

Article VIII.A.3.     Fees in Public Schools

A.     Purpose

The Granite School District Board of Education (Board) ensures that a free public education is provided to all Granite School District (District) students consistent with Utah Code §§53G-7-501 through 505. Pursuant to Utah laws and regulations, fees may be assessed according to an annual fee schedule adopted by the Board, and according to appropriate fee waiver and refund procedures. The purpose of this policy is to outline the District’s system of assessing fees, to provide for an annual notice of the District fee schedule, and to establish appropriate fee waiver and refund procedures.

B.     Definitions

1.     “Fee” means any charge, deposit, rental, or other payment assessed to a student or the student’s family, however designated, whether in the form of money or goods, requested or required as a condition to a student’s participation in an activity, class, or program provided, sponsored, or supported by a school.
  - a.     Fees include: (i) money or something of monetary value raised by a student or the student's family through fundraising; (ii) charges or expenditures for a school field trip or activity trip, including related transportation, food, lodging, and admission charges; (iii) payments made to a third party that provides a part of a school activity, class, or program; (iv) charges or expenditures for classroom textbooks, supplies, or materials; and (v) charges or expenditures for requested or required school activity clothing, equipment, or supplies.
  - b.     Fees do not include: (i) charges related to the National School Lunch Program; (ii) student fines specifically approved by the Board for failing to return, losing, wasting, or damaging private or school property; (iii) improper use of school property; (iv) a deposit that is a pledge securing the return of school property, refunded upon the return of the school property; or (v) a charge for insurance, unless the insurance is required for a student to participate in an activity, course, or program.
2.     “Fee waiver” means a full or partial release from the requirement of payment of a fee and from any provision in lieu of fee payment.
3.     “Instructional equipment” means course related tools or instruments required for a student to use as part of a secondary course that becomes the property of the student upon exiting the course.

4. “Requested or required as a condition of a student’s participation” means something of monetary value that is impliedly or explicitly mandated or necessary for a student, parent, or family to provide so that a student may:
  - a. fully participate in school or in a school activity, class, or program;
  - b. successfully complete a school class for the highest grade; or
  - c. avoid a direct or indirect limitation on full participation in a school activity, class, or program, including limitations created by: (i) peer pressure, shaming, stigmatizing, bullying, or the like; or (ii) withholding or curtailing any privilege that is otherwise provided to any other student.
  
5. “School-sponsored activities” are District or school programs or events approved by the school principal that:
  - a. are initiated, managed, or supervised by schools, teachers, staff, or administrators;
  - b. use school facilities, equipment, or other school resources (not part of a rental or other contractual arrangement); and
  - c. are supported or subsidized by school or District funds, including the public school’s activity funds or minimum school program dollars.
  
6. “Textbook” means instructional material necessary for participation in a course or program, regardless of the format of the material (e.g. a book, workbook, or materials similar in function, which are required for participation in a course of instruction). “Textbook” does not include instructional equipment.

C. Fee Schedules

Consistent with this policy, the Board annually adopts a separate District fee schedule for elementary, junior high, and senior high schools in a regularly scheduled public Board meeting after two public readings. District fee schedules shall be made available to parents/guardians before the start of the school year and shall be published on the District’s website and included in registration materials. The fee schedules shall include at least the elements described below.

1. A specific maximum amount for each fee that may be charged to a student, including required group fundraising.
2. The total amount a student may be charged for any given activity, class, or program.
3. A per-student maximum fee that represents an annual aggregate amount a student may be charged for a reasonable number of activities, courses, or programs.

4. Spend plans based on projected expenditures.
5. Other fees as deemed necessary by the Board.

D. Spend Plans

The spend plans contained in District fee schedules are developed with estimates and the best information available at the time of adoption by the Board. In order to provide better information to parents/guardians, schools shall develop detailed budgets for every activity, course, or program requiring assessment of student fees. More detailed spend plans are generated from the detailed budgets and shall be published to parents prior to the commencement of the applicable activity, course, or program (season). More detailed spend plans shall include a description of anticipated types of expenditures for the current fiscal year, or as carryover for use in a future fiscal year, funded by the fee charged. Spend plans shall be regularly updated (not less than annually).

E. Notice

1. Registration materials shall include a notice to parents/guardians regarding fees and fee waivers including links to this policy and other information. The registration materials shall also include a copy of the fee schedule, a copy of forms parents may use to apply for fee waiver, and forms to appeal a fee waiver determination. Students who enroll during the school year shall also receive the same information.
2. Information shall be made available to parents/guardians in the language spoken by the family, or an administrator shall meet with parents/guardians with an interpreter to allow the parents/guardians to understand the fee waiver forms and policies.
3. The District shall seek input on the fee schedule annually from parents/guardians or other school community members. Parents shall be given notice of board meetings when the fee schedule is on the agenda. Parents are welcome to provide input on the fee schedule by speaking to school or District administrators through established communication channels.

F. Assessment of Fees

Students shall be able to enroll and participate in any class and have the opportunity to acquire all skills and knowledge to obtain full credit and the highest grades at no cost to

students or families with the exception of reasonable fees listed in the applicable fee schedule, consistent with the provisions below.

1. No general charges or fees shall be assessed for textbooks and classroom materials to elementary students. All other programs, activities, and materials considered essential or required, such as newspapers, movies, field trips, and similar items shall be made available free of charge to elementary students. A fee may be assessed for approved extracurricular and co-curricular activities at the elementary level if approved on the District fee schedule. For purposes of this policy, an elementary student is a student attending a school that provides instruction to students in kindergarten through grade 5 or 6. (Students in grade 6 served in a junior high or middle school shall be considered secondary students.)
2. Secondary students may be charged course-related fees. For purposes of this policy, a secondary student is a student enrolled at a junior high school, middle school, or senior high school that provides instruction to students grades 6 or 7 through 12. (Students in grade 6 served in an elementary school shall be considered an elementary student.)
3. Secondary students may be required to provide student supplies. For the purpose of this policy, student supplies are items that 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 outside school-sponsored activities.
  - a. Student supplies include: pencils, paper, notebooks, crayons, scissors, basic clothing for healthy lifestyle classes, and similar personal or consumable items over which a student retains ownership.
  - b. Student supplies do not include the items listed above if the school requests or requires a specific color, brand, or specific imprint intended to create a uniform appearance not related to the basic function.
4. Materials for class projects and enrichment activities required for a secondary course shall be included in the course fee. Students may be allowed to choose optional projects or enrichment activities but shall not be required to select an optional project or enrichment activity as a condition of enrolling in or completing a course. The cost of materials for such optional projects or enrichment activities is not considered a fee and is not waivable. Costly optional projects and enrichment activities shall be avoided if they result in pressure by teachers or peers to select those options.

5. Fees may be charged to secondary students for school-sponsored extracurricular and co-curricular activities. All such fees shall be disclosed on the fee schedule and are subject to fee waiver. Such fees may include, but are not limited to the following:
  - a. charges for summer camp or other out-of-season, school-sponsored activities;
  - b. charges for uniforms, costumes, clothing, and accessories (other than items of typical student dress) which are required for participation in choirs, drill teams, athletic teams, bands, orchestras, or other student groups;
  - c. charges for specialized instruction, choreography, assistant coach stipends, or other contracted services;
  - d. charges for student travel as part of a school team, student group, and other school-approved trips;
  - e. charges for transportation; and/or
  - f. charges for supplies, materials, food, or other items used in a school-sponsored activity.
6. Schools may assess fees for school-sponsored driver's education programs. Fees for driver's education programs are subject to fee waiver except for costs required by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). Fees for driver's education programs provided by a community education program are not subject to fee waivers.
7. Schools may charge a reasonable admission fee for attendance at school dances, performances, competitions, or games when those activities are not held during the school day. Admission fees may also be charged at activities sponsored by the Utah High School Activities Association (UHSAA) or by the local competitive region to which the high school belongs. Secondary students may be issued activity cards, which allow free or reduced-price admission to school-sponsored, extra-curricular activities.
8. Fees may not be charged to a student trying out for a team, program, or activity. Fees shall only be assessed after participants are selected.
9. Federal law permits schools to charge for food or drink provided as part of the Child Nutrition Program in both elementary and secondary schools. Parents may submit an application online to request free or reduced-price meals. The cost of food items available to students from vending machines, concession stands, or school stores are not fees and are not waivable.
10. A reasonable charge may be assessed to cover the cost of duplicating student transcripts when such transcripts are to be provided to the student or mailed to colleges, universities, or places of employment. A charge will not be assessed for

transcripts that are required as part of a transfer to another public or private elementary or secondary school. These charges are not considered fees. Transcripts shall not be withheld based on a student's outstanding fee balance.

11. Personal or discretionary charges or purchases for personal, consumable items such as yearbooks, class rings, letterman jackets, or other similar items are not fees and are not waivable charges except when requested or required by the school or District. Such items are subject to sales tax.
12. Charges for college credit related to a concurrent enrollment classes and charges for advanced placement examinations are not fees and are not waivable.

G. Limitation on Fees

1. No employee or duly appointed volunteer may require a fee unless it has been approved by the Board and listed on the applicable fee schedule.
2. A fee charged to a student must be equal to or less than the expense incurred by the school in providing for student activities, courses, or programs for which the fee is charged.
3. A fee charged to a student must be equal to or less than the maximum amount approved by the Board on the fee schedule.
4. No fee may supplant or subsidize any other fee.
5. Schools shall not assess higher fees to offset loss of revenue due to fee waivers.
6. Individual fundraising may be offered to offset out of pocket fees, but individual fundraising shall not be required. Group or team fundraising may be required in a non-discriminatory manner. Employees shall be sensitive to the needs and limitations of students related to fundraising. (See District Policy, Article V.C.11., Student Fundraising and Article V.C.8 Donations).

H. Fee Waivers and Appeals

Fees shall be waived for students who qualify for fee waiver under Utah law. Fees may be waived for other reasons at the discretion of the principal. Fee waivers are subject to the provisions below.

1. A parent/guardian may apply for a fee waiver by submitting a Fee Waiver Application to the school for each student. Application forms shall be made available to parents/guardians prior to the beginning of each school year.
2. A student's family may be granted a fee waiver if total household income does not exceed the amount set by the state superintendent; if the student receives Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments; if the family is receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits (food stamps); if the student has been placed with a foster family; or if the student is in state custody.
3. Parents/guardians, at their discretion, may apply for partial fee waiver. Those requests shall be processed in the same manner as requests for waiver of all fees. Unless parents/guardians have specifically requested a partial fee waiver, all fees must be waived completely for eligible students.
4. If a family is having a financial emergency caused by job loss, major illness, or other substantial loss of income beyond the family's control, the student may be eligible for fee waiver even if other eligibility criteria are not met. The school principal is empowered to make a determination of eligibility in such cases.
5. The following documentation may be used to verify fee waiver eligibility:
  - a. bona fide tax returns representing all household income; or secondarily, the three most recent pay stubs, which demonstrate the total contributions to the household income;
  - b. a benefit verification letter for SSI;
  - c. a letter of decision for TANF or SNAP covering the period for which the fee waiver is sought from Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS); or
  - d. a required student-in-custody intake form and/or school enrollment letter, for students in foster care provided by the case worker from the Utah Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS).
6. Approval or denial of fee waiver applications will be determined by the school administration based on established state and federal guidelines. If the application is denied, a school administrator shall provide to the parent/guardian a Decision and Appeal Form. The form will explain the reason the application was denied and provide instructions on how to appeal the decision. If a parent/guardian appeals the denial of a fee waivers the requirement to pay the fee is suspended until the appeal is decided.

7. All information provided in the Fee Waiver Application shall be kept strictly confidential. Following the final determination of eligibility, documentation shall be returned to the parent or destroyed. The school shall keep a record of the application (the fees being requested for waiver), the fee waiver determination, and the appeal information until four (4) years after the student has left the District. Thereafter, the records shall be destroyed.
8. Fee waiver documentation may be required at any time by the school, and a parent may ask for review for good cause. Schools may transfer fee waiver information to other schools within the District to which students advance or transfer, or at which students are dually enrolled.

I. Alternatives to Fees

1. At a parent or student's request, administrators may allow service in lieu of fees or make other appropriate arrangements to allow students who cannot pay a fee the opportunity to participate in a school-sponsored activity. Service in lieu of fees may not be required of students. Principals shall work out alternative arrangements for students in a non-discriminatory manner and in consultation with parents on a case-by-case basis.
2. Alternatives to fees may include such things as a reasonable school or community service, tutoring of other students, custodial work or other service at the school, or an assignment to help on a fundraising activity.
  - a. School or community service requirements and fundraising activities must be appropriate to the age, physical condition, and maturity of the student and must be conducted in such a way that students are not subjected to embarrassment, ridicule, or humiliation.
  - b. School or community service requirements and fundraising activities must comply with federal and state regulations, avoid excessive burdens on students and families, and give proper consideration to a student's education, transportation needs, and other responsibilities.
  - c. The credit issued to a student must at least equal the minimum wage for each hour of service performed.
3. Schools may allow, but not require parents/guardians, at the school's discretion, to pay fees in installments.

J. Refund of Fees in Secondary Schools

1. Refunds of co-curricular and extracurricular fees will be determined by the school based on costs already incurred at the time of a student's withdrawal. Refunds of course and basic fees are to be given according to the following schedule:

<u>Full Year Courses</u>	<u>Semester Courses</u>	
First Four Weeks	First Two Weeks	Full Refund
First Term	First Five Weeks	3/4 Refund
Second Term	First Term	1/2 Refund
Third Term	-----	1/4 Refund
Last Nine Weeks	Second Term	No Refund

2. In the event of unpaid student fees and/or negative lunch balances, money scheduled to be refunded to a student may be applied first to outstanding school debts.
3. In the event a student transfers to a school within the District during the school year, any refund due shall be transferred to the student's new school to cover fees at that school.
4. Refunds may be made to students in cash, subject to payment procedures established by the director of accounting.

References

Utah Constitution, Article X, Section 2  
Utah Code Ann. § 53G-8-212  
Utah Code Ann. §§ 53G-7-501 through 505  
Utah Code Ann. §§ 53G-7-601 through 606  
Utah Administrative Code R277-407  
Utah Division of Archives and Records Service, General Retention Schedule, GRS-1522  
District Policy, Article V.C.11., Student Fundraising  
District Policy, Article V.C. 8., Donations and Resource Development