



Approved 1/20/2014
Amended:

Fee Waiver Policy

Policy No. 33

Purpose

The purpose of a Fee Schedule and a Fee Waiver is to provide educational opportunities for all students. This allows the school to establish a reasonable system of fees, while prohibiting practices that would exclude those unable to pay from participation in school sponsored activities. We must abide by the State Board of Education rules which direct the Governing 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 elementary and secondary schools shall be free except that fees may be imposed in secondary schools as authorized by the Legislature. State Law also allows schools to establish money collection and handling procedures.

Policy

Under the direction of the Governing Board, the Director is authorized to administer this policy and to do so fairly, objectively, without delay, avoiding stigma and unreasonable burdens on students or parents/guardians.

Classes and Activity During the Regular School Day

No fee may be charged in kindergarten through sixth grades for materials, textbooks, supplies, or for any class or activity, including assemblies and field trips.

Textbook fees will be charged in grades seven through twelve. If a class is established or approved which requires payment of fees or purchase of materials, tickets to events, etc., in order for students to participate fully and to have the opportunity to acquire all skills and knowledge required for full credit and highest grades, the class shall be subject to the fee waiver provisions of Utah Administrative code R277-407-6.

Students of all grade levels may be required to provide materials for their optional projects, but a student may not be required to select an optional project as a condition for enrolling in or completing a course. Project-related courses must be based upon projects and experiences that are free to all students.

Elementary and secondary students may be required to replace supplies provided by the school which are lost, wasted or damaged by the student through careless or irresponsible behavior in which a fee waiver will not be applicable for such damages.

School Activities Outside of the Regular School Day

Fees may be charged, subject to the Board approved fee schedule (shown below), in connection with any school-sponsored activity which does not take place during the regular school day, regardless of the age or grade level of the student, if participation is voluntary and does not affect a student's grade or ability to participate fully in any course taught during the regular school day. Such fees are subject to the fee waiver requirement.

General Provisions

No fee may be charged or assessed in connection with any class or school-sponsored or supported activity, including extracurricular activities, unless the fee has been set and approved by the Board of Directors and distributed in an approved fee schedule. Fee schedules and policies for the School shall be adopted at least once each year when the board of Directors adopts its annual budget in a regularly scheduled public meeting of the Board. Directors shall ensure that written copies of the School Fee Schedule and Waiver Policy are included with all registration materials provided to potential or continuing students. School procedures for obtaining the waivers and for appealing a denial of a waiver shall be provided as soon as possible prior to the time the fees become due.

No present or former student may be denied receipt of unofficial transcripts or diplomas for failure to pay school fees.

- A. A reasonable charge may be made to cover the cost of duplicating or mailing transcripts and other school records.
- B. No charge may be made for duplicating or mailing copies of school records to an elementary or secondary school in which the student is enrolled or intends to enroll.

In accordance with Utah Code Ann. 53A-11-806, any school whose property has been lost or willfully cut, defaced, or otherwise injured may withhold the issuance of official written grade reports, diploma, and transcripts of the student responsible for the damage or loss until the student or the student's parent or guardian has paid for the damages.

- A. Students shall be given notice and an opportunity to pay fines prior to withholding issuance of official written grade reports, diplomas and transcripts.
- B. If the student and the student's parent or guardian are unable to pay for damages or if it is determined by the school in consultation with the student's parents that the student's interests would not be served if the parents were to pay for the damages, then, the school may provide for a program of voluntary work for the student in lieu of the payment.

C. A general breakage fee levied against all students in a class or school is not permitted. A student may not be excluded from school or withhold unofficial transcripts to obtain payment of school fees or fines. Donations or contributions may be solicited and accepted, but all such requests must clearly state that donations and contributions are voluntary. A donation is a fee if a student must make a donation in order to participate in an activity. No student may be excluded from an activity or program because they did not make a donation.

In the collection of school fees, the school must comply with statutes and State Tax commission rules regarding the collection of state sales tax.

Waivers

To ensure that no student is denied the opportunity to participate in a class or school sponsored or supported activity because of an inability to pay a fee, the school will provide for adequate waivers or other provisions in lieu of fee waivers. Waiver forms can be obtained from our front office staff or by visiting www.freedomprep.net.

The procedure will include the following:

- A. The Director will administer the policy and grant waivers.
- B. The process for obtaining waivers or pursuing alternate shall be administered fairly, objectively, and without delay, and avoid stigma and unreasonable burdens on students and parents.
- C. The Director will inform patrons of the process for obtaining waivers.
- D. Students who are granted waivers or provisions in lieu of fee waivers shall not be treated differently from other students or identified to persons who do not need to know of the waiver.
- E. Fee waivers or other provisions in lieu of fee waivers are to be available to any eligible student

Eligibility for fee waivers:

- A. Inability to pay is presumed for students who are:
 - 1. In state custody or foster care, or
 - 2. Receiving public assistance in the form of Aid to Families with Dependent Children, or supplemental Security Income (SSI), or
 - 3. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamps)
- B. CASE BY CASE DETERMINATIONS are to be made for those who do not qualify under one of 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 or extraordinary medical expenses, are not reasonably capable of paying the fee.
- C. In accordance with Utah State Code 53A-12-103.5, a parent or guardian of a student applying for a fee waiver is to provide documentation and certification of eligibility including income tax returns or current pay stubs.

- D. If a student is eligible for waivers, textbook 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.
- E. 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 textbook fees.
- F. Denial of eligibility for a waiver may be appealed in writing to the school Director within ten (10) school days of receiving notice of denial.
 - 1. The school shall contact the parent within two (2) weeks after receiving the appeal and schedule a meeting with the school Director to discuss the parent's concerns.
 - 2. If, after meeting with the school Director, the waiver is still denied the parent may appeal, in writing, within ten (10) school days of receiving notice of denial to the Governing Board.
- G. Any requirement that a student pay a fee will be suspended during any period in which the student's eligibility for waiver is being determined or during the time a denial of waiver is being appealed.

Provisions in Lieu of Waivers

- A. Director may consider waiver eligible students 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 student or parents.
 - c. The work should be a fair exchange of time for the value of fees to be waived.
- B. Parents are to be given the opportunity to review proposed alternatives to fee waivers.

Items eligible for Fee Waivers

Any charge, deposit, rental, or other mandatory payment for required student participation in any class, program, or activity; provided, sponsored, or supported by the School, are fees requiring approval of the Board, and are subject to the fee waivers requirement.

Items Not Subject to School Waivers

The requirements of fee waiver and availability of other provisions in lieu of fee waiver do not apply to charges assessed pursuant to a student's damaging or losing school property. The school shall pursue reasonable methods for obtaining payment for such charges, including withholding official grade reports, diplomas, and transcripts as indicated in this policy.

Charges for yearbooks, picture books, and similar articles not required for participation in a class or activity are not fees and are not subject to the waiver requirements.

Student supplies for secondary students are not subject to waivers as long as the item is something which is commonly found in students' homes regardless of wealth.

If a student must repeat a course or requires remediation to advance or graduate and a fee is associated with the course or the remediation program, it is presumed that the student will pay the fee.

SCHOOL FEE COLLECTIONS AND ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

School Collections

Responsibility of the Director

It is the duty and responsibility of the school Director to ensure that all student fees collected are in compliance with the authorized fee schedule and financial procedures as approved by the Governing Board. These fees are to be received and deposited in a timely manner.

Available References

Article X 2-3, Utah State Constitution

Utah Code Ann. 53A-2-207(5)

Enrollment of nonresident students processing fee

Utah Code Ann. 53A-3-602.5

School performance report;

Utah Code Ann. 53A-11-806

Components; Annual filing

Defacing or injuring school property, Student's liability;

Voluntary work program alternative

Utah Code Ann. 53A-12-102 to 104

State policy on student fees, deposits, or other charges;

Waiver of fees; Notice of student fees and waivers.

Utah Code ann. 53A-12-201 to 204

Provides for state policy on providing textbooks

Utah Administrative Code R277-407

Rules for School Fees

Utah Administrative Code R277-713-6

Student Tuition, Fees and Credit for concurrent Enrollment Programs