



Procedure Section: **Business and Administrative Matters**

600

Procedure Name: **Fees for Learning Materials and Activities**

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PROCEDURE

Fees for Learning Materials and Activities



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1. Definitions

The following definitions have been included in the Ministry of Education’s Fees for Learning Materials and Activities Guideline:

“**Student Activity Fees**” are voluntary amounts used for the purpose of supplementing a student’s school experience through materials and activities such as student agendas, student recognition programs, yearbooks, extracurricular activities, school dances or theme days.

“**Enhanced Programming and Materials**” are voluntary enrichments or upgrades to the curriculum or co-curricular activities beyond what is necessary to meet the learning expectations for a particular grade or course. For example, in some performance or production courses (i.e. music, construction, technology, manufacturing technology), students may wish to use a superior product or consumable than that provided by the school, in which case they may choose to pay the additional cost of the upgrade.

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

“**Optional programming**” refers to voluntary courses or activities that students normally choose to attend with the knowledge that these programs are beyond the core curriculum. An example is an Outdoor Education Program.

“**Co-curricular activities or materials**” are defined as those related to the regular day school program.

“**Extra-curricular activities**” are defined as those that are outside the regular day-school program.

Cross References
Education Act, R.S.O. 1990
Ministry of Education – Guideline for Fees for Learning Materials and Activities
Policies
608, School Fundraising
614, Fees for Learning Materials and Activities
Procedure
608, School Fundraising

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2. Fee Charges

a) When determining whether fee charges may be appropriate, the following criteria must be considered. A fee is allowed for an activity, material, course, or program if it is:

- not required as part of the regular day school program;
- voluntary and alternatives are offered;
- non-essential or extra-curricular in nature and is not required for graduation; and
- a voluntary upgrade or substitute of a more costly material to the material provided for course purposes.

All students in regular day school programs are to be provided with all required course materials to complete course requirements. Successful completion of a required course leading to graduation cannot be dependent on the payment of any fee.

b) Examples of Activities, Programs, or Materials Ineligible for Fee Charges:

- a registration or administration fee for students enrolled in any regular day school program;
- a textbook fee or deposit;
- learning materials required for completion of the curriculum such as workbooks, musical instruments, science supplies, lab material kits, and safety goggles;
- fees charged for the creation of discretionary accounts by teachers or departments;
- mandatory flat fees for any course leading to graduation other than optional programming;
- fees for guest speakers, visiting teachers, or presentations where the material being presented is a mandatory element of the subject or course;
- fees to fund computers, textbooks, staff development, and training costs; and
- fees for learning materials required to meet learning expectations of the course but are consumed by the pupil and cannot be used again by another student (i.e. chemistry chemicals, etc.).

c) Examples of Activities, Programs, or Materials Eligible for Fee Charges:

- optional programming such as Outdoor Education;

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- extra-curricular trips, events, or activities that are extensions to the curriculum and not required for graduation (i.e. dances, school clubs, theme days, athletics, drama, Student Council activities, etc.);
- extended student trips or excursions not necessary to meet learning expectations of a particular grade or course (i.e., trips abroad, etc.);
- optional art or music supplies or higher quality woodworking supplies, design or technology materials that students choose to use for course completion (as long as required materials are available at no cost);
- student activity fees;
- co-curricular activities, special events, program enhancements, or field trips (i.e., for participation costs, rental of equipment, or travel, etc.) if comparable alternative programming and assignments are offered to students who choose not to participate;
- optional student planners and/or yearbooks; and
- schools may recover the costs for the replacement or repair of lost, damaged, or broken materials such as textbooks, library books, music or science supplies, or any loaned materials; these charges should not exceed the replacement or repair cost.

3. Practices

- a) All fees for student activities should be of a modest amount and be consistent across schools of the Board.
- b) Fee amounts should reflect the actual cost of the service or materials provided to the student. If there are residual amounts at the end of the school year in an ongoing category (e.g. student fees), the funds should be rolled forward to the next year and to help reduce these fees in future years.
- c) Wherever possible, schools will minimize the costs related to enhanced programming and materials that are optional to a course.
- d) Alternative assignments should be provided for students to meet the expectations of a course in those situations in which a student chooses not to participate in an activity for which a fee is charged.
- e) If an event for which fees were collected is cancelled, fees should be refunded to students.

4. Accountability and Reporting

- a) Fees should reflect the actual cost of the services or materials being provided to the student;
- b) A transparent accounting of amounts collected, and expenses must be available to the school community;
- c) Fee schedules each year should be made available to members of the school community in student handbooks, school newsletters, and/or on the school website; and
- d) Fee schedules should include:
 - i) An itemized list of fees; and
 - ii) information about process to confidentially address financial hardship.