

Use of School Facilities and Elections

Rev. July 8, 2020

Background

In the [Strong and Healthy Start Guidance](#) dated June 17, 2020, pertaining to the reopening of schools for in-person instruction in the Fall of 2020, districts were advised on page 16 that the, “public may use school grounds, but may not use school buildings, including restrooms.”

The purpose of this guidance is to clarify how school facilities may be used for elections prior to the start of school. In particular, districts are encouraged to work with their local election officials to provide access to school facilities to conduct elections for the August primary if such access is requested.

August Primary

The General Assembly authorized the Secretary of State to modify election law to enable elections to be held safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. See the Secretary of State Office’s [Summary of Election Law Provisions in H.681](#) for more information.

A district’s school board has the authority to approve the request of a town clerk to conduct national, state, local and/or school district elections in a large communal space inside a school building, provided that:

- All elections-related activity within the space shall conform to the maximum number of participants allowed by current state guidance and is arranged by elections officials to support physical distancing to the extent feasible; and
- Elections officials shall arrange and reimburse, with assistance from the Secretary of State’s Office, for the thorough cleaning and disinfecting of the communal space to be completed within a timeframe acceptable to the school board, following recommended disinfection protocols and using recommended disinfection products.

School boards are encouraged to work closely with local election officials to allow access to school facilities for the purposes of conducting the election for the August primary.

November Election

Additional guidance will be published in the future to address access to school facilities for purposes of conducting the election in November 2020.