



FEES FOR LEARNING MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES

Responsibility:	Coordinating <i>Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board</i>
Legal References:	<i>Education Act</i>
Related References:	<i>Ministry of Education, "Fees for Learning Materials and Activities Guideline", March 2011</i> <i>Board Policy 6011 - Fees for Learning Materials and Activities</i>
Revisions:	<i>March 2014, January 2020</i>
Reviewed:	<i>June 2016</i>

1. Preamble

- 1.1 The following procedure outlines guidelines and expectations for regular day school programming regarding notification of fees, identifying financial need, general course fee management and fees that are charged for lost and damaged material. Administrators should be sensitive to the cumulative amount of fees charged.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 **Core Curriculum:** Core curriculum activities refer to activities or materials related to the regular day school program.
- 2.2 **Enhanced Programming and Materials:** Enhanced Programming and materials are voluntary enrichments or upgrades to the core curriculum beyond what is necessary to meet the learning expectations for a particular grade or course. In these circumstances, a fee may be charged. Where students choose not to access enhancements, alternatives must be made available.
- 2.3 **Extracurricular activities:** Extra-curricular activities are defined as those that occur outside the regular day school program.
- 2.4 **Optional programming:** Optional programming refers to courses or activities that by their very nature require payment of fees for specialized supplies or equipment. This would include Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Integrated Arts Program and Hockey Canada Skills Program.
- 2.5 **Student Activity Fees:** Student activity fees are voluntary amounts that are used to supplement a student's school experience through materials and activities such as student agendas, student recognition programs, yearbooks, extra-curricular activities, theme days and school dances.

3. Guiding Principles

- 3.1 There shall be no fees charged to a student to participate in the regular day school program except for enhanced/optional programming. A pupil has a right to attend without a fee.

- 3.2 No student will be denied access to any course or use of the school's library because they have not paid student activity fees.
- 3.3 Wherever possible, schools will minimize costs related to enhanced programming and materials that are optional to a course. To promote equity in public education, staff shall keep the number of enhanced programming opportunities in a course to a minimum and keep the costs low.
- 3.4 In situations where fees are charged to students, the amount must reflect the actual cost of the service or materials being provided to the student; rounded to the nearest dollar. A transparent accounting of the fees collected and expenditures made must be available.
- 3.5 All fees collected must be deposited in the bank through School Day.
- 3.6 The Principal shall be aware of and approve all fees charged to students.

4. Equity and Inclusive Education

- 4.1 Each student shall 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 resources regardless of personal financial circumstances.
- 4.2 When students/parents choose not to participate in a voluntary activity or program, or not to purchase voluntary materials, alternative assignments will be provided to them to ensure that they meet the course expectations.
- 4.3 The method used to collect student fees are expected to honour the dignity of every student and parent with discreet identification of students/parents who may be experiencing financial hardships.

5. Communication of Fees and Assessment of Financial Need

- 5.1 If a school will be charging fees, a schedule of fees must be communicated to the school community in a timely manner (i.e. during course selection process). This can be achieved through a variety of channels, including but not limited to; school newsletters, school websites and referenced in student agendas. In secondary schools, fees must be documented in the course calendar prior to student's signing up for a course.
- 5.2 Each school will proactively advertise the process for identifying and supporting students requiring financial assistance to its school community (e.g. website, newsletters, school council or school course calendars).
- 5.3 The following shall be included in a communication to students and parents/guardians:

"All learning materials essential for the completion of a program/credit are made available by the school at no cost to students. It is the policy of the Waterloo Region District School Board to acknowledge that students are entitled to an education that ensures they achieve their full potential through equitable and appropriate allocation of funds provided by the Ministry of Education. Enhanced educational opportunities for all students are made available through shared responsibilities with parents and guardians. Students/families requiring financial assistance should contact any staff member. The staff member will ensure that the student's issue is dealt with in an appropriate, sensitive and confidential manner."

6. Fees which are Expressly Prohibited

- 6.1 Music Courses (*core curriculum*)
 - 6.1.1 There will be no charge to students to use musical instruments.
- 6.2 Photocopied Materials

- 6.2.1 Where photocopied materials (i.e. single copies or booklets) are circulated to students there will be no charge to students.
- 6.2.2 Schools will provide print credits to students to print all required materials for a course. Students cannot be expected to print required course material at home.
- 6.3 Safety Goggles
 - 6.3.1 Safety goggles are mandatory in certain courses. The school will provide safety goggles for all students to use in class; no alternative goggles will be made available for purchase.
- 6.4 Science Classes (*core curriculum*)
 - 6.4.1 Lab materials and kits are provided to students at no charge. All labs and materials are paid for by the school.
 - 6.4.2 Lab dissections cannot be considered a course enhancement.
 - 6.4.3 There shall be no set glass fee/breakage charge.
- 6.5 Textbooks (*core curriculum*)
 - 6.5.1 There will be no charge for the use of textbooks.
 - 6.5.2 Schools may charge fees or institute a book deposit fee if the student's enrolment is contained on a continuing education student register, an adult credit course student register or an international language student register.
- 6.6 Workbooks/Cahiers/Booklets (*core curriculum*)
 - 6.6.1 Where workbooks/cahiers/booklets are used during instructional time, they will be available to students at no cost.

7. General

The following are items where fees may apply:

- 7.1 Advanced Placement (AP) Program (*optional programming*)
 - 7.1.1 Fees will be charged to students to cover the cost of the Advanced Placement Exams.
 - 7.1.2 Where special textbooks or workbooks are required for the Advanced Placement courses, additional fees may apply.
- 7.2 Art or Visual Arts
 - 7.2.1 Supplies will be available in class for all students to complete course expectations. Students who wish to have their own enhanced resources have the option of providing their own supplies (*core curriculum*). The supplies provided or the enhanced resources used in a project need to give the students an equitable experience. All supplies used must comply with WHMIS.
 - 7.2.2 Students in senior level art classes who wish to develop their art portfolios may incur fees for the enhanced resources required to complete the artwork (*enhanced materials*). Students may purchase the enhanced materials/supplies from the school at cost.
 - 7.2.3 Specialty Arts Courses (e.g. photography, media arts, stained glass, etc.) may include enhanced activities and resources. When the students select these courses, fees that reflect the cost of the enhanced activities and resources may be charged to students (*enhanced programming*).
 - 7.2.4 Assessment practices will recognize the equivalency of the supplies used (i.e. a pupil will not be assessed differently based on the materials used in a project).
- 7.3 Basic Supplies
 - 7.3.1 For Elementary students, basic supplies (i.e. pens, pencils, erasers and paper) will be provided at no cost by the school.
 - 7.3.2 It is understood that Secondary school students will be expected to provide their own basic supplies.
- 7.4 Extracurricular Activities

- 7.4.1 Extracurricular activities provide opportunities that often require supplemental funding. They are offered to students at a cost that is generally less than comparable community activities. They refer to activities outside the regular day school program. Examples of extracurricular activities include school dances, theme days and clubs.
- 7.4.2 Participation fees may include the logistical costs of running the activities (e.g. facility rental, transportation and equipment). Fundraising activities may be held to support the costs of the extracurricular activities.
- 7.4.3 The Waterloo County Secondary School Association (WCSSA) sets the fees for extracurricular sports.
- 7.4.4 Fees for clubs and activities are set by the school holding the activity.
- 7.5 Field Trips/Excursions
 - 7.5.1 In most circumstances, field trips or excursions provide enhanced learning opportunities for students. They are optional and a participation fee may be charged (*enhanced programming and materials*).
 - 7.5.2 Where a field trip or excursion constitutes a non-vital part of the curriculum, alternate assignments will be made available to students at no charge. Assessment practices will recognize the equivalency of the activities.
 - 7.5.3 If a field trip or excursion represents an essential component of the curriculum, no charges will be levied (*core curriculum*).
- 7.6 Food, Fashion Arts, Family Studies and Technology Courses
 - 7.6.1 Supplies (i.e. food, wood, material) will be available for all students to complete the course expectations. Skill development occurs with an experiential learning focus using basic materials provided by the school at no charge (*core curriculum*).
 - 7.6.2 Students who wish to have their own specialized supplies have the option of providing their own supplies or purchasing supplies from the school at cost (*enhanced materials*). An example of an enhance material used in a course is when a student chooses to use cedar wood versus the supplied pine wood.
- 7.7 Health and Physical Education
 - 7.7.1 Gym Clothing
 - 7.7.1.1 Under no circumstances can students be required to purchase school branded athletic wear in order to participate in a course.
 - 7.7.1.2 For hygiene and safety purposes, a change of clothes is required. Guidelines for athletic wear need to consider religious attire requirements, and should include options such as a t-shirt or long sleeve shirt, shorts or track pants, socks and athletic shoes.
 - 7.7.1.3 Schools may provide gym clothing for sale at cost. Costs should be kept to a minimum.
 - 7.7.2 Physical Education Courses
 - 7.7.2.1 Each secondary school offers a health and physical education course (i.e. PPL course) where a student can choose no-cost activities to complete the course (*core curriculum*).
 - 7.7.2.2 Secondary schools offer some fitness activities, outdoor activities or outdoor leadership courses that have a large number of enhanced programming options in the course (e.g. PAF, PAD or PLF courses). These courses offer an inexpensive introduction to a sampling of healthy lifestyle activities. Students are able to select from a menu of units some of which are provided at a cost by outside agencies and others are provided at no cost by the school. Students are provided no cost options by the school. A participation fee may apply dependent on the student's selection of activities. Assessment practices will recognize the equivalency of the activities.
 - 7.7.2.3 A student cannot be charged a weight room membership fee for use of the room when it constitutes a component of a course.
- 7.8 International Baccalaureate Program (IB) (*optional programming*)

- 7.8.1 Fees are charged for specialized programming as permitted by the Ministry of Education.
- 7.8.2 Fees are set annually for the IB Program by the board.

- 7.9 Leadership Courses
 - 7.9.1 Some leadership courses have enhanced activities that can only be offered with supplemental funding (*enhanced programming*). They are offered by schools to students at cost, which is generally less than comparable community activities. Due to the cost of these enhancements, fees that reflect the actual costs incurred may be charged to students for participation.

- 7.10 Locks
 - 7.10.1 A student may provide an approved lock for their locker or purchase one from the school at cost.

- 7.11 Music
 - 7.11.1 Individual music consumables such as drumsticks or reeds are required for hygiene purposes. A sufficient allocation will be provided to students at no cost. If additional consumables are required due to loss or damage students may purchase them from the school at cost or provide their own.

- 7.12 Planners/Agendas
 - 7.12.1 Schools cannot charge a fee for a school planner/agenda when all students are required to use the same school planner/agenda. Where a planner/agenda is not mandated, students will have the option of purchasing one from the school at cost or providing a comparable planning tool (*enhanced material*).

- 7.13 Special Education Congregated Classes
 - 7.13.1 Special Education congregated classes are provided with additional operating funds on a per pupil basis through a central special education allocation to pay for the program. This is determined by the school on the advice of special education staff and based on the Individual Education Plans (IEP's) of the students in the class (*core curriculum*).
 - 7.13.2 Enhanced educational opportunities may be made available through shared responsibilities with parents, guardians, and other community resources (*enhanced programming*). An example of enhanced programming in a special education congregated class would be promoting social learning of a pupil with a trip to a restaurant for breakfast.

- 7.14 Student Activity Cards
 - 7.14.1 Student activity cards are optional. Purchasing a card entitles the student to participate in a variety of extracurricular activities, which may include dances, clubs, sports, games, reduced entry fees or discounts.

8. Fees for Damaged or Lost Materials and Equipment

- 8.1 Fees will be charged for the replacement or repair of textbooks, workbooks, library resources and other loaned materials (e.g. Chromebooks) and equipment if the item is not returned as required or is returned in damaged condition.

- 8.2 The school will work with families to recover the cost of lost or damaged school property.

- 8.3 The fee charged for lost or damaged materials or equipment may not exceed the replacement or repair cost.