

504.1AP – Fees and Deposits

Purpose

The Board of Education recognizes its obligation pursuant to the *School Act* is to provide, free of charge to school age students resident in the school district, instruction in an educational program sufficient to meet general graduation requirements, as well as educational resource materials necessary for participation in such a program.

In addition to providing the required educational program, the Board of Education is committed to providing a wide range of additional educational opportunities for all students including many enriching activities.

In accordance with the *School Act*, its attendant regulations and ministerial orders, schools may collect fees for certain school programs and/or activities as well as refundable or partly refundable deposits for certain educational resource materials.

The intent when collecting fees and/or deposits from students is to assist in covering the costs of optional programs and activities on a cost-recovery or non-profit basis.

Schools will ensure that a schedule of fees and deposits is published and made available to students and parents prior to the beginning of each school year.

Schools will ensure that fees and deposits are not a barrier to student participation in required educational programs or activities. To that end, schools will have procedures in place such that students who might otherwise be excluded due to financial hardship are afforded the opportunity to participate in school programs or activities.

Procedure

1. Preamble

The intent of the Board of Education is to provide required educational programs and educational resources to students free of charge. It is also the Board's intent to make available to students optional or additional, enhanced learning opportunities that might not otherwise be available without the payment of fees or expenses. The *School Act* permits the Board to charge fees for materials, supplies, equipment and instruments that are not considered to be required "educational resource materials". The purpose of this regulation is to clarify when, and for what purpose, fees and deposits may be charged, and to outline the processes that need to be in place to ensure that students are not excluded from participation in programs and activities due to financial hardship.

In accordance with the *School Act*, the Board may not charge fees for:

- 1.1 materials and equipment necessary to meet the learning outcomes or assessment requirements of an educational program provided by a board;

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- 1.2 materials for basic projects necessary to meet course requirements in elective courses such as woodworking, home economics or art, although students have the option of bringing their own material from home or purchasing material from the school if they wish to use different or more costly material;
- 1.3 participation in activities necessary to complete the required learning outcomes of physical education or outdoor education, although schools may charge for optional activities which might enhance and support the learning outcomes;
- 1.4 workbooks, unless students choose to write in the workbook whereupon a purchase option can be made available.

2. Student Requirements

The Board of Education expects that students are responsible for providing and will attend school with:

- 2.1 basic school supplies and equipment for their personal use such as pens, pencils, erasers, paper, exercise books, rulers, calculators* and data storage devices such as CDs/DVDs;
- 2.2 personal clothing for school activities such as gym strip, footwear, outerwear and aprons;
- 2.3 personal safety equipment such as safety boots and gloves;
- 2.4 a musical instrument when enrolled in a band or strings program, although in many cases instruments may be rented from the school or through the district.

Some schools may make these supplies available as a convenience and at cost to students, usually as a Parent Advisory Council (PAC) initiative.

* Note: Secondary schools will provide class sets of graphing calculators for student use in Math classes if a graphing calculator is a course requirement; schools may charge a refundable deposit for such a calculator.

3. Permissible Fees

In accordance with the *School Act*, the Board may charge fees for:

- 3.1 materials and equipment beyond that which is necessary to meet the required learning outcomes or assessment requirements of an educational program provided by a Board;
- 3.2 materials that are intended for students to take home for personal use or as a gift, such as materials used for projects in technology education, textiles or art;
- 3.3 the purchase or rental of musical instruments for student use in music or band courses or programs; alternatively students may provide their own musical instruments;
- 3.4 the purchase of optional materials such as student planners, annuals and/or yearbooks;
- 3.5 participation in optional activities such as extra-curricular athletics, cultural performances, optional field trips and travel, and graduation activities;
- 3.6 participation in Specialty Academies or “Programs of Choice” pursuant to AP 232 – *Programs of Choice*.
- 3.7 the purchase or rental of tools, equipment and materials necessary for student participation in a trades or apprenticeship program; or the Board may alternatively

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require students to provide their own tools equipment and materials necessary for participation in such a program.

The intent of the Board of Education in charging fees is to assist in the covering of costs without realizing profit. Further, it is the intent of the Board, that where financial hardship exists, fees will be adjusted in part or waived entirely, and student participation will proceed.

4. Deposits And Rentals

Schools may require a refundable deposit for educational resource materials such as textbooks, reusable workbooks and graphing calculators.

Schools may also require a deposit for educational resource materials provided to students who are registered as “home schoolers”.

Criteria used to determine the amount to be refunded should be specified at the time the deposit is required. The deposit is refunded in whole or in part upon the return of the materials.

5. Musical Instruments

The principal, in consultation with staff, the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) and the School Planning Council (SPC), will establish the annual fee required in the case of individual students who wish to rent a musical instrument for their own personal use. This applies in the case of instruments owned by the district as well as instruments rented from commercial providers.

6. Field Trips, Extra-Curricular Travel And Special Events

Schools may not charge fees where participation in a field trip is mandatory and participation is necessary in order for students to meet the learning outcomes or assessment requirements of a course.

Schools may charge fees for additional services and enhancement activities such as optional curricular or extra-curricular field trips and special events. Such activities may enhance and add value to a student learning experiences but are not essential to achieving the required learning outcomes.

Fees for optional enhancement activities shall be on a cost-recovery basis only, and may include actual costs of admission, accommodation, meals, equipment rentals and transportation. *AP 333 – Field Trips*, costs to parents of K – 7 students shall not be in excess of \$50 per trip.

Parent consent forms will specify whether the purpose of the field trip is a required or an enhancement activity, and will also advise parents of financial hardship procedures in effect and available to them.

Schools may consider fundraising as a means of defraying some or all of the costs, subject to the following factors:

- the ability of students to meaningfully engage in such activities;
- the availability of parents;
- the fundraising efforts of other groups and competition for such funds within the school;
- as well as the economic conditions within the larger community.

7. Specialty Academies

A specialty academy is defined as an educational program approved by the School Planning Council that emphasizes a particular sport, activity or subject area that meets the prescribed criteria as set out in to *AP 232 – Programs of Choice*.

The principal, in consultation with staff, the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) and the School Planning Council (SPC), will establish the annual fee required for the school to recover direct costs associated with the specialty academy that are over and above the standard education program. Such costs may include, but not be limited to: supplementary instruction and/or coaching, equipment, uniforms, rental of facilities, travel, entrance fees and special events.

8. Trades Programs

A trades program is defined as an educational program that is designed to certify a student for a particular occupation and includes an apprenticeship for students registered with the *Industry Training Authority Act*.

The principal, in consultation with staff, the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) and the School Planning Council (SPC), will establish the annual fee required for the school to recover direct costs associated with offering a trades certification program that are over and above the standard educational program.

Students enrolled in trades and apprenticeship programs under the *Industry Training Authority Act*:

- may be required to purchase or rent his or her tools, equipment, and materials necessary for participation in the program, or
- may be required to provide his or her own tools, equipment, and materials necessary for participation in the program.

Certain school courses and programs offer the opportunity for students to acquire certification in areas such as First Aid, CPR, Food Safe and Super Host. These certifications are not curriculum requirements, and student participation is optional. Students will be charged a fee to cover the cost of the certification cost if they choose to obtain it.

9. Annual Fee Schedules

The principal, after consultation with staff, the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) and the School Planning Council (SPC), will establish an annual schedule of school fees and deposits, and will submit the schedule to the Superintendent or designate for approval.

The Superintendent or designate will submit approved school fee schedules to the Board for their authorization by the end of February so that information is available for publication in school handbooks in the spring and prior to student registration for the next school year.

The school fee and deposit schedule will be published in the school handbook(s) and/or school newsletter before the beginning of the next school year, and will advise students and parents of school procedures available in cases of financial hardship.

10. Financial Hardship

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- 10.1 In accordance with Section 82 of the School Act, the principal, in consultation with staff, the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) and the School Planning Council (SPC), will develop procedures for addressing individual cases where student participation in a program or activity would otherwise be precluded by demonstrable financial hardship.
- 10.2 Procedures for addressing individual cases of student hardship will incorporate the principles of fairness, respect, dignity, confidentiality and sensitivity.
- 10.3 The principal will ensure that the entire school community is aware that the school has provisions for addressing individual cases of financial hardship, and that students and/or parents can approach the administration, a teacher, counsellor, coach or any other staff member privately and in confidence.
- To this end, it is essential that all members of staff are fully aware of this provision, and are able to assist students and parents and advise them appropriately.
- 10.4 The principal will receive and deal with all requests for support and consideration. In so doing, the principal may consider options of: deferred payment, payment over time, partial waiver or full waiver.
- 10.5 In the event of a requirement to report out on the use of funds in cases of financial hardship, the principal will do so only in general terms in order to protect individual privacy and confidentiality.

11. Accounting

All monies collected and distributed by a school are public funds and subject to an audit by the office of the Secretary-Treasurer.

The principal is responsible for authorizing all expenditures and for ensuring that proper accounting procedures are in place and maintained at the school.

Legal References:

Monitoring Method:	<i>Board of Education / Superintendent</i>
Monitoring Frequency:	<i>Annual</i>
Previous Policy Number:	<i>AP320</i>
Adopted:	<i>1997.11.26</i>
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