

Policy 18

STUDENT FEES

The Board believes instructional services, resources, and/or materials should be made available to students through provincial funding. Therefore, the Board expects that no instructional materials fee, instructional equipment fee, or instructional services fee will be set at the school level.

However, the Board recognizes and supports the long-standing practice of fees being set for a variety of other purposes. The Board therefore delegates the authority to the Principal and Superintendent to set fees for the following, provided an accounting for the fees being set is made to parents and The Board:

- Items of individual student use or ownership,
- Non-divisional facility usage fees used for curricular purposes,
- Curricular field trip expenses,
- Transportation for school-based curricular activities,
- Extra-curricular activities not mandated by the curriculum, and
- Board approved Alternate Programs.

MECCS participates in an Experiences Canada exchange trip annually. Experiences Canada covers transportation costs for both schools (airfare and bus). The participating schools must cover the costs for admission to venues, meals and lodging where necessary. Circumstances prevent our students from doing organized fundraising to support their trip so a one time fee to parents is the only way we have to make the trip feasible. We have a precedent that has worked for several years – parents have shown an ability, and a willingness, to pay a fee for their children's participation in this activity.

Specifically,

1. A curricular activity includes all regular instruction. Curricular activities may also be outside the regular classroom and complement or supplement regular instruction. This includes project work and field trips. Participation in a curricular activity for which fees are levied is on a voluntary basis. Students who choose (or whose parents choose for them) not to be involved in a specific curricular activity where a fee is involved, such as a downhill ski trip, shall be provided with an alternate curricular activity. Such activities should not be used for disciplinary purposes. All curricular field trips should include all students in the grades for which they are planned.
2. The school shall develop a means for identifying and assisting students and families that cannot afford the fees or charges related to a curricular activity.
3. An extra-curricular activity is one that is normally outside the regular school day. It may include sports, music, drama, theatre, debating, publishing or other activities that complement the curricular program. Student participation is on voluntary basis.

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4. The Board expects approved fees shall be applied to a specific purpose and, if requested, a financial report shall be provided to parents showing fee revenues and actual costs.
5. Generally, fees and charges for curricular or extra-curricular activities or for student ownership or facility use should be established during the annual spring budget planning process. The Board expects the fee schedule to be communicated to parents at the beginning of the school year. Any curricular or extra-curricular activity fee that is added to the program during the school year is subject to the same process of approval prior to implementation.
6. Parents will be consulted before the Board sets, increases or decreases any fee or cost. Additionally parents will be notified of the need to charge the fee or costs as well as the amount of the change to the cost.
7. Fees and charges established by the Board shall be reviewed regularly.
8. The Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer shall review annually all fees and charges.
9. Fees and charges, Board approved, shall be identified prior to the start of the school term and a list made known to parents prior to September 7.
10. Fees and charges shall be invoiced to parents and/or students as appropriate. All fees shall be for a specific purpose, applied to that purpose, and shall never be charged for instructional purposes.
11. A parent may claim economic hardship due to unemployment, health or medical issues resulting in loss of income or a result of having more than 2 children participating. The parent can phone, email or write a letter to the Principal outlining their circumstances and requesting a fee waiver, reduction or refund if previously paid.
12. Notice will be provided to parents at their first meeting, in the newsletter and on the website as to the process for applying for a waiver, reduction or refund of the fee if previously paid.
13. The Principal shall effectively handle complaints and concerns raised by parents with respect to fees and costs. The process for handling complaints shall include
 - 13.1 The Principal and parent will meet to discuss the concerns raised and try to reach a resolution.
 - 13.2 If the concern remains unresolved, the Superintendent shall investigate and make a recommendation to the Principal and parent.
 - 13.3 If it is still unresolved, the Superintendent will advise the parent of the right to appeal to the Board.
 - 13.4 The Board retains the right to make a final decision

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Legal Reference: Section 60, 61, School Act
 Schools Fees and Costs Regulation, School Act

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