

WAIVER OF STUDENT FEES

The superintendent will recommend to the School Board a schedule of fees, if any, to be charged students for the use of textbooks, consumable materials, extracurricular activities, and other school student fees. Students must also pay for the loss of, or damage to, schoolbooks or other school-owned materials.

Fees for textbooks and other instructional materials are waived for students who meet the eligibility criteria for a fee waiver as described in this policy. In order that no student is denied educational services or academic credit due to the inability of the parents/guardians to pay student fees, the superintendent will recommend to the Board which additional fees, if any, the District will waive for students who meet the eligibility criteria for fee waiver. Students receiving a fee waiver are not exempt from charges for lost and damaged books, locks, materials, supplies and equipment.

The superintendent shall recommend annual rental and services fees in the following areas:

1. Textbook rental/registration fee
2. Home arts project fees
3. Middle school science lab fees
4. Materials and supplies based upon actual average cost per grade/per individual
5. Student insurance based upon actual cost (optional)
6. District owned musical instruments based upon who initiates instrument use
7. Extra-curricular student activity fees
8. Band, orchestra, and chorus student participation fees

Other school fees include charges and deposits related to instructional materials; use of technology; use of school property such as locks or towels; field trips that are a customary part of a class or extracurricular activity; uniforms or equipment for interscholastic or intramural sports or fine arts programs; school records; school health services; and promotion exercises.

School fees that may NOT be waived include charges for: library fines and other charges made for the loss, misuse, or destruction of school property, including textbooks; school newspapers, yearbooks, pictures, or other such optional items; optional travel opportunities; and admission to school dances, plays, athletic events, or other school social events.

Notification

The superintendent shall ensure that applications for fee waivers are widely available and distributed according to State law and ISBE rule and that provisions for assisting parents/guardians in completing the application are available.

The District's policy for the waiver of school fees shall be annually communicated in the District's Parent/Student Handbook and given to all students during the first fifteen days of school. Thereafter, the handbook shall be given to parents/guardians of all students enrolling in school for the first time.

If the fee waiver policy or administrative regulations are substantively amended, all parents/guardians of all students enrolled in the District will be notified in writing within thirty days of the amendment.

Eligibility Criteria

A student shall be eligible for a fee waiver when the student currently lives in a household that meets the same income guidelines, with the same limits based on household size, that are used for the federal free meals program.

The superintendent will give additional consideration where one or more of the following factors are present:

- Illness in the family;
- Unusual expenses such as fire, flood, storm damage, etc.;
- Unemployment;
- Emergency situations;
- When one or more of the parents/guardians are involved in a work stoppage.

Verification

The superintendent shall establish a process for determining a student's eligibility for a waiver of fees in accordance with State law requirements. School Districts are not required to use the National School Lunch Act as the basis for waiver of student fees. The superintendent may require family income verification at the time an individual applies for a fee waiver and anytime thereafter but not more often than once every 60 calendar days. The superintendent shall not use any information from this or any independent verification process to determine free or reduced-price meal eligibility.

If a student receiving a fee waiver is found to be no longer eligible during the school year, the superintendent shall notify the student's parent/guardian and charge the student a prorated amount based upon the number of school days remaining in the school year.

Determination and Appeal

Within 30 calendar days after the receipt of a waiver request, the superintendent shall mail a notice to the parent/guardian whenever a waiver request is denied. The denial notice shall include: (1) the reason for the denial, (2) the process and timelines for making an appeal, and (3) a statement that the parent/guardian may reapply for a waiver any time during the school year if circumstances change. If the denial is appealed, the District shall follow the procedures for the resolution of appeals as provided in the Illinois State Board of Education rule on waiver of fees.

CROSS REF.: Policy 300:130 (Free and Reduced-Price Food Services); Regulation 300:140-R; Exhibits 300:140- E1 and E2

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/10-20.13, 5/10-22.25, 5/27-24.2 and 5/28-19.2.
23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.245 [may contain unenforceable provisions].

POLICY

Adopted: 11/14/11
Revised: 4/15/13, 4/18/16
Reviewed: