
3520 Student Fees, Fines, or Charges

It is the policy of the Seattle School Board that student fees, charges, fines, restitution, and damage deposits may be imposed. The School Board has the authority to establish fees, charges, fines, restitution, and damage deposits, and procedures governing the collection of the same system-wide. The Superintendent and building principals/program managers have the authority to establish school-based fees, charges, fines, restitution, and damage deposits and procedures governing the collection of same.

1. Fees & Charges

Fees affecting the entire District, such as charges for school meals or athletic participation, shall be approved by the Board and included in a Board Procedure.

Fees established under this policy by the Board, Superintendent, or building principal may be established as required fees or voluntary fees. If a fee is voluntary, a student will not be prevented from participating in the service or activity if they do not pay the fee.

The School Board authorizes the Superintendent or building principal to charge fees for optional supplementary supplies, materials, or services to students so long as: (1) the charge does not exceed the cost of the supplies, materials, or services; (2) students are free to purchase them elsewhere or provide reasonable alternatives; and (3) a proper accounting is made of all moneys received.

The School Board authorizes the Superintendent or building principal to waive or reduce fees established by the Board, Superintendent, or building principal for students whose families by reason of their income would have difficulty paying the full fee. An approved "Seattle Public Schools Annual Application for School Meal Benefits," which uses the USDA Child Nutrition Program guidelines, shall be used as documentation to determine a student's qualification for a waiver or reduction of fees. The School Meal Benefits application must also include the parent or guardian's permission to share the student's eligibility status with school officials unless such sharing is permitted under the National School Lunch Act.

Reasonable effort shall be made to maintain consistency among schools regarding the levels of fees established by the building principal for particular reasons where comparable circumstances exist, and to restrict fees to reasonable levels appropriate to the activities and/or services for which they are imposed. While generally school-based fees are determined by the building principal, at times it may become appropriate to transform a fee or charge into a system-wide fee or charge at the discretion of the Board.

Schools may request voluntary fees to help support a school or classroom activity or project. For example, a school may request voluntary field trip fees to help subsidize the

transportation, admission, or general costs of a field trip. However, to the extent that the student's participation in the educational activity or project is legally required (e.g. a state or District curriculum requirement), parents/students must be notified that the payment is voluntary, and students shall not be denied participation based on their inability to pay the voluntary fee.

Questions about fees or charge amounts should be raised to the building principal, and if further clarification is desired, to the District's Assistant Superintendent of Finance. If clarification is sought, the Assistant Superintendent of Finance will determine if a recommendation should be made to the Superintendent and the Board to make a system-wide decision about the fee or charge.

2. Fines, Restitution, and Damage Deposits

A student will be responsible for the cost of replacing materials or property which are lost or damaged due to negligence.

The student and their parent/guardian will be notified regarding the nature of the violation or damage, how restitution may be made, and how an appeal may be instituted.

The Superintendent is granted the authority to develop procedures to implement this policy.

Superintendent Procedure:

- 3520SP – Student Fees, Fines, or Charges

Policy Cross References:

- 0061 – Administration of the Annual Budget and Financial Reporting
- 2151 – Interscholastic Activities
- 2240 – Summer School
- 2420 – High School Grade and Credit Marking
- 3115 – Students Experiencing Homelessness: Enrollment Rights and Services
- 3116 – Dependent Students (Foster Care)
- 3231 – Student Records
- 3240 – Student Behavior and Disciplinary Responses
- 3405 – Student Wellness
- 3510 – Associated Student Bodies
- 6705 – Food Service and Student Nutrition
- 3520BP – Student Fees, Fines, or Charges

Previous Policies:

- D83.00 – Restitution
- D83.01 – Fines, Restitution, and Damage Deposits
- D85.00 – Student Fees and Charges
- D85.01 – Student Fees and Charges Procedure

Legal References:

- RCW 28A.220.040 Fiscal support — Reimbursement to school districts — Enrollment fees — Deposit.

- RCW 28A.225.330 Enrolling students from other districts — Requests for information and permanent records — Withheld transcripts — Immunity from liability — Notification to teachers and security personnel — Rules.
- Chapter 28A.235 RCW Food Services.
- RCW 28A.320.230 Instructional materials—Instructional materials committee—Complaint system.
- RCW 28A.325.010 Fees for optional noncredit extracurricular events—Disposition.
- RCW 28A.330.100 Additional powers of board.
- RCW 28A.635.060 Defacing or injuring school property—Liability of pupil, parent, or guardian—Withholding diplomas—Suspension and restitution—Community service program as alternative—Publication of information on withheld diplomas—Student rights protected.
- AGO 1965-66 No. 113 Districts - Schools - Fees — Tuition - Supplies — Authority of school districts to charge tuition fees or textbook fees.
- AGO 1973 No. 11 Districts - Schools - Tuition & Fees — Authority of school districts to charge various fees.
- 42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq. McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Management Resources:

- *WSSDA Policy & Legal News*, July 2019
- *WSSDA Policy & Legal News*, May 2018

Last Board Review:

Revisions:

- May 12, 2025 (Administrative Update per Policy No. 1310)
- July 2, 2024
- April 26, 2023
- June 3, 2015
- October 15, 2014

Adopted by the Board:

- December 7, 2011