



**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER BROOKE PINTO**  
**THE JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING**  
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W., SUITE 106  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

September 18, 2023

Nyasha Smith, Secretary  
Council of the District of Columbia  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Secretary Smith,

Today, I, along with Councilmembers Mathew Frumin, Christina Henderson, Robert C. White, Jr., Janeese Lewis George, and Anita Bonds, am introducing the “Expanding Community Access to Safe and Clean Recreational Space Act of 2023.” This bill would require the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to establish a program in partnership with District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) to expand safe and sanitary community access to recreational facilities in every ward on evenings and weekends, outside of the hours in which the facilities are in active use by the schools and student activities.

Recreational facilities at DCPS schools should be, and often are, utilized by the public during evening and weekend hours, when not being dedicated to school- and student- related activities. However, safety and sanitation concerns can deter use or, in some cases, lead school administrators to close access outside of school- and student-related activities. School administrators have expressed the need for dedicated security and custodial services and personnel during public, non-school hours, to ensure safe and sanitary environments and the ability to open recreational spaces to the community.

Community use of recreational facilities at DCPS schools goes beyond the traditional scope of responsibility for principals and school administrators, yet these facilities represent a valuable asset to the surrounding neighborhoods if they can be used by the community. This program would alleviate the unfair burden placed on schools when they are asked to function as a community recreational facility, and indeed want to allow community use, but must absorb the costs of doing so from school funds.

The Expanding Community Access to Safe and Clean Recreational Space Act of 2023 requires DPR to enter into an annual agreement with DCPS to determine the hours of community use at participating DCPS sites, at times that would not interfere with school- and student-related activities. Critically, DPR will also commit to provide security and custodial services as necessary to allow the safe and sanitary use of recreation amenities.

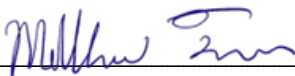
In selecting participating schools, DPR will consider sites that would increase access to recreational space for communities that have experienced historical disinvestment, high levels of traffic incidences, crime and public safety challenges, and high rates of weight-related chronic disease; are located in recreational facility gap areas; could serve as flexible use space during renovations of other nearby recreational facilities; and are nominated by residents or school leadership for participation in the program (however, nomination is not a requirement). Additionally, DPR would be required to establish at least one site in each ward.

Should you have any questions about this legislation, please contact my Legislative Director, Linn Groft, at [lgroft@dccouncil.gov](mailto:lgroft@dccouncil.gov) or (205)440-7600.


Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "BE R" followed by a stylized flourish.

Brooke Pinto


  
Councilmember Matthew Frumin

  
Councilmember Brooke Pinto

  
Councilmember Robert C. White, Jr.

  
Councilmember Christina Henderson

  
Councilmember Anita Bonds

  
Councilmember Janeese Lewis George

AN ACT

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To require the Department of Parks and Recreation to establish a program in partnership with District of Columbia Public Schools to expand safe and sanitary community access to recreational facilities in every ward on evenings and weekends, outside of the hours in which the facilities are in active use by the schools and student activities.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Expanding Community Access to Safe and Clean Recreational Space Act of 2023”.

Sec. 2. Establishment of Partnership between DPR and DCPS for Security and Custodial Services during Hours of Community Use.

(a)(1) The Department of Parks and Recreation (“DPR”) shall establish a program in partnership with District of Columbia Public Schools (“DCPS”) to expand safe and sanitary community access to recreational facilities in every ward on evenings and weekends, outside of the hours in which the facilities are in active use by the schools and student activities.

(2) Incorporating experience and lessons learned from implementing the Community Access to Recreational Space Pilot Program funded in Fiscal Year 2024, DPR shall enter an annual agreement with DCPS to determine the hours of community use at participating

27 DCPS sites, at times that would not interfere with school- and student-related activities. The  
28 agreement shall address the following issues:

29 (A) Hours of community use at the site;

30 (B) Signage to be posted indicating community use hours;

31 (C) Communication process and procedures when a school needs  
32 to hold a special event at the recreational facilities during the hours previously determined to be  
33 open for community use; and

34 (D) Description of security and custodial services at the site to be  
35 provided as described in subsection (b).

36 (3) In identifying participating sites, DPR shall:

37 (A) Establish at least one program site in each ward across the  
38 District;

39 (B) Consider sites that would increase access to recreational space  
40 for communities that have experienced historical disinvestment, high levels of traffic incidences,  
41 crime and public safety challenges, and high rates of weight-related chronic disease;

42 (C) Consider sites located in Recreation Center Gaps, Playground  
43 Gaps, Fields Gaps, Basketball Courts Gaps, and Tennis Courts Gaps, as identified by the  
44 Ready2PLAY Parks and Recreation Master Plan or most updated Parks and Recreation Master  
45 Plan;

46 (D) Consider sites that could serve as flexible use space during  
47 planned renovations of other nearby recreational facilities, especially where renovations may be  
48 extended and will create a temporary Recreation Center Gap, Playground Gap, Fields Gap,  
49 Basketball Courts Gap, or Tennis Courts Gap;

50 (E) Establish a process by which residents and school leadership  
51 may nominate sites for program participation; and

52 (F) Consider nominations by resident and school leadership,  
53 provided that nomination shall not be a requirement for participation.

54 (b) During all evening and weekend hours in which the facilities are open to the  
55 public, DPR shall facilitate security and custodial services as necessary to allow the safe and  
56 sanitary use of public recreation amenities, either directly, through a District agency partner, or  
57 through another third party.

58 Sec. 3. Fiscal impact statement.

59 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal  
60 impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975,  
61 approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

62 Sec. 4. Effective date.

63 This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the  
64 Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as  
65 provided in section 602(c)(2) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December  
66 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)2)), and publication in the District of  
67 Columbia Register.