



Student Fees for Learning Materials and School Activities

Date of Issue: September 2002
Reviewed/Revised: September 2011, February 2023
Memo To: All Stakeholders
From: Director of Education

ACCESSIBILITY:

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PURPOSE:

This administrative procedure provides direction to schools on the levying of student fees for learning materials and school activities.

REFERENCES:

- [Fees for Learning Materials and Activities at Schools](#)

FORMS:

- APB004-05F: [Proposed Fundraising and School Fees](#)

REPORTS:

- N/A.

APPENDICES:

- N/A.

COMMENTS AND GUIDELINES:

Every student has the right to attend a school, where they are a qualified resident pupil, without payment of a fee. Fees may be charged where schools offer enhancements or supplementary learning materials beyond the core curriculum. Where fees are appropriate, they should be minimized as much as possible, with the goal of supporting student participation in programs and activities regardless of individual economic circumstances.

This administrative procedure does not apply to fees charged for tuition (to international students), continuing education programs, or extended day programs.



Guidelines for Schools

- The purposes for which funds are collected should be consistent with WCDSB's mission and values
- Fees charged are to complement, and not replace, public funding for education
- Each student should have an equal opportunity to benefit from the education system without being required to pay a fee. Students must be able to participate in school activities and access to resources regardless of personal financial barriers
- Schools should adopt practices that address financial hardship and support student participation in activities regardless of economic circumstances
- The dignity of every student and parent should be honoured in the school fee collection process:
 - collection methods must afford reasonable expectations of privacy for students and parents
 - a respectful practice for discreet identification of students/parents who may be experiencing financial hardship should be clearly communicated

Fees

Schools should develop strategies to recognize and reduce barriers to participation and work to effectively include all students in programs and activities.

A fee charge shall be permissible for an activity, material, course or program for which any of the following applies:

- It is not required as part of the regular day school program
- Participation is voluntary, and alternatives are offered
- The fee covers enhancements, non-essential, or extracurricular materials/activities which are not required for graduation

Examples of activities, programs, or materials ineligible for fee charges

1. A registration or administration fee for students enrolled in any regular day school program
2. A textbook fee or deposit
3. Learning materials that are required for completion of the curriculum such as workbooks, cahiers, musical instruments, science supplies, lab material kits and safety goggles
4. Fees charged which will be added to discretionary spending accounts to be used by teachers or departments
5. Mandatory flat fees for any course leading to graduation other than optional programming
6. A fee for a guest speaker, visiting teacher, or in-class field trip or presentation where the material being presented is a mandatory element of the subject or course
7. Fees for materials that are to be paid from school budgets or paid for centrally
8. Learning materials that are required to meet the learning expectations of the course, but are consumed by the pupil and cannot be used again by another student in the next semester (for example, a chemical used in a chemistry experiment)

Examples of activities, programs, or materials potentially eligible for fee charges

1. Optional programming such as Advanced Placement courses or Hockey Canada Skills Academy program
2. Extracurricular trips, events, or activities that are extensions to the curriculum and not required for graduation (for example, dances, school clubs, theme days, athletics, drama, student council activities)
3. Extended student trips or excursions that are not necessary to meet the learning expectations of a particular grade or course (for example, trips abroad)
4. Optional art or music supplies or higher quality woodworking, design or technology materials that students choose to use for course completion, as long as the standard materials are available to the student at no cost
5. Co-curricular activities, special events, program enhancements or field trips (for example, for costs of participation, rental of equipment or travel), if alternative programming and assignments are offered to students who choose not to participate. Ability to pay is not the same as choosing not to participate.
6. Student agendas, yearbooks

Accountability to the school community

Fees should reflect the actual cost of the services or materials being provided to the student. A transparent accounting of the amounts collected and expenditures allocated must be made available to the school community.

Schools should not have surplus fee collections that carry over from year to year. Fees should be adjusted where surpluses are being generated. This ensures fees are not being collected from families with no purpose.

Catholic School Advisory Councils should be consulted in the development of a school's fee schedule and made aware of the use of student fees. This fee schedule should include:

- an itemized list of fees that states the rationale and purpose of each fee
- information about the process to confidentially address financial hardship

The annual [Proposed Fundraising and School Fees](#) (Form APB004-04F) shall be submitted to the school's supervisory officer for approval prior to the plan being posted on the school web page and communicated to parents.