

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE NO. 202

### SCHOOL AND TRANSPORTATION FEES

#### Background

The Division assesses fees to recover costs that are not covered in the basic education grants as provided by Alberta Education. Bill 1 “an act to reduce school fees” has provided the direction of the fees that each school board in the province may charge students. It is the philosophy of Red Deer Catholic Schools that all students should have an equal opportunity to participate in all programs that their school offers at the lowest possible cost to the student.

#### Procedures

1. School and transportation fees will be reviewed annually by the Secretary-Treasurer after gathering feedback from school principals, staff and school councils. All increases or additions to the fee structure will be brought to the April board meeting agenda for approval of the Board of Trustees.
2. The list of fees below are intended to be examples of fees that may be charged in our schools, however, it is not an exhaustive list. Schools shall not charge any fee not set out in the Board’s approved fee schedule. Circumstances may occur where schools may consider additional fees not on the approved original fee schedule for Non-Curricular travel, Extra-curricular or Activity Fees. Schools must apply to the Secretary Treasurer for approval of fee changes for Non-Curricular travel, Extra-curricular fees and Activity Fees. The Secretary-Treasurer will assess the anticipated fee to ensure it concurs with the school fees regulation and apply to the Minister for approval.
3. Schools shall advise parents of the amount and purpose of the school and transportation fees prior to or at the time of registration. School and transportation fees are due and payable upon registration or the first day of classes for common costs and are due prior to the activity or on a predetermined payment schedule for non-common fees.
4. Fees must be used for the purpose that they were collected and must be utilized in the year that they were collected. In the event that a fee cannot be utilized for the purpose it was collected or in the year it was collected it must be returned to the parent.
5. Schools will make provisions to have school and transportation fees waived for those circumstances where families cannot afford to pay school fees. Students whose families cannot afford school fees must not be penalized or prohibited from participation in school programs. To be eligible for the school fee waiver program the parent/guardian can go to the school website and complete the

school fee waiver form and speak to the school administrator. Completing the school fee waiver form will also allow students to access the benefits of the fee assistance program benefits through the City of Red Deer. In the event that the school administrator and the family cannot agree that the fees should be waived the family may request that the Secretary-Treasurer assess the administrators' decision and the Secretary-Treasurer's decision will be final.

6. Unpaid fees where a parent has not provided a waiver form will be subject to a collection process.

### **Schedule of approved school fees**

- a. **Textbook Security deposit** - A school may assess a security deposit for student use of textbooks. The security deposit must be returned to the parent or student once they have returned textbooks in reasonable condition. The security deposit may be assessed on a semester or annual basis and should be returned upon the return of all books.
- b. **Locker Rental and deposit** – A school may assess a minimal deposit for the assurance that a student leaves their locker clean at the end of the year as well as a minimal fee for a lock for the locker. The locker is assessed at the end of the year for cleanliness and the deposit will be returned if the student has left the locker in a clean state. The lock fee will be used to replace old locks.
- c. **Student Union** – A school may assess a fee that is utilized by the students union for activities that they plan in the year as well as for various costs of running the students union.
- d. **Student Activity fee** – A school may assess a fee to be used to defray the costs of various non-curricular activities in which the students participate. This may include cost of sports teams, clubs and other activities in the school.
- e. **Yearbook fee** – A school may assess a fee to students in order to estimate the number of yearbooks that will be required in the year. This fee is used to pay for the costs associated with printing and collating the yearbook.
- f. **Band fee** – A school may assess a fee for the rental of band equipment. This fee is used for supplies, cleaning, repairs and replacement of band instruments in the band programs and may only be charged to participants.
- g. **School Council fees** - A school may assess a fee for school council use. This fee is to be used by the school council programs. The principal has the ultimate

responsibility, in consultation with the school council, with regard to the use of these funds.

- h. **Field Trip fee** – A school may assess a fee to be used in taking students on field trips during the year. The fee will be used to take students on principal approved field trips throughout the year.
- i. **Non-curricular participant fee** – A school may charge a fee to students that are directly involved in a non-curricular activity that is school sponsored. This fee would include sports teams, school clubs and other school activities generally outside of the school day or during the lunch hour.
- j. **Optional school supplies** – A school may offer an optional program to students to buy school supplies in bulk for the use of the students in class. These school supplies would be those supplies that a student would be expected to purchase to be used in the classroom throughout the year such as scribblers, binders, binder paper, student agendas, gym strip, snacks (lower elementary grades) and other supplies.
- k. **Fees for optional courses** – A school may assess a fee for optional courses for costs over that of a normal classroom budget. These fees would be assessed for items that are over and above what a classroom would not receive through the regular classroom budget.

**The above list may not be an exhaustive list. If there is any doubt the principal must ask the Secretary-Treasurer for approval of any assessment that they feel does not fit within the list above.**

Alberta Education has provided additional funding to school boards for the cost of additional supplies and materials which will replace our basic fee for each grade. Schools should ensure that they do not add fees from the list above that had previously been included in the basic fee.

### **Schedule of approved Transportation fees**

- a. Students who reside **between 1.6 and 2.4 km** from their **designated school** are eligible to ride the bus provided there is room and there is an existing bus route. A fee will be assessed to those students which will be reviewed annually and any changes must be approved annually by the Board of Trustees at the April Board meeting.

- b. Students who reside **less than 1.6 km** from their **designated school** are eligible to ride the bus provided there is room and there is an existing bus route. A fee will be assessed to those students which will be reviewed annually and any changes must be approved annually by the Board of Trustees at the April Board meeting.
- c. Some middle and high school students may be required to travel to school on City Transit buses. These students will be subject to the cost of the negotiated transit pass fee if they live **less than 2.4 km** from their **designated school**. The pass that the student receives is restricted to operational student days only (i.e. the pass will not work on PD or weekend days). A student may purchase an unrestricted pass that may be used for any transit route on any day for an additional charge.
- d. Students that elect to attend a **school of choice** within the division will be assessed a fee based on their **designated school**. If a student resides **less than 2.4 km** from their **designated school** but elects to attend a **school of choice** they will be assessed a fee based on a. and b. above.
- e. There will be no discounts available to those students who wish to ride the bus on an occasional basis.
- f. All students riding the bus that live **greater than 2.4 km** from their **designated school** will be eligible to ride the bus at no cost. If the route along which they live is designated as a transit route the student will be provided a restricted pass at no cost.
- g. All students with special needs that are not capable of riding regular transportation will be eligible for transportation at no cost regardless of the students **designated school**.
- h. ECS students may be eligible for a rebate if a student is transported by a parent and the student reside **greater than 2.4 km** from their **designated or school of choice**. If busing is not available to the student the parent will be eligible for the full transportation grant, and if busing is available to the student only morning or the end of the day the parent is eligible to be reimbursed one-half of the grant.