our winter participation numbers.	The application deadlines were developed in accordance with Fairfax County Public Schools in order to provide consistency in determining school facility availability. CRS should be able to work with groups that have circumstances such as those described here.
FAP VII.A.3 GAP VII.A.3	Order of Scheduling	Youth practices should not be scheduled before adult games, as games require full-sized fields, while practices do not.	Youth programs are utilizing all available practice space, including smaller fields. The lack of available space necessitates that youth practices are fully allocated to ensure proper skill development and safety.
FAP VII.A.4	Order of Scheduling	Tournaments are (correctly) after leagues in the order of scheduling. But why, then do they have an earlier deadline? And are they – in practice – really scheduled after leagues?	The earlier deadline allows staff to ensure the availability of fields by coordinating the scheduling of the tournaments with the Park Authority and the groups that will be assigned to the requested fields. The additional level of coordination (particularly with FCPA) requires greater lead time. In addition, the size and scope of many of these tournaments requires that they have advance confirmation of available facilities. Tournaments are to be scheduled only when league play can accommodate the use.
FAP VII.B	Lighted Field Scheduling	The wording is confusing.	New wording (see below) clarifies this section.

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FAP VIII.D	Allocation Formula	Fields smaller than full-size should be accounted for in the allocation formulas, which assume that all fields are full-sized.	A new element of the allocation formulas that takes field and gym size into account will be developed and implemented by Fall 2010 (see below).
FAP VIII.D	Allocation Formula	Why does lacrosse get more practice time than soccer?	The proposed formulas, which were recommended by sports representatives to the Athletic Council, have very little difference in the practice times allocated to lacrosse and soccer groups.
FAP VIII.D	Allocation Formula	Why does U6 lacrosse have only 2 teams per field? The kids can't throw the ball that far.	This has been updated to 4 teams per field for U6 lacrosse.
FAP VIII.D	Allocation Formula	Field quality should be considered when allocating space.	Field quality is too subjective to be incorporated into a policy that dictates how to equitably allocate space among organizations.
FAP VIII.D	Allocation Criteria	MOUs and adoption agreements should be available to the public.	The MOUs are public information. CRS, FCPA, and FCPS will examine options to make the relevant information regarding these agreements more readily accessible to the public.
FAP VIII.D GAP VIII.C	Allocation Formula	Groups should be required to allocate their assigned time based on the CRS allocation formula (e.g., number of teams per field, time for practice). Groups take space from younger groups to give more to select and older groups.	The allocation formula is used to determine the amount of space to be allocated to organizations. It is the responsibility of the organizations to determine the best way to meet their clubs' needs through the assignment of space to specific teams.

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FAP VIII.D.14 GAP VIII.G	Unused Space	Groups should give back space (even if it is a portion of the field) that they are not using.	Groups are required to return fields they are not using. Giving back portions of fields, however, would be difficult to manage and can introduce liability and risk concerns. To ensure consistency with Field Allocation Policy, the clause was added to the Gym Allocation Policy (section VIII.G).
FAP VIII.D.9	Primary Seasons	Soccer should have spring and fall as primary seasons, as all leagues play in both seasons.	To ensure equitable access to field space regardless of sport, it is necessary to maintain a single primary season for each sport.
FAP XI.C GAP X.C	School Use of Fields/Gyms	Should clarify that only school events that cause conflict with athletic facility use should be able to cancel community use.	New wording (see below) clarifies this issue.
Fees	Youth Non-County Fees	<p>Youth sports are expensive enough without the county imposing additional fees.</p> <p>The fee is unfair to groups on the county's borders, who need non-county players to fill slots on competitive teams.</p> <p>The fee would add little to the county's budget.</p> <p>The county should make visitors feel welcomed; the fee discourages us from coming into Fairfax.</p> <p>The county imposes enough fees already.</p> <p>Increased fees will result in fewer kids participating in sports and increases in</p>	<p>A \$20 per person, per season, fee for non-county resident youth helps reconcile the fact that these participants are not contributing to the development and maintenance of athletic facilities through the taxes that county residents pay. The fee also helps to offset the proposed changes in residency requirement. \$20 is a reasonable cost, as many youth are already paying well over \$100 in registration fees, and the fee is consistent with the \$20 non-county fee charged to adults.</p>

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		<p>kids “on the streets.”</p> <p>The fee would unfairly punish kids for whom Fairfax County clubs can provide more accessible locations than can groups in their own county.</p> <p>The fee should be higher than \$20. Most of these kids are playing at the more competitive levels and are playing on the county’s best fields.</p> <p>If the county will continue to all non-residents to use the fields, the proposed fee is not high enough.</p> <p>\$20 is mere pennies per game to the players. \$50 would be more reasonable, considering the money the county puts into the fields.</p> <p>Non-residents are often elite players, who are more willing to pay higher fees. \$20 is not enough.</p> <p>The fee should be more substantial if you are going to relax the residency requirements.</p>	

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Fees	Youth Non-County Fees	Groups will pass the fees onto all their participants, including county residents.	Organizations are free to distribute their costs as they see fit. However, it is the Athletic Council and CRS's view that the fee should be passed directly on to the non-county participants.
Fees	Youth Non-County Fees	The fee should be collected, then redistributed to benefit the resident families participating in sports.	The Athletic Council will recommend to the Board of Supervisors (which makes the final determination) that the revenue from the fee be directed into projects that directly benefit the athletic community, similar to the way application fee revenues are handled.
Fees	Youth Non-County Fees	The county should be more focused on getting application fees from walk-ons than getting non-county fees from legitimate participants.	Fee policies are already in place for adults. In addition, the county currently spends hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to control and prevent walk-on use.
n/a	Cricket	More cricket fields are needed to accommodate the need/demand.	This is not relevant to the Allocation Policy, but the Athletic Council will examine the issue.
n/a	Allocations	Other groups get space in our backyard while our teams have to travel farther.	CRS attempts to schedule groups in their geographic areas to the extent possible, given the availability of facilities. Groups are responsible for determining which teams use each specific facility allocated to the organization.
n/a	Permit Availability	Field schedules should be readily available to everyone to see who is scheduled where and when.	Consistently changing schedules make rendering posted schedules immediately outdated, resulting in confusion.
n/a	Allocations	Soccer game allocations should be managed through the leagues, not the clubs.	This is not relevant to the Allocation Policy, but CRS will examine the issue.

Changes to Proposed Policy Made After or In Response to the Public Comment Period

Policy Section	Proposed Change	Rationale
FAP V.D GAP V.D	Add the following language: “Groups may not apply for space if they are allocated space from any other organization receiving space from CRS.”	This wording clarifies that individual teams or parts of larger clubs may not receive space from their parent club and also apply for additional space on their own behalf.
GAP V.C	Add “Applicants must obtain the express written permission of FCPS in order to sell or make an offer to sell goods or services or conduct business activities. Business activities such as camps or clinics are required to be scheduled through FCPS.	This wording ensures consistency with the Field Allocation Policy and clarifies the scheduling responsibilities for camps and clinics.
FAP III.A.4	Change “The actual hours...of availability of individual fields may be restricted...to reflect earlier lights-out times....” to “...to reflect earlier or later lights out times...”	This allows for occasions when field lights-out times may be later than 11 pm.
FAP VII.A.4.b	In the order of scheduling, add the following under the “Tournaments without a local sponsor” heading: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Youth primary season tournaments 2) Adult primary season tournaments 3) Youth secondary season tournaments 4) Adult secondary season tournaments 	This provides consistent language for tournaments with or without a local sponsor.
FAP III.D GAP III.D	Change “Fee-based...activities must be scheduled by FCPS, FCPA, or NVRPA...” to “...activities are not scheduled by CRS, but must be scheduled by FCPS, FCPA, or NVRPA...”	This addition further clarifies that CRS does not schedule camps, clinics, and other fee-based activities.
FAP III.D GAP III.D	Add the following language: “Such programs, including paid coaches and third-party trainers, are acceptable use of CRS-allocated space if the services are available only to registered members of the organization and not for an additional fee (e.g., camp registration).”	This addition further clarifies the difference between fee-based and non-fee-based activities.

Policy Section	Proposed Change	Rationale
FAP VIII.D.7	Add the following language regarding adopted fields: “Memoranda of understanding regarding the development and allocation of fields may supersede the order of scheduling described in Section VII.A, but may not guarantee exclusive use or guarantee space above what is specified in Table 5.	This addition clarifies the reach of MOUs and other agreements for field scheduling in relation to the policy.
FAP V.A.2 GAP V.A.2	Change “At least 75% of participants from applicants that are individual youth teams or groups of individual youth teams must be Fairfax County residents” to “At least 75% of participants from applicants that represent a single team not participating in any other organization receiving facility allocations from CRS must be Fairfax County residents.”	This change clarifies the definition of which applicants are held to the 75% residency standard.
FAP VII.B	Change “Applicants serving players 16 years of age or older will receive first assignment of lighted fields with consideration given to adult scheduling” to “Applicants serving players 16 years of age or older will receive first assignment of lighted fields, with applicants serving adults given primary consideration.”	This change clarifies the meaning of this section.
GAP VIII.G	Add the following language regarding unused space: “Organizations are required to return to CRS any allocated gyms and/or gym use hours that the organization does not use.”	This addition makes the field and gym policies consistent.

Policy Section	Proposed Change	Rationale
FAP XI.C GAP X.C	Change “FCPS and FCPA may cancel or postpone any non-school use of a school field when such use is in conflict with a school event” to “FCPS may cancel or postpone any non-school use of a school field, and FCPA may cancel any non-park use of a park field, when such use is in conflict with a school or park event. The conflict must be one in which the two events cannot occur simultaneously due to space, parking, or other verified restrictions.”	This change clarifies the meaning of this section.
FAP XIII.D (Table 5)	Add prior to the table: “Beginning with the Fall 2010 scheduling season, fields that are at least 300’ x 160’ will count as 1 field; fields that are at least 210’ x 120’ (but smaller than 300’ x 160’) will count as .75 field; smaller fields will count as .5 field.”	This change takes into account the various field sizes allocated and the corresponding numbers of teams that can utilize smaller fields.
FAP XII.I GAP XI.A.9	Add “Failure to meet the residency requirements as identified in Section V.A” as a possible cause for denial or termination of a facility use permit.	This addition provides additional notice that violation of the residency requirements may result in the loss of allocated space.