



SCHOOL FEES IN THE SURREY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Update – September 2007

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BACKGROUND

As you may be aware, in late September 2006 a B.C. Supreme Court decision placed greater limits on the types of fees that schools may charge. This ruling applies only to fees that are directly related to curriculum and does not apply to extra-curricular activities.

The ruling states a district may not charge a fee for “any materials or activities that are required for students to successfully complete a course leading to graduation”. This applies to electives as well as required courses. The district is working to ensure funding is available to cover the costs of courses formerly covered by fees.

NEW SCHOOL FEE PRACTICES

General information regarding requirements, options and related costs is provided below, based on the latest, common interpretation of the court ruling. More detailed information regarding specific courses or learning activities is being provided by your child’s school or classroom teacher.

Basic School Supplies

Students will need to provide their own basic supplies and equipment for their own personal use at school. This includes supplies such as paper, writing tools, calculators, notebooks, computer file storage tools, gym strip, sewing kits and some other items needed for various electives. Some schools may wish to make these supplies available to students at cost (usually as a PAC initiative).

Materials Required to Complete Assignments

Schools will provide materials required to complete basic projects in order to meet learning outcomes for a course; for example, lumber for Woodwork or fabric for Textiles. Students have the option to bring their own material from home or purchase material from the school if they wish to do a more intricate project or assignment and use a different or better quality material.

Field Trips

Generally, the curriculum does not require students to participate in field trips. However, there are many field trips which can serve to enhance and add value to the learning experience for students. Participation in such field trips is optional and there may be a charge to cover costs only. However, if the field trip is essential to achieving specified learning outcomes and cannot be addressed in any other way the trip would not be considered optional and there would be no charge for the field trip.

Workbooks

Most modern language courses and a number of other electives have a workbook that complements the textbook. Schools will provide these workbooks to students on loan. They will need to be returned undamaged and unmarked, as with textbooks. Students have the option of purchasing the workbooks if they’d prefer not to complete assignments in their notebooks.



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Certifications and Optional Examinations

Some courses offer the opportunity for students to acquire certifications, such as First Aid, CPR, SuperHost and Serving It Right. These certifications are not a required part of the curriculum and participation is optional. Students who choose to obtain certification can do so at their cost. Similarly, students participating in International Baccalaureate or Advanced Placement courses have the option of choosing to write the examinations or not. Those who choose to write will be required to pay the cost of the examinations.

Musical Instruments

Students are required to purchase or rent their own musical instrument in order to participate in band programs from grades 7-12.

Student Activity and Extra-curricular Fees

There may be charges for the cost of student planners, materials for personal use, annuals, athletics, extra-curricular field trips and travel, graduation and student activities that are set by the school. Purchase of materials or participation in activities covered by these charges is optional. Charges should reflect the actual cost of the service or equipment in question.

Charges for extra-curricular travel by teams or clubs may be established to defray the costs involved. As per Policy #8901, student field studies may be financially supported in whole or in part by parents and guardians, but must be planned with a due regard for economy in order to be affordable.

Trades and Apprenticeship Programs

Students who are enrolled in trades and apprenticeship programs under the Industry Training Authority Act

- a) may be required to purchase or rent his or her tools, equipment, and materials necessary for participation in the program.
- b) may be required to provide his or her own for tools, equipment, and materials necessary for participation in the program.

SCHOOL FEES POLICY

The Surrey Board of Education has a policy and regulation regarding school fees that can be viewed on the school district website under "General Info". Refer to Policy #9802 and Regulation #9802.1.