

Subject: Contribution of Resources by Parents
Effective: September 1, 1999
Revised: July 1, 2001

1.0 PURPOSE

The Province of New Brunswick provides a system of free schooling, until graduation, for all New Brunswick youth between the ages of 5 and 20 inclusive, ensuring equitable learning opportunities to every New Brunswick person of school age. The school system, however, relies on the contributions of parents and the community in order to be able to provide those extra activities that are not fundamental to the educational process, but which enrich and add enjoyment to the schooling experience of our young people.

This policy will

- a) differentiate between the goods and services considered to fall within the scope of "free school privileges" and those that are considered supplemental;
- b) provide guidance to the schools and school districts as to how, for what purposes, and under what conditions they may legitimately request money or other resources from parents without jeopardizing the principles of equity and free schooling;
- c) provide guidance to the schools and school districts as to how, for what purposes, and under what conditions they may request parents, students and teachers to participate in fundraising activities on behalf of the school system; and,
- d) enhance parents' understanding of which goods and services are considered to be outside the scope of "free school privileges" and ensure that parents do not suffer financial or emotional hardship as a result of school-related requests for money, materials or fundraising participation.

2.0 APPLICATION

This policy applies to the schools and school districts within the New Brunswick public school system. It does not apply to the activities of groups or organizations who choose, on a voluntary basis, to raise or contribute funds for the benefit of the public schools.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Additional learning opportunities are activities that supplement the prescribed educational program provided by the Minister, including co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Co-curricular activities are organized by the teaching staff to help achieve one or more curriculum objectives using, or extending into instructional time. Examples include science fairs, career expos, academic leagues, drama festivals, student leadership forums, cross-cultural events, field trips, and music festivals.

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Extra-curricular activities are those endorsed by the school, organized for students by persons who may or may not be employed by the school, may or may not contribute to curriculum objectives, and normally are conducted outside the instructional day. Examples include interscholastic sports, travel excursions, recreational trips, winter carnivals, and school dances.

Free school privileges are those programs, goods and services that are fundamental to a pupil's education. Each pupil will be provided, free of charge, with instruction in an education program designed to meet his or her completion or graduation requirements, and with those educational resource materials necessary for participation in the educational program.

Student's personal use means the personal and exclusive use of an item or materials by a student who retains ownership of the item or materials until consumed by that student or removed from the school by that student.

4.0 LEGAL AUTHORITY

Sections 3, 8 and 46 of the *Education Act*, and sections 9, 10, and 15 to 19 of the *School Administration Regulation* under the *Education Act*.

5.0 GOALS / PRINCIPLES

- The *Education Act* states that, "the Minister shall provide free school privileges under this Act for every person who is of school age, who has not graduated from high school, and who is a resident of the Province." Each pupil is entitled to free school privileges.
- There are many activities organized and carried out by schools and by volunteer organizations operating on behalf of the schools that are not free school privileges.
- Parents are responsible for providing school supplies, materials, clothing and equipment for the personal use or consumption of their children.
- Schools may request that parents contribute resources, in the way of time, money or materials, in order for the school to be able to offer additional learning opportunities (see DEFINITIONS) that might not otherwise be available.

6.0 REQUIREMENTS / STANDARDS

6.1 Free School Privileges

- 6.1.1 Schools shall not ask parents to raise funds, pay fees or contribute money or materials for the purpose of providing the prescribed educational program or the resource materials that fall within the scope of free school privileges, as defined above.
- 6.1.2 Textbooks for use in the prescribed educational program will be distributed free of charge. Such textbooks will remain the property of the Province and in the event that a pupil loses, destroys or mutilates such a textbook, the student's parent will

be required to pay for or replace the textbook. (See sections 15 to 19, *School Administration Regulation* under the *Education Act*)

6.2 Supplemental Goods And Services

6.2.1 Supplies, Materials, Clothing and Equipment for the Personal Use of Students

6.2.1.1 Parents and students are expected to provide:

- School supplies and equipment for the student's personal use. [Examples: pencils, notebooks, student agendas, paper, calculators, film, art supplies, rulers, safety equipment]
- Clothing for the student's personal use. [Examples: gym clothes, running shoes]
- Musical instruments or instrument attachments, in those circumstances where such is required for a student's personal use.

6.2.1.2 In accordance with section 6.5 of this policy, schools must recognize and make every attempt to minimize the financial impact felt by parents as a result of providing school supplies, materials, clothing and equipment. [This may include making arrangements with parents to provide certain school supplies, as appropriate, in increments over the course of the school year, and considering how the most efficient use can be made of school supplies.]

6.2.2 Contributions for Additional Learning Opportunities

Parental participation in fundraising activities, and the contribution of money by parents in support of additional learning opportunities, are voluntary.

6.2.3 In circumstances where it will be either easier for parents or will result in cost-savings for parents, schools are to request that parents contribute money towards the school's bulk purchase of those items that parents would otherwise be expected to provide [as listed in section 6.2.1.1 above]. In such circumstances,

- the school supplies, materials, clothing or musical instruments are to be provided at cost and for the students' personal use; and,
- parents who prefer to provide the requested school supplies, materials, clothing or musical equipment rather than contribute to a bulk purchase are to be given the opportunity to do so, at the request of the parent.

6.3 Procedures

6.3.1 Monitoring of Parental Contributions

6.3.1.1 School principals, in consultation with the parent school support committee, must ensure that the total amount of money being requested of parents in a given school year (in terms of the combined cost of school supplies, materials, clothing, equipment and contributions in support of additional learning opportunities) is reasonable.

6.3.1.2 School principals, in consultation with the parent school support committee, must ensure that:

- the number of fundraising projects involving parents, students and/or teachers is reasonable and does not present hardship for those involved; and,
- whenever practicable, fundraising activities are coordinated with those of neighboring schools and school-related volunteer organizations to avoid conflicts or excessive burden on parents and the community.

6.4 Accountability

6.4.1 School principals must ensure that they and other persons handling funds within the school are following appropriate administrative and accounting processes in regards to the administration of school revenues and expenditures, including monetary contributions received from parents and money raised through fundraising activities organized by the school (see [Policy 133 – School Raised Funds](#)).

6.4.2 School principals will provide, to the parent school support committee as part of the school performance report, a financial report respecting the monetary contributions received from parents and money raised through fundraising activities organized by the school, and respecting how this money is spent.

6.5 Financial Hardship

6.5.1 All cases where there is an inability or unwillingness to contribute money must be handled with the utmost discretion to avoid any embarrassment on the part of the student and his or her parent.

6.5.2 A student will not be denied full participation in an educational program or co-curricular activity due to an inability to contribute financially.

6.5.3 Parents and students must not, under any circumstance, be unduly pressured to contribute money for the purpose of providing additional learning opportunities, or to participate in fundraising activities.

- 6.5.4 Whenever practicable, school principals shall exercise flexibility in the method by which parents may make contributions so as to reduce hardship on the parents.

6.6 Communication with Parents

- 6.6.1 Each time that parents and/or students are asked to pay fees, contribute money or participate in a fundraising activity, they must be informed as to how the money being raised will be used.
- 6.6.2 School principals must ensure that parents are aware that contributions of money and participation in fundraising activities are voluntary, and of the provisions of this policy dealing with financial hardship.

7.0 GUIDELINES / RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Subject to the other provisions of this policy, schools may make appropriate goods and services available, for purchase or rental, to parents, students, teachers or members of the community. [Examples: yearbooks, school rings, school t-shirts and jackets, school photographs, food products, rental of musical instruments]
- 7.2 Schools may request that a parent contribute either the raw materials or money towards the purchase of the raw materials used in student projects, where it is intended that the student take the completed item home for personal use or as a gift. For example, schools may ask parents to either provide or pay for the materials used for projects in technology education, art courses, or industrial education courses.
- 7.3 Schools may ask parents to raise funds or contribute money towards recovering the additional costs (i.e., transportation, admission fees, accommodations, meals, etc.) associated with co-curricular activities, including fields trips and other special events such as concerts and theatrical presentations. Requests for contributions associated with co-curricular activities are subject to the provisions of this policy respecting financial hardship (see section 6.3).
- 7.4 Schools may ask parents to raise funds, contribute money or pay fees for goods and services relating to extra-curricular activities, including student council activities, extra-curricular sports, school bands and choirs, and special interest clubs.

8.0 DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL POLICYMAKING

School districts may establish policy with respect to parental contributions and fundraising activities that are consistent with the principles of this policy. School district policies may be more restrictive than this policy with respect to fundraising activities and/or the practice of requesting parental contributions.

9.0 REFERENCES

None

10.0 CONTACTS FOR MORE INFORMATION

Department of Education – Policy and Planning Branch
(506) 453-3090

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