Issued by the Minister of Education
K Hawley George
November 20, 2024

NLSchools

NLSchools refers to all public K-12 English schools and school-related facilities under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education, Education Operations Branch and all employees working therein providing services and supports to such schools, including those who work in the areas of school facilities, student transportation, program implementation, student services, and procurement.

Policy Name

School Materials and Student Fees

Policy Statement

The Department of Education promotes and supports inclusive and socially just school environments. Every student should benefit from, and have equitable access to, programs and resources associated with the regular school day and core curriculum. The department recognizes that schools may need to periodically charge fees in order to offer course enhancements and for learning materials and activities beyond the core curriculum. Such fees must be kept to a minimum and be in accordance with Sections 13 and 14 of the Schools Act, 1997.

Background

The department recognizes its obligation to ensure that a lack of financial resources for students and their families does not serve as a barrier to students' access to educational activities and programs. The department is committed to ensuring that students have the necessary materials for school-related activities while making every attempt to minimize the financial impact of additional costs and fees for students and parents or guardians.

Scope

This policy is applicable to all students and schools within NLSchools.

Policy Directives

1. The Department of Education is committed to providing students with the use of required texts and learning materials necessary to be successful in school. While fees may be appropriate and necessary in certain circumstances for course enhancements and school-related activities, fees charged to parents or guardians must be kept to a minimum and be in line with the administrative procedures for

this policy and guidelines.

2. A parent or guardian's inability to pay fees must not limit a student's participation in any required activity. In other situations where fees may be charged to students, the school administration should strive to reduce barriers to participation and, in a confidential manner, make every effort to assist students with limited financial means.
3. Where parents or guardians are required by the school to purchase items for their children, the school must make every effort to notify them as soon as possible of the requirements (e.g., notification in June for the upcoming school year).

Administrative Procedures

1. General Guidelines

1.1 School administrators should review this policy and associated administrative procedures on an annual basis with the school council.

1.2 The department promotes and supports inclusive and socially just school environments, and the reduction of barriers to participation in educational activities and programs for all students.

1.3 Schools are permitted to:

a) Charge an annual fee as necessary, up to a maximum of $60.00, for instrument rentals as part of Instrumental Music Programs.

b) Charge a fee for field trips (co-curricular or extra-curricular) on a cost recovery basis.

1.4 A student must be able to participate in school activities or programs as follows, regardless of the ability of the parent/or guardian to pay:

a) Participate in any field trip organized during the school day, where the school requests full class participation.

b) Enroll in a school program/course of study.

c) Obtain textbooks or other learning materials for which they are entitled.

d) Obtain a report card, transcript or diploma to which they are entitled.

1.5 Schools must ensure that:

a) Adequate provisions are in place for students who are unable to afford to pay fees, such as reducing costs and offering extended or partial payment plans.

b) School supply lists and information on any fees approved for a particular

school year are provided to parents or guardians as early as possible, preferably by June of the previous school year.

1.6 Schools are encouraged to develop a **Calendar of Events** to assist parents or guardians in planning and budgeting for the school year. It should include both school-based activities and fundraising initiatives which request a parental financial contribution. The Calendar of Events should be sent home to parents or guardians early in the school year. They should be given as much advance notice as possible regarding all additional events, such as field trips, which have associated costs.

1.7 Parents or guardians may be billed for any lost or damaged school materials and/or equipment, or any materials or equipment not returned.

1.8 Schools are not permitted to:

a) Collect fees for class sets of materials, such as calculators, dictionaries, etc.

b) Charge fees for locks, locker rentals, student agendas, identification cards, photocopying, etc. (Schools may charge the actual cost up to $10.00 for replacement locks/locks not returned).

c) Charge fees for consumable materials. Schools will cover the basic costs for the accomplishment of the activity covered in the curriculum, as determined by the school. If a student wishes to use additional or more expensive materials for expanded projects, than they will be responsible for covering the additional costs.

2. Supply List Guidelines

It is recognized that teachers put a lot of effort into preparing for the upcoming school year and parents or guardians often ask for a recommended school supply list. As you develop such lists for your schools, we ask that you refer to the suggested supply lists as outlined in Appendix A, and to the department's School Fees - Frequently Asked Questions..

The following procedures also apply:

2.1 Schools may consider the option of providing parents or guardians with the suggested items for a minimal cost not to exceed $25.

2.2 Only items that are absolutely necessary for the student's academic program should be placed on the school supply list.

2.3 Parents or guardians should be informed about supply lists or the set fee at the end of the current school year for the next year, to give families the maximum amount of notice/time to purchase the recommended items.

2.4 Requesting specific brand names of particular items should be avoided. As per Department guidelines, the brand name is at the parents' discretion. Requesting purchases through particular companies should also be avoided.

2.5 Schools may require a separate pair of sneakers or gym shoes.

2.6 Schools may provide a list to parents of optional items that they may choose to donate to the school or class (e.g., tissues, wipes).

3. Grades 7 – 12

3.1 Schools should have procedures in place to monitor and record the return of textbooks by students. It is recommended that these procedures include a list of the returned materials for each student, which can be made available upon request to the parents or guardians.

3.2 Parents or guardians are expected to incur the cost for:

a) Damaged textbooks, novels or other non-consumable materials.

b) Textbooks, novels or other non-consumable materials not returned at year's end.

4. Funding for Field Trips

4.1 The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

a) CURRICULAR: Activities related directly to the students' areas of study and participation is on a class basis.

b) CO-CURRICULAR: Activities developed from the school's program or students' areas of study, and usually complementing the regular curriculum.

c) EXTRA-CURRICULAR: Activities related indirectly to the students' areas of study and school's program, but may support and promote health and fitness, sport, leadership, citizenship, etc.

d) FIELD TRIP: Approved school activities that take place off school property, including activities where students walk to a destination.

4.2 Students should not be charged a fee to participate in curricular activities that take place during instructional time, where students are required to participate.

4.3 Students should not be excluded from excursions that take place during instructional time, due to a lack of financial resources. When planning such excursions, schools should consider all related costs, including out-of-pocket

expenses (e.g., lunch).

4.4 Schools are permitted to charge students reasonable fees for participation in co- curricular and extra-curricular activities, and for student travel related to those activities.

4.5 If a student is returned home from a field trip due to illness, accident or inappropriate behaviour, the parent or guardian may be responsible for any additional costs incurred. Schools should communicate this information to students and parents or guardians.

4.6 In the event that a school trip is cancelled, any funds collected from students must be returned to them, except for any non-refundable deposits.

4.7 Notwithstanding 4.6, funds generated through fundraising for a trip that is cancelled

will become the property of the school and may be used for other student-related, educational purposes as approved by the school administrator, in consultation with the school council.

Any such fundraising must be done in accordance with the School Fundraising Policy.

APPENDIX A

SUGGESTED SCHOOL SUPPLY LISTS

Items to be Considered When Creating Supply Lists

It is recommended that teachers choose from the following items to create supply lists for the upcoming school year. Not all items have to be included on the list for each grade level. The list should be provided to parents/students prior to the end of the current school year:

Supply List Template	
Item	**Quantity Recommended**
Exercise Books	• No more than 16
Pencils	• No more than 2 packages
Crayons/Leads/Markers	• Crayons/leads/Markers – recommended • No more than 2 packages
Glue/Glue Sticks	• No more than 4 items
Erasers	• No more than 4
Duotangs	• No more than 12 (colours may be requested)
Loose Leaf	• 1 package / 200 pages
Highlighters	• Recommended – 2
Pens	• Recommended – 2
Scissors	• 1 pair (metal with rounded tops)
Ruler	• 1 (30 cm)
Binder	• No more than 2
Protractor	• Grade six only
Gym clothes/sneakers	• Change of clothing and sneakers for gym if possible
Headset	• Bring own device from home if available

NLSchools

Sample School Supply Lists

(Sample) Primary Suggested Supply List	(Sample) Elementary Suggested Supply List
➢ 1 pair of scissors ➢ 8 exercise books (Please no wire coils) ➢ 2 large glue sticks ➢ 6 duo-tang folders ➢ loose leaf paper – 1 package of 50 sheets ➢ 1 package of HB Pencils ➢ 2 erasers ➢ 1 package of crayons ➢ Please send along your child's sneakers when they switch to winter boots or on days when they do not wear them to school.	➢ 12 exercise books ➢ 1 package of loose leaf paper ➢ 12 Duo-tang folders or report covers ➢ 30 cm ruler ➢ 1 protractor (grade six students only) ➢ 1 pair of scissors ➢ 2 erasers ➢ 1 package of colored pencils or crayons ➢ 2 glue sticks ➢ 1 binder ➢ Please send along your child's sneakers when they switch to winter boots or on days when they do not wear them to school