

Student Fees

Date Approved: 2023

Projected Review Date: 2027

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PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that when activities with a fee are offered, a student's financial or socio-economic circumstances are neither a barrier to nor an enabler of exclusive access to that activity. Schools may offer curriculum or extracurricular activities (e.g., enhanced programming or materials, optional programs, excursions, athletics, clubs, activities) that are financed wholly or in part by student fees; however, individual financial circumstances should not prevent a student from participating in these activities. Schools may have student activity fees or team fees, and these fees should be voluntary and as low as possible.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Every student has the right to attend a school, where they are a qualified resident pupil, without payment of a fee.
- Each student should have access to the activities in their school community without paying a fee.
- Student fees are only appropriate in cases where schools choose to offer enhanced programming or materials, optional programs, or activities beyond the core curriculum.
- Schools will limit the number of activities that require fees and, to the greatest extent possible, rely on alternatives to student fees (e.g., school budget, grants, fundraising, etc.) to finance these opportunities.
- Where fees are appropriate, they should be developed with the involvement of the school community, be minimized as much as possible, and spent in the current fiscal year.
- Successful completion of a required grade or course leading to graduation cannot be dependent on the payment of any course fee.
- Staff will honour the dignity of every student and family when requesting, collecting, and/or waiving a fee.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

- Students will be able to participate in school activities without paying a fee.
- The number of activities provided by schools that charge a fee will be limited, and the cost to students and families will be as low as possible.
- No student fees will replace public funding for education, and they may not be used to support items that are funded through provincial grants such as classroom learning materials and textbooks, facility repairs, maintenance, or upgrades outside of enhanced or optional materials.
- Student fees and their disbursement will be clearly communicated to each school community.

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RESPONSIBILITY:

Director of Education
Executive Council

TERMINOLOGY:

Enhanced Programming and Materials: Enhanced programming and materials are voluntary enrichments or upgrades to the curriculum, voluntary courses or co-curricular activities beyond what is necessary to meet the learning expectations for a particular grade or course. For example, students may wish to use a superior product or consumable than that provided by the school, in which case they may be asked to pay the additional cost of the upgrade.

Where students choose not to access these enhanced programs or materials, alternatives must be available as essential course materials required to meet the learning expectations of the course or grade are to be provided at no cost.

Qualified Resident Pupil: An international student studying at HWDSB on a visitor visa and a study permit is required to pay fees according to the Education Act 49(6).

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, extracurricular activities, school dances or theme days.

Team Fee: A specific fee for each sport played based on the needs of the team and used to fund tournaments/exhibition games, uniform deposit and/or upgrades, travel, first aid (non-funded sports), referees (non-funded sports) and athletic supplies (e.g., tape, wrap) The fee will be waived or subsidized for students who are experiencing financial hardship.

ACTION REQUIRED:

- Maintain procedures that support the guiding principles of this policy and any related Ministry policy.
- Communicate the requirements of this policy and related procedures to school principals annually.
- Principals will work with and communicate to school and program staff, parents/guardians/caregivers and students about the development of any fees.



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PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Intended Outcome	Assessment
Students will be able to participate in school activities without paying a fee.	Hamilton Foundation for Student Success Grant usage Parent Voice Survey
The number of activities provided by schools that charge a fee will be limited, and the cost to students and families will be as low as possible.	Annual School Financial Reports
No student fees will replace public funding for education, and they may not be used to support items that are funded through provincial grants such as classroom learning materials and textbooks, facility repairs, maintenance, or upgrades outside of enhanced or optional materials.	Annual School Financial Reports
Student fees and their disbursement will be clearly communicated to each school community.	School communication: website, newsletters, messages to parents, school council reports. Parent Voice Survey

REFERENCES:

Government Documents

Education Act

Ministry Guideline: Fees for Learning Material and Activities