Introduction & Research Goals
Schools are community hubs where all people can gather to learn and participate in a range of activities offered by community organizations. School facilities provide a place for people to gather, volunteer, access community programs, participate in recreational and social activities, and build strong communities.

In order to better understand how the community uses its facilities, the UGDSB tracks:

- The number of permits requested vs. granted
- The number of visits made to schools for permitted activities
- The total number of hours that school facilities are used by the community
- What age groups use school facilities
- What gender groups use schools
- Which spaces within schools are most commonly used
- What type of activities take place in school facilities

Background
Elementary and secondary schools are available for community use after regular school hours. Although generally there is a fee for the use of school facilities, funding is provided by the Ministry of Education to all school boards in Ontario so that they can make school space more affordable and accessible to communities. Indoor and outdoor school space is also available to not-for-profit community groups at reduced rates.

Methods
All requests for community use of school facilities must be made online. Permit requests are submitted to the UGDSB using eBASE software, which collects responses to mandatory questions. The UGDSB is then able to use eBASE to generate electronic reports on overall school facility use as well as the use of facilities at individual schools. Schools in Ontario are required to report on the community use of their schools to the Ministry of Education annually.

Research Findings:
- A total of 1,132 permits were requested and granted for community uses of school spaces during the 2015-2016 school year.
- Over this time, there were over 1 million participants visits and over 80,000 hours permitted to use spaces in schools across the UGDSB.
- The most frequently used spaces were classrooms, representing 37.5% of the total number of hours permitted, followed by fields (25.3%) and gyms (22.8%).
- The majority of hours permitted were for activities with no target age (Figure 1) and for both genders (Figure 2).
- There are a wide range of community activities that are held in school spaces. Most of the permitted hours are for sports and recreation (17%), social activities (9%) and leadership activities (8%) (Table 1).

Conclusions:
- UGDSB school facilities are used by community members of all age and gender groups, to participate in a wide range of community activities

The UGDSB works actively to make its schools hubs of the communities by making its facilities open to the public.

COMMUNITY USE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS in the Upper Grand District School Board

The Upper Grand District School Board (UGDSB) serves approximately 34,000 students through 65 elementary schools and 12 secondary schools in the City of Guelph, County of Wellington and County of Dufferin.

Research Findings:

- A total of 1,132 permits were requested and granted for community uses of school spaces during the 2015-2016 school year.
- Over this time, there were over 1 million participants visits and over 80,000 hours permitted to use spaces in schools across the UGDSB.
- The most frequently used spaces were classrooms, representing 37.5% of the total number of hours permitted, followed by fields (25.3%) and gyms (22.8%).
- The majority of hours permitted were for activities with no target age (Figure 1) and for both genders (Figure 2).
- There are a wide range of community activities that are held in school spaces. Most of the permitted hours are for sports and recreation (17%), social activities (9%) and leadership activities (8%) (Table 1).

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