

## **107 General AP – School Fees**

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### **Basic Instructional Materials School Fee**

Basic instructional materials are materials, supplies and resources required for any course that is introductory in nature that a student is enrolled in.

1. Schools shall not charge any fee or cost for:
  - a. Textbooks,
  - b. Workbooks,
  - c. Photocopying, or
  - d. Printing or paper supplies,
2. Schools can charge a fee for bulk school supply purchases for parents on a cost recovery basis.
3. If targeted funding is received from the Alberta government for basic instructional materials, it will be recorded as part of school's annual school fee revenue in their school budget. This funding is to be used to purchase textbooks, workbooks, photocopying costs, paper supplies, printing costs and other basic instructional materials and supplies that are charged against the school budget.

### **Non-Basic Instructional Materials and Services School Fee**

Non-basic instructional materials and services are those materials, services and/or courses that would not be offered to students due to the costs of rental of equipment, off-site costs, high cost programs unique to the community etc.

1. Non-basic instructional materials and service fees may be charged for the following, but not limited to:
  - a. Optional or Elective Course Fee – A fee charged for course options and electives, such as Band (including band equipment rental to a third party), Fine Arts, Advanced Placement, Career and Technology Studies (CTS), Career and Technology Foundations (CTF), Physical Education etc.
    - i. Only if a course requires a significant amount of consumable and disposable goods and or services, Schools may charge a non-basic instructional materials and services school fee to assist in defraying this cost.
  - b. Technology User Fee – A fee charged for use or rental of computers, iPads, or other electronic devices.
  - c. Alternative Program Fee – A fee charged for a program (not an individual course) that emphasizes a specific culture, religion, or subject matter or uses a particular teaching philosophy, including sports-related academies.
  - d. Activity Fee – A fee charged for transportation, accommodation, admission, facility and equipment rental and other charges for field trips, physical education, or

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special events (including in-school presenters where it is optional for the student to attend). These activities are usually associated with curriculum.

- e. Enhanced Early Childhood Service Program – A fee for full day or progressive Early Childhood Services programs that provide greater hours of instruction than required (475 hours per year)
- 2. Community children enrolled in a Junior Kindergarten or Enhanced Kindergarten program (greater than 475 hours per year) will be assessed the following monthly fee.
  - a. Junior Kindergarten Program Fees - \$45 per month for every half day of service provided on a weekly basis
  - b. Enhanced Kindergarten Program Fees - \$250 per month
  - c. Junior Kindergarten and Enhanced Kindergarten are not a mandatory Alberta Education program; therefore, these fees are not eligible for the School Fee Reduction / Waiver below.
  - d. Fees may be waived for children identified with a Mild / Moderate or Severe disability.
  - e. Fees for these programs will be reviewed annually to ensure the programs operate at a cost recovery basis.
- 3. The fees shall not exceed the cost of consumable/disposable goods and or services.
- 4. All non-basic instructional materials and service school fees collected by the schools shall be forwarded to central office. The school fees collected will become part of the division total fees revenue.

### **Non-Curricular Goods and Services Fee**

Principals are authorized to charge a fee for student actions or activities that are not course related and only where the student has the ability to opt out of the action or activity.

- 1. Schools may charge non-curricular goods and services fees for the following, but not limited to:
  - a. Sports Team Fees (for uniforms, travel, tournament entry, etc.),
  - b. Locks and/or Locker Rental,
  - c. Agenda Books,
  - d. Caution Fees/Refundable Deposits/Damage Fees,
  - e. Student Council or Student Union,
  - f. Student Club Fees (including costs for third party rental or lease of equipment),
  - g. Non-curricular field trips (for travel, accommodations and admission), and
  - h. Gym Strip
- 2. These amounts collected are retained at the school and expenditures for these actions or activities are paid at the school level.

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**School Fee Reduction / Waiver and Refund Process**

1. The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) has the authority to reduce or waive school fees for families who encounter financial hardship. A payment plan can be agreed upon between the CFO and parents to assist with financial difficulties.
2. The school fees (except for Junior Kindergarten and Enhanced Kindergarten fees) are subject to the following reduction/waiver and refund provisions:
  - a. School Fees may be reduced or waived upon a parent/guardian's confidential application (Appendix Form) to the Chief Financial Officer, with documentation demonstrating financial difficulty, for all persons with financial responsibility to the child(ren), (i.e. most recent tax return). When assessing reduction or waiver of school fees, the families' prior year taxable income will be compared to the Statistics Canada Low Income Cut-Off for five-person households in rural areas under 10,000 people. All completed fee exemption / payment plan forms and supporting documents are to be forwarded to the Chief Financial Officer for consideration of approval.
    - i. Waiving/reducing fees should only apply to mandatory school fees and not sports/optional fees. If a parent is able to pay a portion of a student's outstanding fee balance, it is expected to be applied to school fees prior to any optional fee.
  - b. When a student, who has paid a non-basic instructional materials and services school fee, transfers to another school jurisdiction during the school year, a pro-rated refund per month shall be paid upon application for the refund.
  - c. When a student transfers to another school jurisdiction during the school year, the school shall reimburse any unused fees that were paid for non-curricular goods and services fees. Non-curricular goods and services fees:
    - i. Are not refundable where a service has been performed or a product has been received; and
    - ii. Shall be refunded on a per month pro-rated basis, to a student who transfers to another school jurisdiction during the school year, where the activity covered by the fee extends over a period of time and where the student is present only for a portion of that time.
3. Principals are responsible to communicate the School Fee reduction/waiver and refund circumstances and provisions to their staff at the first staff meeting held for each school year. The School Fee reduction/waiver and refund process is required to be included in student and staff handbooks or school newsletter.
4. With respect to school fees and costs, any disputes or concerns between the parents and the Chief Financial Officer, should be referred to an appeal committee, including the Superintendent and/or designate, for a resolution. Both the Chief Financial Officer and parent will be communicated with before and after a decision is made.

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**General**

1. All new school fees or school fee increase/decreases shall be made in consultation with parents. These shall be brought forward to parents for feedback on or prior to June 1<sup>st</sup> of each year for the upcoming school year. Consultations with parents can include, but is not limited to, school council meetings (both in-person and virtual), surveys and written submissions. Consultation with parents is required to include a demonstration for the need to charge a new fee or increase/decrease to an existing fee, including the amount and purpose of each school fee.
2. The Chief Financial Officer shall be responsible for reporting whether fees have been spent for the same purpose for which they were collected. This will be completed in the annual financial statements as provided by the Minister of Education.
3. The Chief Financial Officer shall be advised on or before June 15th of each year of all fee changes for the upcoming school year. This information will be provided in a fee schedule template, as provided by the CFO or designate. Once the Superintendent and CFO review the fee schedule, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, it will be posted on the division's website along with this Administrative Procedure.
4. When setting a fee, the school should consider their estimate of the projected cost of providing for the subject matter of the charge.
5. School Fees must be spent for the purpose in which they were collected. Appropriate use is determined solely on what was communicated to the parents when deciding to charge the fee.
6. Principals are responsible for the collection of school fees. Accounts that are more than six-months overdue may be submitted to the Division office for further action. The Division reserves the right to engage the services of a collection agency to recover unpaid school fees.

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