

Staff Report



April 15, 2025

To Board of Education (Public Meeting)
From Sean Nosek, Superintendent/CEO
Re School Fees and Deposits for 2025/26

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Board of Education approve the following school fees and deposits for the 2025-26 school year:

- Student Activity Fees for middle and secondary schools of up to \$30 per student. The student activity fee covers costs such as student agendas, guest speakers, student identity cards, school events, student recognition, student leadership, locks and locker rentals. Schools shall not charge for a student agenda if it is to be used as a learning resource or for assessment purposes;
- Parking permits of up to \$16 for the right to park as well as for administrative expenses at secondary schools where required;
- Graduation Fee of up to \$60 per student, the basic amount for the cost of the convocation ceremony (e.g. gown and stole rental, keeper cap and tassel, folder, diploma, and tickets to convocation/venue, tea/reception);
- Personal supplies in accordance with the supply list approved by the district;
- Bakerview Centre for Learning non-fundable registration fee of \$25 for continuing education courses
- Course Fee: \$550 for graduated adults taking non-funded courses;
- Refunds for graduated adults paying \$550 course tuition will be processed as follows:
 - Bakerview Centre for Learning: Continuing Education, refunds for fee paying graduated adults will be granted up to 4 days of attendance after registration. There will be a 10% per day holdback to a maximum of 40%. Withdrawal after four days will result in no refund. Individuals wishing a refund due to hardship after registration will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
 - Abbotsford Virtual School, upon placement into a distributed learning course: refunds may be granted: 100% within two days, 75% within a week, and 50% within 30 days. Refunds will not be considered after 30 days.
- International Baccalaureate Programme Exam Fee as follows:
 - \$150 for a student registered for one IB class in their Grade 11 year
 - \$300 for a student registered for two IB classes in their grade 11 year
 - \$450 for a student registered for three or more IB classes in their grade 11 year

BACKGROUND:

Student fees for the Abbotsford School District are permitted under the *School Act*, Section 82(3) and Administrative Procedure 317 - Student Fees (attached). The Board is required to approve school fees and deposits annually. These fees have been reviewed at both secondary and middle school levels.

The Student Activity Fee listed above has not increased for the 2025-26 school year and will be published by all schools. Schools requiring deposits for educational materials will make this information available, along with the list of fees and personal supplies, as per district administrative procedure.

Ministry Graduated Adult funding requires that adult graduates pay the full fee to register for 'Academic Upgrading Courses'. For the 2025-26 school year, the district will charge a non-refundable course fee of \$550 for Graduated Adults, 19 years of age and over. Foundations Courses continue to be tuition-free.

Bakerview Centre for Learning currently faces multiple course registrations per student and cancellations at the last minute, which impact whether the courses can be viable to run with insufficient enrolment.

Abbotsford Senior International Baccalaureate program students must complete six IB classes and write six IB exams. The school incurs the cost of regular IB expenses in addition to the exam fees, which exceed the district-allocated funds. For the 2024/25 School year, the following number of students fell into each category:

- 11 students writing one exam.
- 8 students writing two exams.
- 28 students writing three or more exams.

Fees and deposits

- 82** (1) A board must provide free of charge to every student of school age resident in British Columbia and enrolled in an educational program in a school operated by the board,
- (a) instruction in an educational program sufficient to meet the general requirements for graduation,
 - (b) instruction in an educational program after the student has met the general requirements for graduation, and
 - (c) educational resource materials necessary to participate in the educational program.
- (2) For the purposes of subsection (1), a student is resident in British Columbia if the student and the student's guardian are ordinarily resident in British Columbia.
- (2.1) Subject to subsection (2.2), if a board permits a student who is older than school age and is ordinarily resident in British Columbia to enrol in an educational program leading to graduation, the board must provide free of charge to that student
- (a) instruction in an educational program sufficient to meet the general requirements for graduation, and
 - (b) educational resource materials necessary to participate in the educational program.
- (2.2) Subsection (2.1) does not apply to a student who has
- (a) already met the general requirements for graduation, or
 - (b) completed the requirements for graduation from a secondary school or high school in another jurisdiction.
- (3) Subject to subsections (1) and (2.1), section 82.4 and the orders of the minister, a board may charge fees for goods and services provided by the board.
- (4) A board may require a deposit for educational resource materials provided to students and to children registered under section 13.
- (5) If a board requires a deposit under subsection (4), it must refund all or part of the deposit to the student or child on return of the educational resource materials.
- (6) A board must publish a schedule of the fees to be charged and deposits required and must make the schedule available to students and to children registered under section 13 and to the parents of those students and children before the beginning of the school year.
- (7) Except as provided in an agreement under section 75 (4.1), a board is not responsible to pay for any educational activity undertaken by a student that is not provided by the board.



AP 317

Student Fees

Background

The purpose of this procedure is to clarify when, and for what purpose, fees and deposits may be charged, and to ensure that fees and deposits do not become a barrier to participation in activities or programs because of financial hardship.

Procedures

Principals/Vice-Principals will ensure that the assigning and collection of fees and deposits conform with the following procedures:

Definitions

1. Curricular

Refers to instructional courses and/or programs authorized by the Ministry of Education and Child Care, Locally Developed or Board Authorized leading towards graduation as set out in the [‘School Act’](#).

2. Extra-Curricular

Refers to any school activity that is not included in the curricular offerings leading towards graduation (e.g. school events, clubs, sports clubs, student leadership activities).

3. Allowable Fees, and Field Trips

Fees may be charged for school special events, clubs, sports and other extra-curricular items and/or activities not regulated in the [‘School Act’](#).

3.1 Graduation Fees: The basic cost for graduation will be an amount to cover the cost of the convocation ceremony (e.g. gown and stole rental, keeper cap and tassel, folder, diploma and tickets to convocation/venue, tea/reception).

3.2 Parking Permits: Schools have the option of issuing parking permits to students to park their vehicles on school district property. The fee shall be for the right to park as well as for administrative expenses.

3.3 Student Activity Fee for Middle and Secondary Schools: The student activity fee covers costs such as student agendas, guest speakers, student identity cards, school events, student recognition, student leadership, locks and locker rentals.

Schools shall not charge for a student agenda if the agenda is to be used as a learning resource and/or for assessment purposes.

3.4 Field Trips:

- 3.4.1 Curricular:

- 3.4.1.1 Mandatory

- A field trip is deemed 'mandatory' when students are required to participate in order to meet specific course learning outcomes.

- If a classroom field trip is deemed mandatory, there must be no charge to the student.

- 3.4.1.2 Optional

- A field trip is deemed 'optional' when specific learning standards can be attained through either a field trip or an alternate learning opportunity.

- A fee may be charged for an optional field trip to cover admission and transportation costs.

Students who do not participate in an optional field trip will be provided with an alternate learning opportunity based on specific learning outcomes addressed in the field trip.

- 3.4.2 Extra-curricular Field Trips:

- Extra-curricular field trips are not evaluated as a formal part of an educational program and a fee may be charged.

3.5 Deposits and Rentals

The school may require students (including home schooled students) to pay a refundable deposit for "educational resource materials". Criteria used to determine the amount of the deposit should be specified at the time the deposit is required. Refunds will be adjusted for damages or for servicing the item upon return.

3.6 Textbooks and Workbooks: Refundable deposits may be requested for textbooks and workbooks. School-made workbooks cannot be charged to students.

3.7 Musical Instruments: Schools may request that parent(s)/guardian(s) provide a musical instrument. Schools may charge a deposit for an instrument loaned to a student by the school.

3.8 Graphing Calculators: Students may be given the options of buying their own, borrowing a school-provided graphing calculator, or using school-provided calculators during class time. Schools must make available as many graphing calculators as needed by students who do not wish to buy their own. Schools may collect a refundable deposit on loaned graphing calculators.

3.9 Technological Equipment: Deposits may be collected for the use of cameras, computers or other school equipment loaned to students by the school for use to complete coursework.

3.10 Laptop Computers – (One-to-One Program): Students/Parents may be given the options of purchasing their own laptop computer, leasing or leasing to own a laptop computer as per the District Lease Plan, or borrowing a laptop from the school. Schools may collect a refundable deposit on loaned laptop computers.

3.11 Personal Supplies and Equipment:

All school supply lists must be approved by the principal prior to being provided to parents. Involvement in school-authorized School Supply Purchase Programs (with either a commercial provider or by the school) must be completely optional and at the sole discretion of the parent/guardian.

Schools that opt to use a School Supply Purchase Program must do so on a strict cost recovery basis rounded to the closest \$0.05. This includes student planners if they are not used for instructional purposes. Parents must not be charged for student planners if they are used for instructional purposes.

Schools may not charge cooking fees (e.g. Kindergarten cooking programs) or fees for art materials for specialized art projects occurring during instructional time (e.g. Mother's Day art gifts).

Schools may charge for, or request that parent(s)/guardian(s) provide, the following personal supplies for students. The following list is not prescriptive; schools may adapt this list to their needs but may not add to it without permission of the Superintendent (or designate).

- 3.11.1 Art Supplies: felts, glue, paint shirt, pencil crayons, scissors, scrapbooks, sketch books, stencils for numbers and letters, wax crayons
- 3.11.2 Math Supplies: calculator (non-graphing), graphing paper, protractor and compass set
- 3.11.3 Music Supplies: band instrument, recorder, reeds
- 3.11.4 PE Supplies: gym bag (cloth with drawstring), runners (indoor, non-marking), shorts, socks, t-shirt

- 3.11.5 School Uniforms/Dress Coordinates: jackets, vests, ties, pants, shorts, skirts, shirts, blouses
- 3.11.6 Writing Supplies: backboards, binders, correction tape/whiteout, divider tabs, duotangs, dry-erase markers, erasers, exercise books, highlighters, index cards, Key Tab notebook, loose-leaf paper, markers, pencils, crayons, pencil box/case, pencil sharpener, pens, portfolio/report covers, post-it notes, reinforcements, and rulers
- 3.11.7 Reference Resources: computer data storage device, English and other language dictionaries, and thesaurus
- 3.11.8 Career / Trades Programs: protective eye wear, protective head gear, safety boots, tools for apprenticeship programs (CTC, ACE-IT, SSA)
- 3.11.9 Student Agendas: A fee may not be charged if the agenda is used for assessment purposes. A fee may be charged if the agenda is used for any other purpose.
- 3.11.10 Computer Supplies: Headphones, storage medium

3.12 Materials of Superior Quality: While a school may not charge 'blanket' course fees, a student may be required to pay for materials of superior quality (optional materials) used in the preparation of a project to meet a course requirement.

3.13 Applied Skills (Tech Ed., Business Ed., Home Ec.) and Fine Arts (Art, Music, Drama, Dance): A school must provide the basic ingredients/materials for class projects. Should a student choose to, he/she may use 'optional' materials to upgrade the project. For example, a student may use a finer grade of wood, or acrylic versus oil based paint.

3.14 Specialty Academies: Schools may charge a fee for students to participate in a Board approved academy. The Board will establish fees on an annual basis in consultation with the School Planning Council.

3.15 Summer School: Fees will be in accordance with the [School Act](#) and Ministry of Education and Child Care guidelines. Students of school age will not be charged course fees. A refundable deposit may be charged at the time of registration. Students who complete summer school will be issued a refund on the deposit.

3.16 Night School-Continuing Education: Fees may not be charged for courses leading to graduation for students of school age. Graduated adults will be charged a course fee except for courses in Language Arts 11/12, Mathematics 11/12 and Sciences 11/12.

3.17 Distributed Learning (Virtual School): Fees may not be charged for courses leading to graduation for students of school age. Graduated adults will be charged a course fee except for courses in Language Arts 11/12, Mathematics 11/12 and Sciences 11/12.

4. Application of Procedures

4.1 Annually, the Superintendent will establish a process for setting fees and deposits charged. This is to ensure consistency across the district.

4.2 The Principal in consultation with the School Planning Council and in accordance with district policy will recommend a schedule of school fees and deposits to the Superintendent.

4.3 The Superintendent will make a recommendation to the Board for approval.

4.4 The Board will approve school fee and deposit schedules prior to the next school year so that the information is available for publication by schools.

4.5 The Principal will ensure that school fee and deposit schedules are published and/or made available to students and parent(s)/guardian(s) prior to students selecting courses.

4.6 On an annual basis, each school will be required to submit a summary of fees collected and the related expenses. The report will be in a format defined by the Finance Department and include a detailed listing of the expenditures. This report would be completed for the following fees:

- i) Student school supplies
- ii) Student activity fees
- iii) Student planners
- iv) Other fees as may be identified by the Superintendent

Where a surplus occurs, the school would be expected to provide an explanation and/or a plan for its dispersal (including possible reimbursements).

5. Financial Hardship

Staff must ensure that no student is denied an opportunity to participate in educational programs or educational curricular activities based on financial hardship.

6. The option for waiving school fees for school programs, optional curricular field trips and other activities must be made known to parents. The principal must ensure the process for waiving a fee is fair and confidential.

(Last Revised: June 2016)