



Administrative Procedure 505

STUDENT FEES

Background

The [School Act](#) requires that instruction in an educational program be provided free of charge to every student of school age who is resident in British Columbia and enrolled in an educational program in a school operated by a District. It dictates that schools cannot charge fees for anything that is referred to as “educational resource material.” These are all materials and equipment necessary to meet the learning outcomes or assessment requirements of an educational program provided by the District. Educational resource material also refers to “information” represented or stored in a variety of media and formats that is used for instruction in an educational program including, with limitation, the materials referred to in Section 3 of [Ministerial Order 333/99](#), the Educational Program Guide Order.

The District may charge fees for goods and services, as defined under [School Regulation 265/89](#). These goods and services are provided by the District in accordance with Ministry Orders and the School Act section 82(3).

The purpose of this Administrative Procedure is to clarify when, and for what purposes, fees and deposits may be charged and to ensure that no student is denied an opportunity to participate in the required educational programs or activities based on financial hardship (Administrative Procedure 506).

Procedures

1. The Superintendent will ensure that the following District fee guidelines for elementary, middle and secondary schools are adhered to in the District.
2. The principal is responsible for approving school fees. The principal shall consult with the Parents’ Advisory Council regarding any changes in the current fee schedule to enable communication to all parents. The principal will ensure:
 - 2.1. That a schedule of fees is prepared and provided to the Superintendent by May 1 of each year.
 - 2.2. That parents and students are aware of fees established through publication in school handbooks, school course selection guides, newsletters and other school media sources (such as the school website); and
 - 2.3. The publication of fees for the following school year will take place prior to end of the current year.

3. Principals may establish fees for materials and equipment of a nature, or of a quality, beyond what is necessary to meet the required learning outcome or assessment requirements of an educational program provided by the District. Basic materials will be provided, but materials of a quantity or quality higher than what is required can be charged.
4. Students may be charged for paper, writing tools, calculators other than graphical calculators, student planners, exercise books, computer storage media and other school supplies and equipment for a student's individual use.
5. Students may provide their own musical instrument where that is necessary or the District may charge for the purchase or rental of a musical instrument for the student's personal use.
6. Students may provide their own tools, equipment and materials where necessary for a Trades program or the District may charge for the purchase or rental of tools, equipment and materials for the student's personal use.
7. The principal may charge a student enrolled in an International Baccalaureate program, fees relating to the direct costs incurred by the District in providing the International Baccalaureate program that are in addition to the costs of providing a standard educational program.
8. Students participating in International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement courses have the option of writing International Baccalaureate or Advanced Placement final examinations in addition to school or provincial final examinations. The principal may charge to recover expenses for these examinations.
9. In order to minimize the expense of basic school supplies for families, the District will approve schools to offer a bulk purchase program to parents for school supplies for elementary students. If a family is unable to pay for these supplies due to financial hardship they will be provided to the child free of charge in accordance with Administrative Procedure 506 - Hardship.
10. The principal may charge a student enrolled in a specialty academy, fees relating to the direct costs incurred by the District in providing the specialty academy that are in addition to the costs of providing a standard educational program.
11. Principals may require deposit(s) for educational resource materials such as textbooks, workbooks and laptops. Deposits are refundable and students will be advised on the terms of the deposit at the time the deposit is required. If a school requires a deposit, it must refund all or part of the deposit to the student upon return of the educational resource materials. Any required deposits must be included and published in the schedule of fees submitted to the Superintendent.
12. Principals may charge for materials and activities that are outside of an educational program (e.g. Student activity fee, graduation activity fee, yearbook, extra-curricular activities), however, the payment of such non-educational fees is not mandatory, but is based on the optional participation in the activity by the student.
13. Principals may charge fees for the costs associated with optional field trips that add value to a student's learning experience, but where learning outcomes are not assessed. Fees that re-coup the cost of transportation, accommodation, meals, entrance fees, equipment

rentals, or other student costs specific to the trip, may be charged. Excluding international or overnight trips, no student shall be denied an opportunity to participate through an inability to pay. (Administrative Procedure 506 - Hardship).

14. Each principal shall have well-known procedures to facilitate the participation of students who would not otherwise be able to participate in an educational program due to financial hardship. Assistance to students shall be given in accordance with Administrative Procedure 506 - Hardship and in a manner as to preserve the dignity of the individual and the family.

Reference: Section 20, 22, 65, 82, 82.1, 82.2, 82.3, 82.31; 82.4, 85 School Act
School Regulation 265/89
Ministerial Order 236/07 - Board of Education Fees
Ministerial Order 333/99 - Educational Program Guide Order

Adopted: November 4, 2008

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