

**TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION
POLICY and PROCEDURES**

Title	Effective Date	Revision Date	Pages
No. 703 Student Fees	April 1, 1996	November 25, 2003 June 19, 2007 December 2018	1 of 3

It is the policy of the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education to permit Principals, in consultation with their School Advisory Councils, to set student fees as appropriate.

PROCEDURE UNDER Policy 703

Rationale

- Public schooling should be “free” as established under the *Education Act* of Nova Scotia. The **TCRCE** stipulates that “free” is to mean that students are not charged tuition and that the **TCRCE** has the responsibility to provide materials, facilities, staffing, support services and transportation for eligible students served by its schools.

The **TCRCE** believes that students will benefit when additional funds are collected through fees to enhance or enrich the basic mandatory requirements of the Public School Program, the **TCRCE** deems it appropriate for schools to charge student user fees for such enrichment/enhancement provided such fees are

- fair;
- reasonable;
- used directly to defray the costs for the purposes cited;
- an accurate reflection of the costs of the materials, services or activities; and
- optional where such fees place students at an economic disadvantage.

Within these conditions, the **TCRCE** acknowledges that it may be appropriate for schools to charge student user fees; consequently, it permits schools the option to:

- charge fees for any activity or event which is optional for students and not part of the required Public School Program;
- combine fees/costs for a number of materials, services or activities into a single fee as a payment convenient for school, student, and families; and
- charge user fees or rental costs for items or services which have been purchased from the school-based funds.

Because of the economies of large scale ordering and the need to have uniform and equitable supplies, and because there are circumstances when it is more cost effective and efficient for schools to bulk purchase and charge students/families the appropriate fees the **TCRCE** permits schools to

- charge (or consolidate into a single fee) costs for materials, supplies, or consumable items which are normally purchased by families and/or students;

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- b) as the usual operation requirements of the class or program (e.g. school supplies such as pens, pencils, scribblers, math equipment; lab consumables or books, art supplies, etc.);
 - c) in circumstances where schools are engaged in bulk purchasing they are required to follow existing **TCRCE** policy.
5. The **TCRCE** believes that public schools should be “free” as established under the *Education Act* of Nova Scotia. **The Regional Centre for Education:**
- a) does *not* permit schools to ask students or parents to pay for an activity or event which is considered to be a mandatory component of a required class or Public School Program; and
 - b) does *not* permit schools to charge user fees or rental costs for items that have been provided by or purchased through Department of Education and **Early Childhood Development** credit allocation to the **Regional Centre**.

Responsibility and Monitoring

1. The Director of Programs and Student Services is responsible for overseeing this policy and procedures.
2. This policy will be monitored annually.
3. Each school in the Tri-County Regional **Centre for Education** shall, annually, compile a complete and detailed written list of all student fees to be charged that school year if the school charges such fees. This list is to be clearly communicated to students/families at the beginning of each school year (prior to September 30).

Note: Schools should ensure that student fees for any given year are fair, reasonable, and not excessive. Multiple fees may be combined into a single payment, but a comprehensive breakdown of all the component fees and their purposes must be provided to students, families and the **TCRCE** when requested.

4. Principals shall submit annually the school list of student user fees to the Director of Programs and Student Services (prior to September 30).
5. Schools must keep detailed and accurate accounts of the payment of all student fees including a financial accounting of all monies collected and the purposes for which the fees have been collected as per **Regional Centre** Policy # 301 *School Based Funds*.
 - a) Receipts are to be provided promptly to students/families whenever fees are collected.
 - b) The school is to keep in a secure place a copy or record of every receipt issued to students/families.
 - c) All receipts issued any time during a particular school year are to be maintained in accordance with Policy # 301 *School Based Funds*.

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6. Schools are to make available other options/alternatives, including waiver of fees or alternative payment schedules, or service in lieu, for students/families who, to the knowledge of the school, are economically disadvantaged.
7. No student shall be excluded from an activity, event, or elective course because of his/her inability to pay the fees charged for that activity, event, or course.
8. Should a dispute arise between the school and students/families over the payment of fees, the issue is to be arbitrated or resolved by the school principal.
 - a) If the issue is not resolved at this level, the principal is required to refer the matter to the Director of Programs and Student Services.

Monitoring and Evaluation

1. The Director of Programs and Student Services shall be responsible for the implementation, monitoring, and revision of this policy.
2. The policy and procedures shall be monitored and evaluated **every five years or as required.**