

Administrative Procedure 505

STUDENT FEES

Background

Black Gold School Division is committed to offering enhanced educational programming for students and will establish fees to offset the additional costs incurred for enhanced services and optional activities. It may also be necessary for the schools to establish a fee for specific courses or school-related activities, projects or items (refer to Appendix).

Fees will be set annually under the following guiding principles:

1. School fees will be set in consultation with Principals, school staff, School Councils and parents.
2. The Board and schools will establish a schedule of fees, listing each type of fee and its amount. The Board or school will not charge any fee that is not set out in the Board's and school's fee schedule, as reviewed by the Finance Department.
3. The Board or schools will not charge any fees for textbooks, workbooks, photocopying, printing or paper supplies.
4. The Board and schools must demonstrate to parents the need to charge a fee, including the amount.
5. Fees are to be used for the purpose for which they are collected and must be directly related to the cost of the specific goods or specific services provided to the student.
6. The Board and schools will publish its reviewed fee schedule on its website.

Procedures

1. The Board will determine annually Division Tuition Fees, Division Transportation Fees, Division Technology Fees and may specify guidelines to schools for setting School-Based Fees during budget deliberations.
2. Principals, in consultation with the parents and the Superintendent or Associate Superintendent, Business and Finance are authorized to establish School-Based Fees adhering to the following guidelines (refer to Appendix):
 - 2.1 The School-Based Fees must follow the guidelines as set out by the Board of Trustees during budget deliberations.
 - 2.2 Fees charged are to be established to cover the cost of the course, activity, project or item. An accounting of the revenues and expenses associated with any fees which are charged will be made available upon request.

- 2.3 Prior to setting a new fee or changing the amount of an existing fee, the Principal will consult with parents, demonstrating the need to charge a fee. Consultation with School Councils and communication in school newsletters and on the website are acceptable forms of soliciting feedback.
 - 2.4 Each school will complete a cost analysis to determine the cost of individual School-Based Fees.
 - 2.5 Programs vary widely between schools in the Division both in the breadth and depth of course offerings, which will affect the cost of the courses and the fees associated with them. Conversely, the fees being charged for courses will determine their breadth and depth.
3. Upon registration for transportation, parents/guardians will be required to pay 50% of the transportation fee, with the remaining 50% due by the end of January.
 - 3.1 Where the total transportation fees owing is greater than \$150, a parent/guardian can request to be setup on a monthly payment plan by contacting the Transportation Department. The payment plan will be administered via the Division's secure online payment site. The payment will be split into six installments, with the first installment due upon registration. The remaining installments will be due on the 1st of the month from October to February.
 - 3.2 Transportation fees will only be prorated for students registering for transportation after the start of the school year if the student is new to the Division. Otherwise, transportation fees will only be prorated in special circumstances at the discretion of the Transportation Manager.
 - 3.3 In the event of financial hardship, where a parent/guardian is unable to pay the transportation fee, the parent/guardian can apply to the Principal for transportation fees to be waived.
 4. In certain circumstances, a student may be eligible for a refund of fees which have been paid. In other situations, all of the money collected may have already been spent and a refund will not be issued.

Each category of fees may be subject to a different procedure for refunds, as follows:

- 4.1 Transportation fees will not be refundable after the first day of school unless:
 - 4.1.1 The student leaves the Division prior to the end of school year.
 - 4.1.1.1 In this case the fee will be prorated based on the number of months the student was registered for transportation. If the withdrawal date is prior to the 15th of the month then the student is given a refund for 50% of the month; if the notice is after the 15th of the month, there will be no refund for the month.
 - 4.1.2 The student moves from an ineligible rider to an eligible rider.
 - 4.1.3 In this case, the Division will prorate the ineligible fee and eligible fee based on the number of months the student was an ineligible rider and the number of months the student was an eligible rider.
- 4.2 Refunds are not provided if the service has already been performed or the activity has occurred. This applies to fees for Optional Courses (Enhanced Course Fees),

Non-Curricular Travel Fees, Extracurricular Fees, Activity Fees (Student Excursion Fees), Enhanced Kindergarten Fees and fees for Non-curricular Goods and Services.

- 4.3 Refunds may be partially issued, depending on the circumstance. If the school has incurred a non-refundable deposit, a refund will not be issued for the deposit, even if the student withdraws from the activity. However, other portions of the fee may be refunded if a cost to the school hasn't been incurred e.g. student excursion – the entrance fee portion may be refunded but not the cost of the busing.
- 4.4 Refunds for the Technology Fee will be as follows: 50% refund for withdrawal prior to January 31.

If the student is continuing their education in the Division, a credit will remain on account for any refunded fees unless the parent requests to be paid-out (a payment will not be issued for amounts less than \$20.00). Payments will not be issued if there are other fees outstanding to the Division.

5. Any surplus funds remaining after all the event/activity expenses have been paid may be used to sponsor a final class/team activity or event. If the funds remaining are a large amount, schools may issue a refund. The plans for the use of any surplus funds must be outlined to the parents prior to the fee being charged.
6. If there is a disagreement between a parent and a Principal regarding whether or not a fee may be charged or regarding the amount of the fee, the parent may contact the Associate Superintendent, Business and Finance with the full details of the concern. The Associate Superintendent, Business and Finance will make the final decision regarding the fee.
7. Parents are eligible to have school fees waived in cases where they are unable to pay the fees because of financial hardship. Principals are responsible for the decision whether or not to waive school fees.
 - 7.1 Parents are to complete and sign the Waiver of School Fees Application to apply for a waiver of school fees. The application form is to be submitted to the Principal.
 - 7.2 If a waiver is granted or denied, the Waiver of School Fees Application is to be signed by the Principal.
 - 7.3 If the waiver has been approved, the school will email an electronic copy of the signed application to the Finance Department and Transportation Department. This information will be entered by the school in Rycor showing that the fee has been waived.
 - 7.4 If the waiver is denied, the school will submit the signed application to the Associate Superintendent, Business and Finance. The parent has the right to appeal this decision to the Associate Superintendent, Business and Finance.
8. The following procedures will be used for the collection of fees:
 - 8.1 All fees charged to students within the Division will be available for payment online via Rycor Fee Management software. Principals, teachers and coaches will make every reasonable effort to advise the school secretary of an upcoming activity or item for sale at least one week prior to the activity. This will enable parents to pay online and enable the school to communicate with the parents regarding the event.

- 8.2 Schools can communicate the fee payment schedules to parents in the school newsletter and via both SchoolMessenger and Rycor.
 - 8.3 Schools must send out reminders to parents regarding outstanding Division and school fees using Rycor Email Campaigns at least three times per year, generally on or before the following dates: November 30, January 31, and February 28.
 - 8.4 If a fee is not collected and has not been waived, any outstanding fees may be sent to the Collection Agency.
 - 8.5 Information on all outstanding accounts as of February 1 will be exported from Rycor as of March 15. All waivers must be entered in Rycor by this date to ensure that the information on outstanding fees is correct.
 - 8.6 The Finance Department will compile the information by school and department, and forward to the schools for review prior to sending letters to parents.
 - 8.7 Once the list is confirmed, a final notification will be sent to parents requesting payment by April 30 will be sent through Rycor by the Finance Department.
 - 8.8 At the beginning of May, each school and department will review the final list of outstanding accounts. The confirmed list of names will then be sent to the Collection Agency.
 - 8.9 Parents paying fees that have gone to collections are to notify the Finance Department that payment has been made to ensure removal of name from collections.
 - 8.10 At this stage, the Division will now owe twenty-five percent (25%) to the Collection Agency on all fees whether they are paid at the school or Division Office.
 - 8.11 When the fee is collected and entered in Rycor, 100% of the revenue will be credited to the account. Subsequently, 25% will be charged to the school for school-based fees once the invoice is received from the Collection Agency.
9. In the spring, each school will complete a School Fee Schedule itemizing each and every fee that will be charged at the school in the following year. The School Fee Schedule will be reviewed and approved by the Finance Department. Each school is responsible for posting the approved School Fee Schedule on the school website by the end of June. Only school fees included on the approved School Fee Schedule may be charged to the students.
 10. Schools must ensure that all school fees and expenditures are entered and coded correctly into Rycor and PowerSchool AtrieveERP. This information will be extracted for inclusion in the Audited Financial Statements which demonstrates that the school fees have been spent for the purpose for which they were collected.

Reference: Section 13, 19, 21, 23, 32, 33, 52, 53, 59, 68, 196, 197, 204, 222, 225, 257 Education Act
Rycor Email Campaign User Manual
School Fees and Costs Regulation
School Transportation Regulation

Form: 505-1 Waiver of School Fees Application