



Niagara Catholic District School Board

STUDENT FEES

ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

300 – Schools/Students

No 301.11

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In keeping with the Mission, Vision and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, the following are Administrative Operational Procedures for Student Fees.

PREAMBLE

The Niagara Catholic District School Board, through shared and committed leadership, recognizes its responsibility to support all stakeholders in our Catholic community implementing consistent and transparent practices that cultivate equity and inclusion.

The Niagara Catholic District School Board will make every effort to ensure that all students have every opportunity to access all programs and activities offered. The dignity of every student and parent/guardian will be honoured in the collection of fees.

The Niagara Catholic District School Board and its schools may choose to offer programming and materials beyond what is necessary to meet the learning expectations of a particular grade or course. These opportunities may be subject to an additional fee.

In compliance with Part II, School Attendance, Sections 32 (1) and 32 (2) of the Education Statutes and Regulations of Ontario, the Niagara Catholic District School Board supports every student's right to attend a school, where the student is a qualified resident pupil, without payment of a fee.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Student Activity Fees

Student activity fees are voluntary amounts that are used to supplement a student's school experience through materials and activities such as student agendas, student recognition programs, yearbooks, co-instructional activities, school dances, or theme days or retreats.

Enhanced Programming and Materials

Enhanced Programming and materials are voluntary enrichments or upgrades to the curriculum or co-instructional activities beyond what is necessary to meet the learning expectations for a particular grade or course. Where students choose not to access these enhanced programs or materials, alternatives must be available as essential course materials required to meet the learning expectations of the course or grade are to be provided at no cost.

Optional Programming

Optional Programming refers to voluntary courses or activities that students normally choose to attend through an application process, with the knowledge that these programs are beyond the core curriculum. Examples may include Advanced Placement and Hockey Canada Skills Academy programs.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Fees should reflect the actual cost of the services or materials being provided to the student. A transparent accounting of the amounts collected and expenditures allocated must be made available to the Catholic school community.

Members of the Catholic school community should be consulted in the development of a school's fee schedule and made aware of the use of student fees. Fee schedules will be made available to the Catholic school community.

Fee schedules should include:

- An itemized list of fees that states the rationale and purpose of each fee; and
- Information about the process to confidentially address financial hardship.

To ensure consistency and transparency across all Niagara Catholic schools, the application of fees should reflect the following principles:

- The purposes for which funds are collected are consistent with the Niagara Catholic District School Board mission statement, strategic directions and system priorities.
- Fees raised for school purposes are to complement, and not replace, public funding for education.
- Successful completion of a required grade or course leading to graduation cannot be dependent on the payment of any course fee.
- Students must be able to participate in school activities and access resources regardless of personal financial barriers.
 - Schools should address financial hardship and support student participation in activities regardless of economic circumstances.
 - A respectful practice for discreet identification of students/parents who may be experiencing financial hardship should be clearly communicated.
 - Financial reporting practices to the school community are in place.

FEE CHARGES

When determining fee charges, a fee charge shall be permissible for an activity, material, course or program if it is:

- Not required as part of the regular day school program;
- Voluntary, and alternatives are offered;
- Non-essential or co-instructional in nature and is not required for graduation by an individual student; or
- A voluntary upgrade or substitute of a more costly material to the material provided for course purposes.
- Examples of Activities, Programs, and Materials Eligible and Non-eligible for Fee Charges are found in [Appendix A](#).

BEST PRACTICES

In addition, school Principals shall consider the following best practices when implementing application of fees in their schools:

- Minimizing, where possible, costs related to enhanced programming and materials (for example, speakers, dance instructors, in-class field trips) that are optional to a course;
- Making every effort to ensure all students can participate in student activities regardless of ability to pay;

- Modest student activity fees for student agendas, student recognition, yearbooks, school dances, student council activities and clubs, photographs, co-instructional activities and athletics; and
- Where a parent authorizes student not to participate, alternative assignments must be provided during the school day for students to meet the expectations of the course.

References

- [*Education Statutes and Regulations of Ontario, Part II, School Attendance, Sections 32 \(1\) and 32 \(2\)*](#)
- [*Ministry of Education, 2011:B02, March 25, 2011 Memorandum – Guidelines for Fees for Learning Materials and Activities*](#)
- *Niagara Catholic District School Board Policies/Procedures*
 - [*School Generated Funds \(301.6\) AOP*](#)
 - [*Equity and Inclusive Education Policy \(100.10\)*](#)

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