

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

September 27, 2011

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Trustee L. Cleary, Chair, Planning and Policy Committee
Trustee M. Janz, Planning and Policy Committee
Trustee C. Ripley, Planning and Policy Committee

SUBJECT: Board Policy Review – INB.BP Instructional Fees

ORIGINATOR: T. Parker, Assistant Superintendent

RESOURCE
STAFF: Bob Morter, Carol Symons

RECOMMENDATION

That revised Board Policy INB.BP - Instructional Fees as amended be considered for the third time and approved.

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Background

The policy School Assessed Fees INB.BP first came into effect in 1996. This review of the policy arose not through any specific concerns with the policy, but rather that it was past due for review. The intention of the policy in the original form was and remains to ensure that students are not charged for instruction.

Rationale

The intention of the change to this policy is to remove possible confusion that may arise. The *School Act* has always provided for fees to be charged for specific materials. The existing policy could be interpreted to prohibit all fees as it states that education should be at “no direct cost to parents.” This belief would conflict with a number of other board policies which explicitly allow for charges to parents including such areas as student transportation and the provision of a lunch program.

The revised policy is intended to more accurately reflect the provisions of the *School Act* which allows for the imposition of fees in a limited set of circumstances.

The draft policy was available for feedback from the public on the District Web Survey from April 4 to May 9, 2011. Twenty-nine responses were received. The majority of the responses were very positive; some felt the policy did not adequately protect families from the implementation of fees, feeling that the policy represents the “slippery slope” of families paying greater fees for all courses. Concerns were also raised about circumstances where families were unable to pay fees.

Two changes were made to the draft policy in response to the public input.

The first change was the addition of the word “minimal”, to clearly demonstrate the intention of the Board that fees should be limited in scope. The second was the addition of a direct reference to the *School Act* as the authority that allows for fees to be charged for materials.

In summary, the Board Policy, Instructional Fees, as written reflects the Board’s desire to ensure that public education remains available to all students and families regardless of economic means.

TP:ts

APPENDIX I Board Policy INB – Instructional Fees

Edmonton Public Schools Board Policies and Regulations

CODE: INB.BP

TOPIC: ~~School Assessed~~ Instructional Fees

EFFECTIVE DATE:

ISSUE DATE:

REVIEW DATE:

Schools shall not charge fees for instruction but may charge minimal fees with respect to instructional supplies or materials in accordance with the *School Act*.

Reference(s):

[INB.AR](#) - School Assessed Fees

[School Act Section 60.2.j – Power of boards](#)
