

RATIONALE:

Educational programs and the activities and required resource materials to participate in those programs are provided to students at no cost subject to specific exceptions allowed under the School Act and Ministerial Order. Deposits and fees approved by the Board in the Spring for the following year may be charged by the school so long as there are processes in place to ensure financial hardship is not a barrier to participation in activities or programs. The purpose of fees is to assist in the recovery of costs without realizing profits.

PROCEDURE:

1. Deposits

The school may require a deposit for educational resource material such as textbooks, novels and tools provided to students enrolled at the school and students who are registered as home-school students. The deposit is to be refunded in whole or in part upon the return of the educational resource materials. Criteria used to determine the amount refunded must be specified at the time the deposit is required.

2. Fees for Materials, Supplies, Equipment

Parents and students are responsible for providing the following: paper, writing tools, calculators other than graphing calculators, student planners (optional), exercise books, and other school supplies and equipment for a student's individual use, and appropriate personal clothing for school activities such as gym strip, footwear, outerwear, and personal safety equipment. Schools will provide graphing calculators where they are required.

Schools are expected to have respectful and confidential processes in place to assist families who need support with these items.

The school may charge for goods beyond the baseline projects that are intended for the student to take home for personal use or as a gift: for example, optional materials used in textiles, shop, or art.

Schools may charge a deposit for lock rental, make locks available for purchase for students, or allow students to provide locks for their personal use.

3. Fees for Musical Instruments

Fees may be associated with the cost of rental of Musical instrument for the student's personal use when enrolled in a course where students learn to play a musical instrument. The school may charge fees for the purchase or rental of a musical instrument for the student's personal use or require the student to provide his or her own musical instrument.

4. Fees for Specialty Academies

Fees may be charged for an approved speciality academy that emphasizes a particular sport, activity or subject area and meets the prescribed criteria set out in the School Act regulations. Fees must relate to the direct costs incurred in providing the specialty academy that are in addition to the costs of providing a standard educational program.

5. Fees for Trades Programs

Schools may charge fees for the purchase or rental of tools, equipment, and materials necessary for the student's participation in the trades program or require the student to provide his or her own tools, equipment and materials necessary for the student's participation in the trades program.

6. Extra-Curricular Field Trips and Special Events

Parents and students are responsible for the payment of expenses in respect of optional field trips or special events including expenses for transportation, accommodation, meals, entrance fees and equipment rentals. Such fees must be limited to defray the actual costs of transportation, accommodation, meals, admission, and equipment rentals.

Student council activities may have fees for students who choose to participate in those events or activities.

7. Processes for Establishing Annual Fee Schedules

The principal, after consultation with teachers and the parent advisory council, and working within the district's fee structure guidelines, will prior to April 1, recommend a schedule for the school's general fees and deposits for the following school year to the secretary-treasurer.

The Secretary-Treasurer, after reviewing school fee schedules, will recommend the schedules to the Board for approval.

The Board will approve in the Spring the schedule of general fees to be charged by schools in the following year.

In the case of deposits and fees and special equipment or supplies required for a specific course, program, or specialty academy, the costs must be known to students and parents at the time of course selection or registration for the program. These fees require consultation with and approval by the parent advisory council of the school and must be submitted to the secretary-treasurer at least two months prior to the commencement of course selection or registration in order for approved costs to be available for inclusion in course selection/registration materials.

Once approved, and before the end of the school year, the principal will publish the school's fee and deposit schedule, along with the process for waiving a school fee, in the school handbook

and on the website.

8. Financial Hardship

The schedule of proposed fees submitted by the school will include a fair and confidential process for students, parents, and school staff to waive fees in cases where students and their parents experience financial hardship.

Schools may consider deferred payment, payment over time, partial waiver, full waiver, or other fund-raising methods in helping to deal with the request for fee waiver

The Board, after reviewing the school fee schedules, will approve school fees and deposit schedules in the Spring prior to the next school year so that the information is available for publication in school handbooks and websites.

The principal will publish the school's fee and deposit schedule, along with the process for waiving a school fee, in the school handbook and on the website.

Authority: School Act, sections 82, 83, B.C. Reg. 265/89, and Ministerial Order 236/07 (M236/07)