

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. 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.

Regulation

Fees are subject to the Education Act and School Fees Regulation. No fee can be established for the cost of textbooks, workbooks, photocopying, printing or paper supplies.

Procedures

1. Schools may propose instructional fees to enhance a course, activity, project or item, on a cost recovery basis only.
2. Prior to setting, increasing or decreasing school fees, parents must be consulted. In addition, the school must be able to demonstrate to the parents the need to charge the school fees.
3. Instructional fees are for student actions or activities that are course related and only where the student utilizes materials, services or travel that are beyond the those normally supplied by the school for such a course; or where the materials, equipment or facilities or services used in a course taken by a student cannot normally be covered from provincial grant funding.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. Schools and departments 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.

7. 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. Refunds will only be issued for amounts \$10 or greater. Amounts less than \$10 will remain as a credit on account.
8. 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.
9. The first letter which includes a statement of fees owing for the 2024-2025 school year will be sent by email on the last working day of September. One email will be sent for each student in the division.
10. Overdue reminders for unpaid fees will be sent by email campaigns in Rycor, as per the following schedule:

a. Letter 1	Nov. 25	Principal
b. Letter 2	Feb. 28	Principal
c. Final Notice	April 15	Secretary-Treasurer
11. Unpaid fees where a parent has not provided a waiver form will be subject to a collection process.

Schedule of approved school fees

Alternative Program Fees - Amounts charged under section 19 (5) of the Education Act; a program (not an individual course) that emphasizes a specific culture, religion, or subject matter or uses a particular teaching philosophy, including sports-related academies. Ball academy and hockey academy fees are included here.

Fees for Optional Courses - Amounts charged for additional materials or supplies associated with non-core course options as band, fine arts, advanced placement, second languages, or Career and Technology Studies. E.g Fees for CTS/CTF courses; Fees for Fine Arts.

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.

Activity Fees (field trip fees) - Transportation, admission, accommodation, and other charges for field trips or special events, usually associated with curriculum. Additional examples include fees for swimming and inline skating.

Extracurricular Fees

Fees for participation in clubs, sports teams, intramurals, or other programs designed to broaden scholastic experience. Includes charges for materials, activities, mandatory clothing/uniforms, and travel associated with the club/team, etc.

Non-Curricular Travel

Travel, accommodation, & admission associated with extended (overnight) non-curriculum travel for arts, culture, (spectator) athletic events, and international travel. These trips are typically optional at the discretion of the parent & student and not directly associated with any other field trip, course, club, team, or program. Examples may include year end ski trips or a European tour. Note that if travel & accommodation is associated with another activity, such as extracurricular activities or field trips, travel costs should be classified with that primary activity and not Non-curricular travel.

Non-Curricular Goods and Services

Fees charged to parents in exchange for mandatory goods or services common to most students or a cohort within the population, including the purchase of locks, student ID, uniforms, gym strip, library, agendas, student union, insurance, graduation cap and gown fees charged to all graduating students (versus a voluntary banquet ticket cost), parent-teacher associations, and fitness fees not associated with curriculum.

Student Union – A school may assess a fee that is utilized by the students union for activities that they plan for the year as well as for various costs of running the students' union.

Lock – A school may assess a minimal fee for a lock for the locker. The lock fee will be used to replace old locks.

PreKindergarten Fees

Amounts collected from parents for non-qualifying & unfunded children less than 5 ½ years of age for preschool or pre-kindergarten.

International Student Fees

Tuition charged for unfunded students from outside Alberta.

Adult education revenue: Education services provided to adult unfunded students over 20 years of age should be classified as Other sales & services.

Sales or rentals of other supplies/services

Sales of goods & services available for which parents have the option of purchasing from the school, such as yearbooks, school pictures, clothing items, calculators, etc. are generally considered Other sales & service revenue. This can also include bulk school supply sales, recorders, or workbooks, but parents & students must have the option of sourcing these from alternative sources.

- a. **Yearbook Sales** – A school may charge students for yearbooks. This amount is used to pay for the costs associated with printing and collating the yearbook.
- b. **Optional school supplies Sales** – 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.

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.

Transportation fees Guiding Legislation

- a. Students (ECS - Grade 6) who reside greater than 1 km from their **catchment school** are eligible to ride the bus provided there is room and there is an existing bus route. Students who reside less than 1 km from their designated school will not be provided transportation service.
- b. Students (Grade 7 - Grade 12) who reside greater than 2 km from their **catchment school** are eligible to ride the bus provided there is room and there is an existing bus route.
- c. Some middle and high school students may be required to travel to school on City Transit buses. These students will be provided a city bus pass if they live at least **2 km** from their **catchment school**.
- d. Students that elect to attend a **non-catchment school** within the division will be assessed a fee and are subject to transportation availability.
- e. There will be no discounts available to those students who wish to ride the bus on an occasional basis.
- f. Transportation fees will be in effect the first day of school or the first day of service as per the registration request.

- g. All students with special needs that are not capable of riding regular transportation will be eligible for specialized transportation if available at no cost regardless of the student's **catchment school**.
- h. Late registrations for transportation will be assessed a non-waivable late fee per student and service may be delayed.
- i. If a request for transportation requires a second bus within the catchment area a fee per student will apply.

References:

Sections: 53,57,59 of the Education Act