Washington County School District
121 West Tabernacle Street
Saint George, Utah 84770
435-673-3553

District Policy 3400

School Fees/Solicitation of Funds

This Policy will be reviewed and adopted annually. Fees-School Washington County School District - Adopted 9-14-93 (Ref 53A-12)-Revised 3-8-05-Revised 5-10-05 (ref. HB 183); Revised 4-18-06; Revised 6-13-06; Revised 5-12-09; Revised 5-11-11; Revised 4-9-13; Revised 5-13-14; Revised 4-14-15; Revised 8-9-16; Revised 4-11-17; Revised 4-10-18; Revised 5-14-19; Revised 8-24-26.

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1. Purpose:

1.1. Utah has a strong tradition of supporting free public education for all of its children. A commitment to free elementary and secondary schools was included in the state's first constitution, and has continued to be recognized in the constitution and statutes to this day.

1.2. Despite the commitment to free education, funding shortfalls have, over the years, led to the emergence of a confusing system of official and unofficial fees, charges, and deposits in Utah's schools, some of which appear to have been excessive or arbitrarily set and administered.

2. Policy:

2.1. Utah law requires parents to enroll and ensure the attendance of their children in school, and sets criminal penalties for those who fail to do so. The purpose of this policy is to permit the orderly establishment of a reasonable system of fees, while prohibiting practices that would exclude those unable to pay for participation in school-supported activities.

2.2. APPLICABLE LAW: Utah Code: 53G-7 and R277-407.

3. Procedure:

3.1. DEFINITIONS:

3.1.1. Fee: Any charge, deposit, rental, or other mandatory payment, however designated, whether in the form of money or goods.

3.1.2. Provision in Lieu of Fee Waiver: An alternative to fee payment and waiver of fee payment.

3.1.3. Student Supplies: Items which are the personal property of a student which, although used in the instructional process, are also commonly purchased and used by persons not enrolled in the class or activity in question and have a high probability of regular use in other than school-sponsored activities. The term includes pencils, papers, notebooks, crayons, scissors, basic clothing for healthy lifestyle classes, and similar personal or consumable items over which a student retains ownership.

3.1.4. Optional Project: A project chosen and retained by a student in a vocational or other class where projects are part of the curriculum, in lieu of a meaningful and productive project otherwise available to the student which would require only school-supplied materials.

3.1.5. Textbook: Book, workbook, periodical, newspaper, other printed materials, computer software, and materials similar in function to the foregoing.

3.1.6. Fee Waiver: A release from the requirement of payment of a fee and from any provision in lieu of fee payment, is a process with no visible indicators that could lead to the identification of fee waiver applicants, and complies with the privacy requirements of The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. 1232g (FERPA).

3.1.7. Spirit Pack: Athletic teams and performing arts groups often require participants to purchase a "Spirit Pack." Spirit packs generally contain practice clothing/equipment or clothing that provides group identity.

3.2. CLASSES AND ACTIVITIES DURING THE REGULAR SCHOOL DAY

3.2.1. No fee may be charged for any class, elementary school activities that are part of the regular school day, or supplies a student uses during the regular elementary school day in kindergarten through sixth grade (except where sixth grade is part of a secondary school), including assemblies, plays and field trips. (53G-7-503)

3.2.2. Textbook fees may only be charged to students who take Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or concurrent enrollment (CE) courses. Any textbook fees assessed for these courses remain subject to fee waiver requirements.

3.2.3. Elementary students must be able to enroll and participate in any class, and have the opportunity to acquire all skills and knowledge required for full credit and highest grades, without paying a fee. Teachers must ensure that projects requiring only school-supported materials are available to students without fee in classes where projects are part of the curriculum.

3.2.4. Students of all grade levels may be required to provide materials for personal projects which are optional. No student shall be required to construct an optional project.

3.2.5. Student supplies must be provided by the school for elementary school students (Grades K- 6). A student may, however, be required to replace supplies provided by the school which are lost, wasted, or damaged by the student.

3.2.5.1. It is the policy of the Washington County School District that those responsible for the loss, damage, or vandalism of school property, shall be responsible for all related costs in replacing or repairing the property. Failure of the parent or student to do so will result in

the District filing suit under Utah Legislature § 78A-6-1113, to recover those costs. This procedure applies equally to elementary and secondary students.

3.2.6. Secondary school students (Grades 6-12) are required to provide their own student supplies, subject to the provisions of Utah Code.

3.2.6.1. In order to avoid excessive costs to students and where waivers are required, teachers should avoid requirements which involve specific color, size, style, or vendors of items classified as student supplies.

3.3. SCHOOL ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE OF THE REGULAR SCHOOL DAY

3.3.1. Fees may be charged, subject to the provisions of Utah Code, in connection with any school-sponsored activity, regardless of the age or grade level of the student, if participation is voluntary and does not affect a student's grade or ability to participate fully in any course taught during the regular school day. These fees must be in a fee schedule adopted by the Board of Education. This section applies to school-sponsored activities before and after school and on days when school is not in session.

3.3.2. Fees related to extra-curricular activities sponsored by the Utah High School Activities Association may not exceed limits established by the Association.

3.3.3. Students in the Washington County School District are encouraged to participate in educational activities sponsored by organizations outside the school. A list of such activities would include but not be limited to the following; International Science and Engineering Fair, Science Olympiad, Math Counts, History Fair, etc. The sponsoring organization for each of these optional activities generally charge a registration fee. The fee varies depending on the sponsoring organization and participating students are responsible for the payment of this fee.

3.4. GENERAL PROVISIONS

3.4.1. No fee may be charged or assessed in connection with any class or school-sponsored or supported activity, including extra-curricular activities, unless the fee has been set and approved by the local Board of Education in accordance with this policy. No teacher, administrator, other employee, or agent of the Washington County School District may approve or require the payment of any fee not listed as part of the District's fee schedule.

3.4.2. Fee schedules and policies for the entire District shall be adopted at least once each year by the local Board of Education in a regularly scheduled public meeting of the board. Provision shall be made for public hearings or other procedures designed to ensure broad public notice and participation.

3.4.3. The Washington County School Board shall annually review the District fee schedule and policy at the time the budget is considered for adoption.

3.4.3.1. References for obtaining information about the proposed fee schedule and policy shall be communicated to parents prior to school registration.

3.4.3.2. References for obtaining information about the District fee schedule and waiver policy shall be included with registration materials provided to students.

3.4.4. No present or former student may be denied receipt of transcripts or a diploma for failure to pay school fees other than a reasonable charge made to cover the cost of duplicating or mailing. No charge may be made for duplicating or mailing copies of school records to an elementary or secondary school in which the student is enrolled or intends to enroll. Reasonable copying costs and postage costs shall be charged unless waived. If a student transfers to another elementary or secondary school, a complete transcript shall be sent to the new school within a reasonable period of time upon receipt of the request for transcripts without charge.

3.4.5. The school principal shall administer the waiver policy. Requests for waivers shall be handled without unreasonable delay to registration and enrollment. No eligible student or parent shall be denied waivers. A student who has applied for or received a waiver, shall not be identified to persons other than those directly involved in gathering or administering waivers. A standard written decision and appeal form shall be provided to applicants.

3.5. ELIGIBILITY FOR FEE WAIVER

3.5.1. Students who qualify under the guidelines adopted by the Board of Education and set forth in the schedule of fees are entitled to waiver of the applicable fees. Students may not collect fees or assist in the fee waiver approval process.

3.5.2. Proof of eligibility will be determined by the principal after the parent or guardian of a student applying for a fee waiver provides acceptable documentation verifying the student's eligibility to receive the waiver. Alternatives for satisfying the fee requirements, such as work opportunities, should also be considered when reasonably possible according to the individual circumstances of both the fee waiver applicant and the school. (5-10-05)

3.5.2.1. Acceptable documentation for fee waivers would include the most recent income tax return or the last three pay stubs, or both (if available), for each household member. In lieu of income verification, if the student's family receives (TANF/SNAP) or if the student receives Social Security income, is in foster care or in state custody the following documentation is acceptable: a letter of decision covering the period for which a fee waiver is sought from the Utah Department of Workforce Services (TANF), a benefit verification letter from the Social Security Administration (SSI), or a youth in custody intake form and/or school enrollment letter from the Utah Division of Child and Family Services or the Utah Juvenile Justice Department, or verification obtained through the LEA's McKinney-vento liaison.

3.5.2.2. A school is not required to keep documentation on file after the verification is completed. Sensitive documentation is reviewed at the school level by an appropriate school administrator and immediately destroyed or returned to the person making the submission.

3.5.3. To provide for balancing of financial inequities among schools, if over 5% of the student body of a school are approved for fee waivers, the principal may submit an itemized claim to the Superintendent for financial assistance, if the school is not able to adjust to the decrease in revenue.

3.5.4. Charges for yearbooks, class rings, letter jackets, and similar articles are not fees and are not subject to the waiver requirements of this policy.

3.5.5. Charges for school lunches, school milk, etc., are covered by separate policy and are excluded from this policy.

3.5.6. Each school is to ensure that adequate waivers or other provisions are available to guarantee that no student is denied the opportunity to participate because of an inability to pay the required fee, deposit, or charge. In addition to the outright waiver of fees, each school that charges a fee is to provide a variety of alternatives for satisfying the fee requirement to those who qualify, if there is reasonable work for fee waiver recipients to do, if the student's circumstances are appropriate, and if there are District/school resources are available for adequate supervision and perhaps transportation. The service assignment will be appropriate to the age, physical condition, and maturity of the student. The service assignment will follow state and federal laws, including the Fair Labor Standards Act. The service must be performed within a reasonable period of time and will be credited at a rate of at least equal to the minimum wage for each hour of service. Alternatives include allowing the student to provide tutorial assistance to other students; assistance before or after school to teachers and other school personnel on school related matters; and general community or home service. Each school may add to the list of alternatives subject to approval by the Board. Alternatives will be administered in a way that avoids unreasonable burdens on students and families.

3.6. APPEALS. Appeals related to waivers shall be made in the following procedure:

3.6.1. The appeal is submitted to the principal. Fee payment requirements will be suspended while a fee waiver appeal is pending.

3.6.2. The principal shall respond within one week (5 working days).

3.6.3. If the party is not satisfied with the decision, or the principal has not responded within one week (5 working days), the appellant may file the appeal with the Superintendent (or designee).

3.6.4. The Superintendent (or designee) shall respond within two weeks (10 working days).

3.6.5. If the party is not satisfied with the decision of the Superintendent (or designee), or the Superintendent (or designee) has not responded within two weeks (10 working days), the appellant may file the appeal with the School Board.

3.6.6. The School Board shall respond within 45 days.

Attachments and References:

- WCSD School Fee Schedule
- Utah State Board of Education School Fees Notice
- Utah State Board of Education School Fee Waiver Application