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| NUMBER: | PR F: 05 |
| EFFECTIVE: | November 8, 2011 |
| AMENDED: | |
| RELATED POLICIES: | See References |
| REPEALS: | |
| REVIEW DATE: | 2014-2015 |

1.0 OBJECTIVE:

- 1.1 To provide guidelines and procedures for the consistent and transparent implementation of *Board Policy F: 05 Fees for Learning Materials and Activities*.

2.0 GENERAL:

- 2.1 The school principal is responsible for ensuring that the materials required to meet the expectations of the core curriculum for day school programs are available without cost to the students. No fee will be charged for learning resources that are essential to meet the learning expectations of a particular grade or course.
- 2.2 The school principal, through the allocation of funds from its general revenues, shall provide a level of instruction in its regular day school programs that reflects the Board’s objectives and principles in promoting and supporting equity and inclusion within a Catholic community, and that supports fairness and access to student activities in a way that is sensitive to the needs of all students.
- 2.3 The school principal shall ensure that the dignity of every student and parent is honoured in the school fee collection process, developing collection methods that afford reasonable expectations of privacy for students and parents, and develop and clearly communicate a practice for discrete identification of students/parents who may be experiencing financial hardship. Where the principal is satisfied that a financial hardship exists for a student or family, all or part of the course fee may be waived in a confidential manner.
- 2.4 School policies must be compliant with Board Policy *F: 05 Fees for Learning Materials and Activities* and support the principles and objectives of Board Policy *A: 14 Promoting and Supporting Equity & Inclusion Within a Catholic Community*. School principals shall consider the following when implementing fee policies in their schools:
 - Minimizing, where possible, costs related to enhanced programming and materials (for example, speakers, dance instructors, in-class field trips) that are optional to a course and ensuring fee amounts reflect the actual cost of the service or materials being provided to the student;
 - Making every effort to ensure all students can participate in student activities regardless of ability to pay;
 - Creating a central fund or subsidy program to support the full participation of students in activities regardless of economic circumstances;

- Where a student chooses not to participate, alternative assignments should be provided for students to meet the expectations of the course; and
- Modest student activity fees, not to exceed \$50.00 per student, for student agendas, student recognition, yearbooks, school dances, student council activities and clubs, photographs, extra-curricular activities and athletics.

2.5 School principals shall ensure that cash handling and maintenance of appropriate financial records comply with the accounting procedures and internal controls approved by the Business and Financial Department.

3.0 FEE CHARGES - ELIGIBILITY AND CRITERIA:

3.1 When determining whether fee charges may be appropriate, the following criteria may be considered. A fee charge shall be permissible for an activity, material, course or program if it is:

- Not required as part of the regular day school program;
- Voluntary, and alternatives are offered;
- Non-essential or extracurricular in nature and is not required for graduation by an individual student; or
- A voluntary upgrade or substitute of a more costly material to the material provided for course purposes.

3.2 Examples of Activities, Programs or Materials **Ineligible** for Fee Charges

- A registration or administration fee for students enrolled in any regular day school program;
- A textbook fee or deposit; (Schools may recover the costs for the replacement or repair of lost, damaged or broken materials such as textbooks, library books, music or science supplies or any loaned materials. These charges should not exceed the replacement or repair cost.)
- Learning materials that are required for the completion of the curriculum such as workbooks, cahiers, musical instruments, science supplies, lab material kits and safety goggles;
- Fees charged for the creation of discretionary accounts by teachers or departments;
- Mandatory flat fees for any course leading to graduation other than optional programming;
- A fee for a guest speaker, visiting teacher, or in-class field trip or presentation where the material being presented is a mandatory element of the subject or course;
- Items that are funded through the allocated budget of the school board including, but not limited to learning materials necessary to meet learning expectations such as computers, workbooks, textbooks, staff development and training costs; or
- Learning materials that are required to meet the learning expectations of the course, but are consumed by the student and cannot be used again by another student in the next semester, e.g., a chemical used in a chemistry experiment.

3.3 Examples of Activities, Programs or Materials Potentially **Eligible** for Fee Charges

- Optional programming such as, Advanced Placement courses or Hockey Canada Skills Academy program;
- Extracurricular trips, events, or activities that are extensions to the curriculum and not required for graduation (e.g., dances, school clubs, theme days, athletics, drama, student council activities);
- Extended student trips or excursions that are not necessary to meet the learning expectations of a particular grade or course (e.g., trips abroad);
- Optional art or music supplies or higher quality woodworking, design or technology materials that students choose to use for course completion, as long as the required materials are available at no cost;
- Student activity fees;
- Co-curricular activities, special events, program enhancements or field trips (e.g., for costs of participation, rental of equipment or travel), if alternative activities and assignments are offered to students who choose not to participate; or
- Student agendas, yearbooks.

3.4 There may be **optional** additional costs for learning resource materials that students may purchase to enhance their program. Examples of these include uniforms for physical education classes, art supplies, and similar personal or consumable items. A list of recommended optional requirements should be provided in June of each year. Efforts should be made to minimize the list and consideration should be given to cost per student.

3.5 During course selection, information will be provided on costs students can expect to pay in any course. Costs students have paid in the past by enrolling in a particular course will be used as a reference.

3.6 To the extent possible, costs related to enhancing programming shall be kept to a minimum and reflect the actual costs of the services or materials being provided to the student.

3.7 If students are charged additional costs to enhance their program, the principal, a designate, or a curriculum leader is responsible for providing advance notification to parents and students detailing the collection and disbursement of all monies collected.

4.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES - TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY:

4.1 The school principal shall consult with school staff, parent involvement committees, school councils, other advisory committees, parents, students and the school community when choosing to charge any fee(s).

4.2 The school principal will develop a communication plan no later than the second week in June to communicate to the school community the student activity fee schedule for the upcoming school year. The communication plan shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. an itemized breakdown of each voluntary student fee and the rationale for each of those fees;
 - b. an outline of individual class/program school supply expectations;
 - c. a confidential process by which a parent or student may indicate his or her intention not to contribute to any or all of the items;
 - d. reference to the subsidies available and contact information as to how such subsidies can be accessed confidentially;
 - e. The information set out within subsections (a) (c) and (d) above, shall be included in the student agenda planner, the last newsletter of the school year for fees for the coming year, as well as in the first newsletter of the new school year.
- 4.3 Written documentation in the form of a receipt will be provided to students and/or parents upon payment of the student fee, indicating the intended allocation of the fee.
- 4.4 Schools shall comply with school fundraising reporting procedures set out within the Board's fundraising policy/procedure and establish practices that promote accountability for the handling and management of the proceeds raised from fees. A transparent accounting of the amounts collected and expenditures allocated must be made available to the school community.