HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION	**Policy Code:**	HIAE
	Policy Title:	Fees
POLICY HANDBOOK	**Cross Reference:**	
	Legal Reference:	*Education Act* S.13, 57, School Fees and Costs Regulation
	Adoption Date:	June, 2017
	Amendment or Re-affirmation Date:	

POLICY

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION BELIEVES THAT PARENTS AND INDEPENDENT STUDENTS HAVE SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR COSTS IN RESPECT TO ANY MATTER PROVIDED FOR UNDER THE EDUCATION ACT AND REGULATIONS. THE BOARD AUTHORIZES SCHOOLS TO LEVY SCHOOL FEES AND COSTS AS PER THIS POLICY.

DEFINITIONS

Activity fees: Transportation, admission, accommodation, and other charges for field trips or special events (including in-school clinicians & presenters) usually associated with curriculum. Additional examples include fees for swimming and skating.

Alternative program fees: Amounts charged under Section 19(5) of the Education Act, a program (not an individual course) that emphasizes a specific culture, religion, or subject matter or uses a particular teaching philosophy, including sports-related academies. Fees classified here are in addition to fees charged to students who are not in an alternative program.

Basic Instructional supplies fees: means a school fee charged by the jurisdiction to offset, in whole or in part, the costs of bulk supply purchases. "School Fees Regulation" has eliminated fees associated with what was previously termed basic instructional supplies

Early childhood services fees: school fees in respect to an early childhood services program offered to a child who, as of September 1, is younger than 6 years of age. These fees also include early childhood services programs that provide greater hours of instruction than required (475 hours per year).

Extracurricular fees: Fees from clubs, sports teams, intramurals, or other programs designed to broaden scholastic experience. Includes charges for materials, activities, and travel associated with the club/team, etc

Fees for optional courses: means a school fee charged by the school for student enrolment in non-core course options, such as band, fine arts, career and technology studies. They represent fees for course items, materials, or events available at or sponsored by a school, which are not required for core instruction, as provided for by Alberta Education funding and include:

- Personal property materials – the costs for supplies and materials provided by the school for the exclusive use of the student, which becomes the personal property of the student at the end of the instructional period, e.g. raw materials for major student projects in Career and Technology Foundations (CTF) and Career and Technology Studies (CTS), fine arts, etc.
- Optional items and activities within school/courses, such as enhanced CTF/CTS supplies, and/or course related excursions.
- Extension of regular program or special program costs – charges which may be made for rental/purchase of equipment/facilities for extension of regular or special program charges which have been approved by the Superintendent, such as physical education 20 and 30, and.
    - The majority of students registered in a band program are expected to supply their own instruments; in the case of large instruments provided by the District, an annual rental fee may be assessed.

Non-curricular goods and services fees: Fees charged to parents in exchange for goods or services common to most students or a cohort within the population, including locker rental, locks, student ID, uniforms, gym strip, library, agendas, student union, insurance, graduation ceremony fees charged to all graduating students, parent-teacher associations, and fitness fees not associated with curriculum.

Non-curricular travel fees: Travel, accommodation, & admission associated with extended (overnight) optional non-curriculum travel for arts, athletic events, international travel;

Technology user fees: fees associated with rental of personal devices such as graphing calculators, laptops, chromebooks, tablets or other electronic devices

Transportation fees: a transportation fee under the School Transportation Regulation, which are for regular bus service to and from school (excluding field trips).

Tuition fees: In accordance with section 13 of the Education Act, A board may charge tuition fees in respect of an individual who attends a school operated by the board and who is not a resident student of the board or any other board or the Government.

Other fees to enhance education: Fees related to provide additional support to students toward educational programs not described or covered by the preceding fee categories. Examples may include additional exam preparation fees, tutoring, and summer school.

REGULATIONS

1. Horizon schools shall not charge any fees or costs for textbooks, workbooks, or photocopying, printing, or paper supplies.

2. Fees charged to parents and independent students will be transparent (see individual school fee schedules on the jurisdiction's website).

2.1. Schools shall not charge any fee or cost
  2.1.1. That is not set out in the board's reviewed fee schedule
  2.1.2. That exceeds the amount set out in the board's reviewed fee schedule
  2.1.3. That exceeds the amount that the board estimates to be the projected cost of providing for the subject matter of the charge, or
  2.1.4. That is not clearly expressed in the reviewed fee schedule to connect to specific goods or specific service or learning experience that is calculated to benefit students.

2.2. The Board shall publish its reviewed fee schedule on its website.

3. The Board will

3.1. consult with school councils prior to setting, increasing, or decreasing school fees or costs

3.2. demonstrate to school councils the need to charge school fees or costs, including the amounts

3.3. communicate the circumstances under which school fees or costs may be waived or refunded

3.4. communicate the process a parent must follow to request a school fee or cost be waived or refunded

4. The Board shall establish, and submit a schedule of fees and costs, as required, for approval by the Minister.

4.1. Ministerial approval does not apply to:
  4.1.1. Educational, cultural or recreational trips inside or outside its district or division; or
  4.1.2. Non-curricular travel

5. The Board shall provide an annual statement, to the Minister, that demonstrates that the fees and costs collected by it have been spent for the purpose for which they were collected.

6. It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure fees are safeguarded and proper records are maintained.

7. Disputes and concerns between parents, and/or independent students, and the board shall be resolved as per policy IFH: Formal Parent/Student Appeals

8. Such fees may include a security deposit.

8.1. A security deposit may be collected and refunded each school year, less any deductions for damage or loss.

9. Parents shall be informed of the school fees before the commencement of school each fall, at the time of registration, or in advance of registration.

10. If school fees are not paid or a waiver obtained,

    10.1. A principal may prohibit a student from participating in the benefit the fees would have provided

11. The Board may direct that students are exempt from payment of fees.

    11.1. A parent or independent student may apply to the principal for a waiver of the fees (see Appendix: Waiver).

12. The school shall be responsible for the collection of school fees and the subsequent submission to Division Office.

13. If an off-site activity or event is cancelled and funds are returned to the school or the jurisdiction, the principal must distribute the funds to parents and independent students who paid the costs in accordance with amounts paid.

14. Generally speaking, progressive action will entail the following:

    14.1. Letter from the school
    14.2. Letter from Central Office
    14.3. Collection agency
    14.4. Progressive action is utilized with the final step implemented in exceptional cases where it is satisfied that this action is warranted.

Appendix: Waiver

No eligible child is ever denied access to an education in Horizon because of an inability to pay school fees. **If you can't afford the following fees,**

- Basic Instructional supplies fee
- Early Childhood Services
- Fees for optional courses
- Technology User Fees

If any of the following situations apply to your family you may apply for a waiver:

- **We receive assistance from Provincial Social Services**
  - You must provide a photocopy of **one** of the following documents:
    - A currently dated Social Services Benefit Card showing applicant's & student(s) names, or
    - A current letter from Social Services verifying you are in receipt of assistance & the children listed are covered as your dependents
- **We are low income but not on Provincial Social Services**
  - You must provide a photocopy of **one** of the following documents:
    - The Alberta Child Health Benefit card and letter of confirmation of renewal for the current year (DO NOT send Alberta Personal Health Card), or
    - A copy of your current Alberta Health Benefit card with all children's names and card expiry date (DO NOT send Alberta Personal Health Card)
- **We are Government Sponsored Conventional Refugees**
  - You must provide a photocopy of **both** of the following documents:
    - Parent(s) "Confirmation of Residency" papers indicating Convention Refugee and a current Citizenship & Immigration cheque stub, and
    - Copy of current dated "Interim Federal Health Certificate of Eligibility" for applicant and children
- **We have Treaty Status living below an income threshold based on family size (see appendix: waiver below).**
  - You must provide a photocopy of **all** of the following documents:
    - Parent(s) Status Card **and** Notice of Assessment for parents/guardians (this is the only situation where any form of income tax papers will be accepted)
    - Treaty Status cards for each of the children (or a letter from your band verifying each child has treaty status)
- **Independent Students**
  - You must provide a photocopy of one the following documents:
    - A recent pay stub and a receipt for rent or a letter from your landlord indicating you are paying rent, or
    - A letter from your parent confirming you are an independent student living away from home
    - Alberta Child Health Benefit income guidelines

    * For information regarding the Alberta Child Health Benefit, please call 310-0000 then dial 780-427-6848 (toll free) or visit the website at www.employment.alberta.ca/FCH/2076.html. Please note it can take several weeks to receive coverage.

Procedure to Request Waiver of Fees

Step 1: Be sure you have the appropriate documents as noted above and if not, apply.
Step 2: Complete a Fee Waiver Application form (see below – available at your child's school or on the Horizon website at www.horizon.ab.ca).

Use only one form per family listing all of your children.
Step 3: Attach the documentation indicated for your situation (applicant's name must be on documentation).
Step 4: Mail it to the address on the front of the form or drop it off at your child's school.

Checklist for completing Waiver Application

- Read the information section below and policy HIAE.
- Fill out the parent and student information sections.
- Sign and date the application.
- Attach a photocopy of supporting documents (see information section below). Copies will not be returned.
- Place this form and attached documents into an envelope, marked "Confidential – Waiver Form" on the envelope, and deliver to the office of your child's school or you can mail it to the address on the front of this form.

Information Regarding Waiver Application

- Complete only one application form per family, listing all names of your children attending Horizon schools.
- It is recommended you submit your application as soon as possible, only complete waiver applications will be processed.
- Please allow 4 – 6 weeks for processing. After 7 weeks, if you have not received a reply from Horizon, please call 403-223-3547
- Applications may be mailed to the address on the waiver or dropped off at your child's school
- Application for Waiver of Fee forms must be completed annually.
- If you have any questions, please phone your school or division office at 403-223-3547.
- Applications without proper documentation will not be processed.

Additional Financial Hardship Provisions

If you do not meet the criteria above, you may declare a financial hardship to your school principal. Your principal will work with you and the Associate Superintendent of Finance and Operations to either come up with a manageable payment schedule, or decide to waive part or all of your fees.

If you are unable to pay the following fees

- non-curricular goods and services fees
- activity fees, or
- extracurricular fees

you may submit a waiver or declare a financial hardship to your school principal. While there is no guarantee that these fees will be waived, your principal will work with you to either come up with a manageable payment schedule, or possibly decide to waive part or all of your fees.

horizon school division

Application for Waiver of Fees

APPLICATION DEADLINE DECEMBER 1

PLEASE READ BOTH SIDES

PRIOR TO FILLING OUT FORM and complete Section A and either B or C

OFFICE USE ONLY
□ approved

SECTION A: PARENT/GUARDIAN

Last Name	First Name		
Street Address	City	Province	Postal Code
Home Telephone No	Business Telephone No.	Email address:	

Number of people residing in household: No. adults_____ No. children _____

Name of Child(ren) (Include all)	School(s) Attending

SECTION B: CONFIDENTIAL FINANCIAL INFORMATION : Please Choose one of the following:

☐ I have attached a copy of an **OPTION C FORM** (equivalent to the last notice of assessment from Canada Revenue Agency for **ALL** adults in the household. Option C's may be obtained at no charge by calling Canada Revenue Agency at **1-800-959-8281**. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND NOTICE OF ASSESSMENT**

☐ I have attached a copy of an August or later Social Services Health benefits card **(must list the students as your dependants)**

☐ I have attached a copy of my Alberta Works Health benefit card **WITH** proof of eligibility letter **(must list the students as dependents)**

☐ I am an independent student and have attached the Declaration of Independence form signed by the schoolprincipal

SECTION C: EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES Please refer to information on the back of this form

☐ My circumstances are exceptional and I have provided the necessary documents as **outlined on the back of this form**

The personal information contained in this form is collected under the authority of the Education Act and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act for the purposes noted. If you have any questions about this collection, please contact the school principal.

In signing this form:

- *I understand that financial and other information provided is confidential, subject to the above information sharing;*
- *I certify that the information given in this application and in any documents attached is up to date, correct and complete.*

Parent/Guardian (Print Name) _____ Signature _____ Date _____

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Check **Section C** on front if there are exceptional circumstances that are affecting your ability to pay your fee(s). In order to be considered for exceptional circumstances all of the following criteria must be met:

1) Provide a detailed letter explaining your circumstances
2) Attach supporting documents that substantiate your claim such as the following:
   - Photocopies of your current reporting card and cheque stub for Employment
   - Insurance Benefits (name and amount received must be visible)
   - Letter from your present employer stating your current gross income
   - Letter from school/university you are attending full time or a photocopy of your student loan
   - A current statement from Social Services certifying that the applicant is on social assistance and the student(s) is/are dependent(s) of the applicant
   - Resettlement assistance program documents
3) Waiver must also be signed by Principal(s) of your child(ren)'s school(s)
4) Final decision rests with the Associate Superintendent, Finance and Operations

The following chart of family income levels outlines how the waiver of fees will be determined

# of Adults and Children Per Household	100% Waiver	50% Waiver
1 person	<$20,449	$20,449 -27,265
2 persons	<$25,456	$25,456- 33,941
3 persons	<$31,294	$31,294 - 41,725
4 persons	<$37,996	$37,996 - $50,662
5 persons	<$43,095	$43,095 - $57,460
6 persons	<$48,605	$48,605 - $64,806
7 or more persons	<$54,114	$54,114 - $72,151

Statistics Canada information used as a guideline

Sign and mail the completed application form with supporting document(s) to:

Horizon School Division
Associate Superintendent, Finance & Operations
6302 – 56th Street
Taber, Alberta T1G 1Z9

Mark "CONFIDENTIAL" on the envelope

Or return completed form with copies of relevant documents to your child's school:

****You are liable for your school fees until which time you have been notified by our office with an approval notification. It is our goal to process your fee waiver within 3 weeks of the receipt date. If you have submitted a fee waiver and have not heard back with a reasonable time frame please contact our office at 403-223-3547.**