

706 School Fees

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Policy

The Board is dedicated to providing a wide range of educational opportunities for each student, including as many enriching activities as possible.

In accordance with the *School Act*, the Board may charge a fee for goods and services associated with enrichment activities, courses, or programs that extend learning opportunities for the student beyond the basic educational program required to achieve provincial learning outcomes or required for graduation.

In addition, the Board may charge a fee for items such as materials, supplies, equipment, safety devices, exercise books, uniforms and the rental of musical instruments, which are intended for the personal use of the student. The Board may charge a fee for costs such as transportation, accommodation, meals, entrance fees and equipment rental associated with supplementary or optional field trips or special events.

When a school fee is charged, the intent is to assist in recovering costs without realizing any profit. Every effort shall be made to keep student fees to a minimum.

The Board may require the student to provide at his or her own personal expense appropriate personal clothing for school activities such as gym strip, footwear, outerwear, personal safety equipment, and musical instruments.

The Board shall ensure that no student of school age ordinarily resident in British Columbia is excluded from participation in an activity, course, or program because of financial hardship.

The application of school fees shall be reviewed annually to make certain that fees are consistent throughout the School District.

Administrative Procedures

Fees for Enriched or Additional Learning Opportunities

A school fee to recover some or all costs related to enriched or additional learning opportunities may be levied for:

- Materials used in projects intended for a student to take home for personal use or as a gift materials and equipment of a nature, or of a quality or quantity, beyond that which is necessary to meet the required learning outcomes or assessment requirements of an educational program provided by the Board
- Supplies or equipment intended for the personal use of a student such as paper, computer storage media, exercise books, and student planners
- Materials, supplies, and equipment used in supplemental enrichment activities
- Safety equipment for the personal use of a student
- Rental of a musical instrument or music uniform
- Transportation, accommodation, meals, entrance fees or equipment rental associated with a supplemental or optional field trip

- Special events held at a school
- Use of a lock and/or locker
- Extra-curricular activities organized by a school.

Establishment of School Fees

The principal of a school:

- Is responsible for establishing school fees and specialty academy fees as provided in this policy
- Shall ensure that all fees are established at the minimum level necessary to recover the cost of an activity, course or program
- Shall consult with appropriate teachers, staff, staff committee, students and the Parents' Advisory Council (PAC) prior to establishing a fee
- Shall, in consultation with the Parents' Advisory Council, annually provide a presentation on proposed fees at a school Parents' Advisory Council meeting
- Shall, in the case of elementary schools, prepare a schedule of fees and provide this schedule to the Superintendent by April 30th of each year
- Shall, in the case of secondary schools, prepare a schedule of fees and provide this schedule to the Superintendent by November 1st of each year.

Specialty Academy Fees

Specialty Academies are educational programs that emphasize a particular sport, activity or subject area and meet prescribed criteria as set out in Ministry regulations. Fees may be charged with respect to the direct costs incurred in providing the specialty academy that are in addition to the costs of a standard educational program.

The principal of a school offering a specialty academy:

- Is responsible for establishing fees for the specialty academy
- Must, before establishing a schedule of fees for the specialty academy, consult with the Parents' Advisory Council and obtain their approval for the schedule of fees. A schedule of fees for a specialty academy must be established and made available to the public on or before July 1st of each school year
- Shall consult with appropriate teachers, staff, staff committee, and students prior to establishing a fee
- Shall, in consultation with the Parents' Advisory Council, annually provide a presentation on proposed fees at a school Parents' Advisory Council meeting.

The Superintendent:

- Shall review annually the schedule of fees for all schools and specialty academies to ensure that fees are consistent throughout the School District
- Shall in the case of elementary schools, prepare a schedule of fees for all elementary schools in the School District and provide this to the Board for information by May 15th of each year
- Shall in the case of secondary schools, prepare a schedule of fees for all secondary schools in the School District and provide this to the Board for information by December 31st of each year
- Shall in the case of specialty academies, prepare a schedule of fees for all specialty academies and provide this to the Board for information by July 1st of each year.

Publication of School Fees

The principal of a school:

- Is responsible for making students and parents aware of fees established under this policy
- Shall have a schedule of fees published in the school handbook, the school course selection guide, on the school website or in the school newsletter, prior to or upon the start of the school year or semester, and shall ensure that the schedule of fees remains accessible throughout the school year.

Financial Hardship

The principal of a school:

- Shall ensure communications regarding fees include a reference to the possibility of a fee waiver in cases of financial hardship and the means by which such a waiver may be obtained
- Shall encourage staff, where appropriate, to advise parents/guardians directly of the means by which a fee waiver may be obtained
- Shall make certain that there is fair, consistent and confidential procedure for waiving a fee, in whole or in part, for cases where a student would not be able to participate in activities due to financial hardship.