

February 22, 2024

**AMEND BOARD REPORT 79-154-3  
GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHING ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT FEES**

**THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING:**

That the Chicago Board of Education adopt the amended "Guidelines for Establishing Elementary and High School Student Fees." This policy was posted for public comment from December 15, 2023 until January 16, 2024.

**POLICY TEXT:**

**I. Fee Schedule and Notice to Parents**

At the beginning of the school year, each school shall issue a fee schedule containing that of the fees which will be charged by the school during the school year and a brief description of what each fee covers. Only the fees listed in the schedule are to be imposed. This schedule is to be issued to all parents through the students and must be printed in the primary language of the student. Any fees arising after the main fee schedule have been issued are to be approved by the principal and set forth in a supplemental fee schedule issued to the students affected thereby.

If the school charges a "general fee" or "activity fee," the fee schedule should itemize what the school covers.

No fee may be charged for charitable contributions or ID cards. A fee may be charged for replacement ID cards and replacement textbooks.

Before a fee schedule may be issued, the principal or designee is to consult with the local school council ~~and/or PTA~~ regarding the types and amounts of fees to be charged. Copies of the draft fee schedule and a copy of these guidelines should be provided to the local school council ~~and/or PTA~~ at the time they evaluate the proposed schedule. In high schools, principals are to also consult with student representatives in compiling the schedule. The roles of the local school council, ~~PTA~~ and student representatives are advisory in nature.

Each fee schedule shall contain a notice to parents (either on the fee schedule itself or attached to the fee schedule) which shall contain the following information:

1. A statement that the fee schedule was developed in conjunction with the local school council ~~and/or PTA~~, and, if a high school, student representatives.
2. A statement that whenever possible students whose parents cannot afford to pay a fee or fees will not be denied educational activities or services and that if the parent is unable to pay a fee, he or she should contact the principal or designee.

Translations of the notice into other languages may be obtained from the ~~Bureau of Multilingual Education~~ Office of Language and Cultural Education.

**II. No Sanctions are to be Imposed for Inability to Pay Fee(s)**

1. Students are not to be punished for inability to pay a fee, and academic, disciplinary or other sanctions or threats are prohibited.
2. The school should make every effort to assure that students unable to pay fees have the materials necessary to participate in their classes, and parents should be directed to agencies such as the ~~Illinois Department of Public Aid and the School Children's Aid Society~~ Illinois Department of Human Services which may assist them in obtaining the necessary materials
3. For students who are unable to pay fees, substitution of certain equivalent items may be allowed wherever feasible, which are to be specified by the principal. For example:
  - a. Gym clothing. (Substitutes must be suitable and properly laundered)
  - b. ~~Shop clothing.~~ Career Technical Education (Equivalent substitutes or clothing from home may be used except where the required shop clothing is specifically designed for safety and cannot be substituted.)
4. No public high school of a school district shall withhold a student's grades, transcripts, or diploma because of an unpaid balance on the student's school account.

**III. Instructions to school staff**

All school staff are to be made aware of these guidelines and the school's fee schedule. These are to be reviewed at least annually with all staff. Teachers are to be instructed that only the fees listed in the prepared schedule or supplemental schedule are to be charged and collected.

**IV. Reporting**

All principals are to annually (by December 1 of each year) submit to their district superintendent a copy of the notice to parents and fee schedule(s) issued.


**V. Graduation Fees**

Fees for graduation should be established well in advance of graduation day and should cover only those items required for participation in the actual exercise, i.e., cap, gown and auditorium expenses. All other activities connected with graduation shall be priced separately and made optional to the student.


**Amends/Rescinds:** 79-154-3

**Legal References:** 105 ILCS 5/34-21.6; 105 ILCS 5/10-20.9a(c)-(d)


**Approved for Consideration:**

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