



POLICY

SO22

Fees for Learning Materials and Activities

Board Received: April 27, 2020 Review Date: May 2024

Policy Statement

The Grand Erie District School Board will ensure all students have access to learning materials and equipment necessary to meet curricular requirements and be proactive in providing a barrier free learning environment for all. The Grand Erie District School Board is committed to supporting students' participation in school activities regardless of their individual economic circumstances.

As indicated in Ministry of Education Guidelines, parent(s)/guardian(s) or students may be asked to contribute resources in the way of time, money, or materials to support enhanced or optional programs and activities.

When fees are collected, the purposes and method for their collection must be consistent with Grand Erie District School Board policies.

Accountability

1. Frequency of Reports – As needed
2. Criteria for Success – Every school's Student Handbook and School Profile will reference this policy.
 - Schools will follow the policies as set out in this document and will communicate these policies through the regular school communication process such as student agendas and school website.

Background Information

In March 2011, the Ministry of Education distributed Memorandum 2011: B02 directing boards of education to develop their own policies on school fees in compliance with the Education Act.

Memorandum 2010: B11 states that it is important to ensure existing practices are not in contravention of the Education Act requirement that resident pupils are entitled to attend a regular day school program without payment of a fee.

Statements from The Education Act that inform this policy:

- Section 32 (1) that *"a person has the right, without payment of fee, to attend a school...in which the person is qualified to be a resident pupil."*
- Section 170 (1) paragraph 13, *"Every board shall: ...provide, without charge, for the use of pupils...the textbooks that are required by the regulations to be purchased by the board."*
- The exception to these statements is noted in Section 171(1) paragraph 31.1 in which a book deposit is permitted to be charged to students enrolled in a continuing education course or class that is eligible for credit towards a secondary school diploma.

Procedure

1. Regular Day School

There shall be no fees charged to a student to participate in the regular day school program. A pupil has a right to attend without fee.

If the student is in the regular day school program:

- 1.1 There will be no fees or cost charged to students to participate in the regular day school program. In some courses (i.e. art, music, construction technology) students may wish to use a superior product or consumable than that provided by the school, in which case they will be asked to pay the additional cost to be provided upgraded materials.
- 1.2 Fees may not be charged for a textbook or a textbook deposit.
- 1.3 Fees may not be charged for a workbook. If the workbook is used as a regular part of the program, the school shall provide the workbook to all students. Fees may be charged for a workbook if the workbook is optional. To the extent possible, schools must minimize dependence on charges for learning and/or resource materials.

2. Other School Registers

- 2.1 Schools may collect a book deposit if the student's enrolment is contained on a continuing education student register, an adult credit course student register, or an international language student register. The book deposit will be refunded upon return of the textbook or resource to the school.

3. Student Fees at Schools

- 3.1 The school principal is responsible for ensuring that the materials required to meet the expectations of the core curriculum are available without cost to students. No fee may be charged for learning resources that are essential to the delivery of a core course or program.
- 3.2 The school principal must review all proposed optional charges for all courses prior to inclusion of such optional charges in any publication, and prior to the fee being levied. When changes cannot be incorporated into already-published materials, the principal will inform parents in writing of the new fee(s).
- 3.3 The Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy directives recognize that socio-economic status is one of many factors that the board must consider in order to create barrier-free, equitable opportunities for all students. In situations where fees may be charged to students, every effort shall be made to assist students with limited financial means. The school principal will develop collection methods that maintain the dignity of and that afford reasonable expectations of privacy for students and parents/guardians and develop and communicate a practice for the respectful and private identification of students/parents who may be experiencing financial hardship.
- 3.4 All field trips for which there is a cost must be optional to a course. Where the student chooses not to participate in an optional field trip, alternative assignments must be provided in order for the student to meet the expectations of the course.
- 3.5 In order to maximize the resources provided to students, Grand Erie promotes green practices which include judicious use of consumable items in all school programs.

- 3.6 Schools may collect student activity fees and/or admission fees to recover the cost of participation in optional extra-curricular activities.
- 3.7 No student will be denied access to report cards, courses, use of the library, or a locker for failure to pay student activity fees.
- 3.8 The school principal shall communicate with staff, student councils, and school councils about student activity and athletic fees.
- 3.9 Optional programs are courses or activities that students choose to attend in addition to regular day school programs, with knowledge that these programs are beyond the provincially mandated curriculum. Examples may include Advanced Placement, Hockey Canada Skills Academy, or specialized courses. Throughout the course selection process, schools must communicate information to parents/guardians and students regarding optional program fees. It is understood that fees can be subject to change based upon reasonable and unforeseen circumstances.
- 3.10 The basic Secondary Athletic Fee will be determined by the Principal of each school in consultation with School Council and will be reviewed on an annual basis. Fees may include: tournament costs, game or sport based equipment, supplemental sport costs (referee fees, rentals etc.) and athletic celebrations and awards. A Principal may request an increase to the fee, having undertaken the appropriate consultation with members of the school community. The fee structure should be established so that the fees collected offset, but do not exceed, the associated costs related to the whole school year offering of sporting activities. The fee will be waived or subsidized for students who maybe experiencing financial hardship
- 3.11 The following statements **must be included in the School Profile and the Student Handbook.**

Student Fees

There will be no fees or cost charged to students to participate in the regular day school program. Fees may be charged where the student chooses to upgrade the material or where purchase of material is optional. Students enrolled in Grand Erie District School Board schools can expect to be provided with the basic classroom learning resources that are required in order to complete the course expectations. It is recognized there may be optional resources that students may purchase to enhance their programs; e.g. field trips, upgrading materials in courses such as construction technology and visual arts. Students may choose enhanced program options where fees are required to recover associated costs.

Students are expected to come to school ready and willing to participate actively in their own learning. To that end, students are expected to bring materials with them for their own personal schoolwork. Teachers will communicate the basic materials needed to complete learning tasks in each class; e.g., pencils, pens, pencil crayons, markers, erasers, rulers, calculators, etc.

Students are encouraged to pay the student activity fee. The activity fee includes access to the co-instructional program (e.g., sports, dances and other school activities). Students involved in co-instructional teams, groups and clubs will be made aware of any

additional fund-raising obligations or participation fees prior to making a commitment to participate.

The basic Secondary Athletic Fee will be determined by the Principal of each school in consultation with School Council and will be reviewed on an annual basis. The fee will be waived or subsidized for students who may be experiencing financial hardship.

Students and families experiencing hardship may contact the school administration for assistance to support students' success in school.

4. Fees for Damaged or Lost Material

- 4.1 The principal may charge fees for the replacement or repair of textbooks, library material, technology, or other loaned materials (e.g., equipment), if said loaned material is not returned as required or is returned in damaged condition. The fee may not exceed the replacement or repair cost, as appropriate.