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## **School Fees Policy**

- A. Legal Authority/Requirement
- B. UCA 53A-12-102 to 104 Student Fees, Waivers, Notice □ R277-407
- C. School Fees

### **Philosophy**

1. The following policy concerns school fees, rental fees, textbook sales, deposits or rentals or waivers regarding these items. Under the direction of the Board of Trustee's, the principal is authorized to administer this policy fairly, objectively, without delay, avoiding stigma and unreasonable burdens on students or parents.
2. Many expenses in the operation of schools are beyond the ordinary costs of education. Added conveniences such as, but not limited to, lockers, yearbooks, clubs, travel, and tangible products are items of cost which may properly be borne by parents and students.
3. Activities that are outside the normal school curriculum should be supported largely by participating students.
4. Students should have equal access to all programs offered by the public school regardless of their parents' or guardians' ability to pay school fees.
5. A waiver procedure is identified herein to ensure that students are not denied the opportunity to participate in school activities and educational programs because of inability to pay fees or charges.
6. An appeal process is defined herein with the Board retaining the final responsibility.
7. Written notice should be provided to parent/guardians, students, school personnel, and the general public regarding school fees, rental fees, textbook sales, deposits or rents, and waiver policies. Specific fees are to be published prior to registration time.

## **Purpose**

1. To permit the orderly establishment of a reasonable system of fees, while prohibiting practices that would exclude those unable to pay from participations in school-sponsored activities.
2. To implement State Board of Education rules that direct the Board to implement a policy regarding student fees. The rule is authorized under Article X Sections 2 and 3 of the Utah Constitution, which vests general control and supervision of the public education system in the State Board of Education and provides that schools shall be free except that fees may be imposed in secondary schools as authorized by the Legislature.

## **Definitions**

1. "Fee" means any charge, deposit, rental, or other mandatory payment, however designated, whether in the form of money or goods. Admission fees, transportation charges, and similar payments to third parties are fees if the charges are made in connection with an activity or function sponsored by or through a school.
2. Provision in Lieu of Fee Waiver means an alternative to fee payment and waiver of fee payment. A plan under which fees paid in installments or under some other delayed payment arrangement is not a waiver or provision in lieu of fee waiver.
3. Student supplies means items that are personal property of a student which, although used in instructional process, are also commonly purchased and used by persons not enrolled in the class or activity in question and have a high probability of regular use in other than school-sponsored activities. The term includes pencils, papers, notebooks, safety eye glasses, basic clothing for healthy lifestyle classes, and similar personal and consumable items over which a student retains ownership.
4. Optional project means a project chosen and retained by a student in lieu of a meaningful and productive project otherwise available to the student that would require only school-supplied materials.
5. Textbook means book, workbook, and materials similar in function that are required to participate in a course of instruction.
6. Waiver means release from the requirement of payment of a fee and from any provision in lieu of fee payment.

## **Fees in General**

1. All fees must be set by the Board. Fees will be set at least once a year by the Board.
2. No school employee may establish any student fee or cost not set or approved by the Board.
3. Fee schedules and the waiver policy will be provided to students in the registration materials.
4. The school may sell school supplies to students; however, students will be required to provide their own school supplies.
5. Individual students and parents will be required to pay for textbooks, lab materials and damages to school property beyond reasonable wear and use by students.

6. A fee may be charged in connection with any school sponsored activity, which does not take place during the regular school day.
7. Fees may be charged in connection with any school-sponsored activity, which does not take place during the regular school day.
8. No present or former student may be denied receipt of transcripts or diploma for failure to pay school fees.

### **Fee Waivers**

1. No student shall be denied the opportunity to participate in a class or school-sponsored or supported activity because of an inability to pay a fee.
2. The Principal shall administer the waiver policy. If it is necessary to review financial documents, only the Principal is authorized to review such documents. Request for waivers shall be handled without unreasonable delay. No eligible student or parent shall be denied waivers.
3. A student who has applied for or received a waiver shall not be identified to persons other than those directly involved in gathering or administering waivers.
4. The Principal may require a waiver eligible student to perform a work assignment or public service as payment-in-kind in lieu of a fee waiver. Work or service alternatives must be administered according to the following guidelines:
  - a. The student given work alternatives should not be treated differently from other students or identified to persons who do not need to know.
  - b. The work should be appropriate to the age, abilities, and situation of the student and should not create an unreasonable burden on the students or parents.
  - c. The work should be a fair exchange of time for the value of the fees to be waived.
  - d. Parents are to be given an opportunity to review the proposed alternative to fee waivers.
  - e. Work alternatives should not create a burden on school resources.

### **Fee Waiver Eligibility**

1. Inability to pay is presumed for students who are
  - a. Eligible for free lunch
  - b. Receiving public assistance in the form of Aid to Families with Dependent Children, or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or
  - c. In foster care or in state custody.
2. Case by case determinations are made for those who do not qualify under the foregoing standards but who, because of extenuating circumstances such as, but not limited to, exceptional financial burdens such as loss or substantial reduction of income of extraordinary and unavoidable expenses, are not reasonably capable of paying the fee.
3. Parents or guardians shall be required to provide eligibility documentation supporting their claim for fee waivers in the form of
  - a. Verification of eligibility for free school lunch;
  - b. Verification of receipt of Supplemental Security Income (SSI);

- c. Verification of receipt of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC);
  - d. Verification that student is in foster care;
  - e. Verification that student is in state custody; or
  - f. f. Verification based on income tax returns or current pay stubs if the student does not qualify under one of the above-presumed eligibilities.
4. For the protection of privacy and confidentiality, the principal/director shall ensure that The Academy for Math, Engineering & Science does not retain documentation for fee waiver eligibility.
  5. If a student is eligible for waivers, textbooks fees must be waived; no work alternative is permissible. A student may, however, be offered a work alternative to a waiver for all other kinds of fees.
  6. If a parent or guardian of an eligible student asks to pay fees in installments instead of having all or part of the fees waived, an alternative method of payment can be arranged for everything but textbooks fees.
  7. The principal/director must review fee waiver documentation at least once during a student's school experience.

### **Fee Related Appeals**

1. An appeal is submitted to the Principal.
2. The Principal shall respond within one week of receiving the appeal (5 working days).
3. If the party is not satisfied with the decision or the principal has not responded within one week (5 working days), the appellant may file the appeal with the Board of Trustee's.
4. The Board shall respond within 45 working days.