

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

May 27, 2003

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Angus McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: 2003-2004 Non-Resident Fees

ORIGINATOR: A. Habinski, Executive Director

RESOURCE  
STAFF: Ann Calverley, Mary-Ellen Deising, Dean Power, Eila Stenberg

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the following costs which form the basis for establishing the resources to be recovered as part of agreements entered into with other Alberta school jurisdictions to provide educational programs for their special needs resident students be approved:

Level	Category of Student	Total Cost*	Net Cost*
Level 5	Communication, Hearing Impaired, Strategies, Mild Mental, Disability, Literacy, Multiple & Visual Disability	9,848	4,453
Level 6	Physical, Medical, Moderate Mental Disability	10,987	5,562
Level 7	Severe Emotional/Behavioral Disability	18,730	920
Level 7	Blindness, Deafness, Multiple, Physical, Severe Mental Disability	18,730	0
Level 8	Autistic, Blindness, Deafness, Multiple, Physical, Medical or Severe Mental Disability, Woodside	26,206	6,457
All	Transportation	Cost	Cost

\* These amounts reflect the average cost and do not include the cost of additional services that are unique to individual student programming.

2. That a Non-Alberta Student Fee based on the total cost per student, plus \$500 be approved.
3. That a non-refundable International Student Application Fee of \$250 effective for 2004-2005 be approved.

4. That an increase in the Homestay Registration Fee from \$650 to \$750 for 2003-2004 be approved.

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#### Non-Resident Special Needs Students

The School Act states that a student is a resident student of the board of the district or division in which the student's parents reside. Further, each board is charged with the responsibility to ensure that each of its resident students is provided with an education program consistent with the requirements of the Act and regulations. The district's obligation, with respect to requests to accommodate non-resident students, is set out in section 45(3), which states that, a board shall enrol a resident student of the board or of another board in the school operated by the board that is requested by the parent of the student if, in the opinion of the board asked to enrol the student, there are sufficient resources and facilities available to accommodate the students.

Within the funding received from Alberta Learning for the district's resident students, the district is responsible for providing an appropriate program for these students. In most cases the program costs for students with mild, moderate and severe special needs exceed the grants that are received. Therefore, funds received for students in regular programs must be used to help fund the special needs programs. Funds received for our resident students should not be used to subsidize the programs for special needs students who are residents of another board, as would be the case if the district adopted an open door policy to all students.

Section 62(1)(b) of the School Act states that a board may, with respect to its resident students enter into an agreement with another board or person to provide education programs. This authority enables the district to consider requests from other jurisdictions to provide programming for students resident in other jurisdictions, and recover appropriate resources to offset the cost of providing the programming.

Historically the district recovered the average net cost of programming at each of the allocation levels. Over the past several years we have moved to the position where the district recovers the full cost of programming for non-resident students. Under arrangement with Alberta Learning, the funding applicable to the identified non-resident students is redirected back to the student's home jurisdiction. The calculated total program cost per student (Appendix I) is based on the 2003-2004 forecast resource allocations to schools, as well as amounts for administration and instructional support and the teacher salary enhancement envelope. Net costs (Appendix II) are still being calculated as students who were being sponsored prior to the change have been grandfathered. The actual cost of the programs for students can vary due to the specific needs of each student. The agreed upon cost should include the provision for additional charges that are unique to student programming, such as the need for additional aide time.

The total program costs that are being recommended to be recovered reflect an increase of about one per cent. This results from the impact of the proposed resource allocation to schools for the 2003-04 school year and the fact that the level 4 allocation has been decreased and while those at levels 5 through 8 have been held at last year's levels.

Fees are not being recommended at levels 2C, 3 or 4 due to the pool of funding that the district receives for Mild or Moderate and Gifted and Talented funding through the Basic Instruction Grant. Alberta Learning designates that a set amount, \$375 for 2003-2004, per student included in the Basic Instruction grant be used to support programs for students with Mild or Moderate disabilities and students who are Gifted and Talented. There are not enough students from districts outside of Edmonton who are registered in regular programs to offset the total incremental costs of all out-of-district students in Mild or Moderate or Gifted and Talented programs (up to level 6). However, there are sufficient numbers to address the incremental costs at levels 2C through 4. Therefore, the district seeks sponsorship for levels 5 and 6. Furthermore, the administration believes that it would be detrimental to our district if sponsorship were not required for levels 5 and 6 as the programs could be overloaded, making it necessary for the district to incur the cost of opening new sites.

#### Non-Alberta Student Fee

The district has received requests for programming from students who are residents of Canada but not resident in Alberta. The School Act states that these students are entitled to have access to an education. However, they are not residents of an Alberta school jurisdiction and the district can not access Alberta Learning funding. The district can recover the cost of programming from these students under the condition that the fee not exceed the cost to the board of having the individual enrolled in a school operated by the board. Currently there are four students who fit into this category.

It is proposed that the average cost per student as shown in Appendix I be the basis for a non-Alberta student fee. It is further recommended that each fee charged be increased by \$500 per student to cover the debt service and capital building costs to the district. This cost is not part of the per student allocations, therefore, is excluded from the calculations in Appendix I.

#### International Student Fee

The International Student Program offers full time academic programming in Edmonton Public Schools to international students from around the world. In May 2002, the board approved the international student fee of \$10,000 for the 2003-2004 school year. The international student fee reflects both the full cost of a senior high program including ESL instruction and support services, as well as discretionary funds beyond the costs of programming. The fee also covers expenses associated with developing and maintaining the International Student Program, for example ongoing international student recruitment, processing applications, developing and communicating information in print, electronic and audiovisual formats, providing translations of district information, and providing ongoing advice and assistance to international students and parents as well as to district staff and the community.

The program in Edmonton Public Schools continues to grow and is the largest in Alberta. This year 416 student applications were processed and 326 international students from 23 different countries have attended 51 district schools. The revenues generated by the program in the 2002-2003 school year, while not yet finalized, are estimated to be approximately \$2.4 million dollars.

An increase in the international student fee for the 2004-2005 school year is not currently recommended. The fee has just been increased from \$9000 to \$10,000 for the upcoming school year, and the administration believes that a further increase in the fee for the 2004-2005 school year is likely to result in the loss of international students to other districts in or adjacent to Edmonton, offering lower, more attractive fees for the same or very similar programming. An international student program is market-driven, and because parents and students are 'shoppers' and compare program costs, it is likely that setting a higher international student fee than all other Alberta school jurisdictions would have the negative impact of a net loss of international students to other districts, particularly Edmonton Catholic Schools and Elk Island Public Schools. Ultimately, this would have a negative financial impact on district schools with a history of serving these students. A comparison of international student fees within Alberta, and in selected school districts in other Canadian provinces is attached in Appendix III.

#### International Student Application Fee

It is recommended that a non-refundable international student application fee of \$250 effective 2004-2005 be approved. In the past, the district has not required an application fee. However, a \$100 administration fee was deducted from each tuition fee refund, to cover administrative costs. A non-refundable application fee of \$250 will more accurately offset costs associated with processing applications and utilizing courier services, and is common practise in school districts offering international student programs.

#### Homestay Registration Fee

Trustees are asked to approve a recommendation for an increase in the district's Homestay Registration Fee from \$650 to \$750, for the 2003-2004 school year. The Homestay Program is available to allow international students to reside with Edmonton families while studying in district schools and the monthly Homestay fee of \$700 is paid directly by the student's family to the Homestay family. International students pay the one-time Homestay registration fee to the district prior to placement, to cover staff costs associated with operating the program. This includes screening and interviewing local families, reviewing student Homestay applications, matching students and families, monitoring placements, and liaising between students and families, to address issues. Increasing the Homestay registration fee for the upcoming year will ensure that costs associated with making the Homestay Program available are borne by students and families who utilize the program.

EES/ees

APPENDIX I - 2003-2004 Total Program Costs

APPENDIX II - 2003-2004 Net Program Costs

APPENDIX III - Comparison of International Student Fees