



Memorandum

Date: May 22, 2020
To: Board of Education
From: Ryan Stierman, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO

Action Item: Fee Refunds

1.0 ISSUE STATEMENT

The Government of British Columbia has released its BC K-12 Education Restart Plan. As part of the Plan, the Province announced five potential stages that school districts can be under during the COVID-19 Pandemic:

- Stage 5 - Suspend all in-class instruction for all grades and students. Remote and online learning for all students;
- Stage 4 - Current stage - In-class learning for children of essential service workers and vulnerable students. Remote and online learning continues for most students;
- Stage 3 - In-class learning for students in kindergarten to Grade 5 on a part-time basis. Access to in-class learning as needed for grades 6 to 12 on a part-time basis. Remote and online learning continues to be available for students;
- Stage 2 - In-class learning for all students in elementary school (K to 7) on a full-time basis. In-class learning for secondary students (grades 8 to 12) on a part-time basis. Remote and online learning continues to be available for secondary students, and;
- Stage 1 - return to full in-class instruction.

The Provincial Government has set June 1, 2020 as the target date to move to a Stage 3 service level.

In light of the announcement, staff now has certainty on the remainder of the school year and has developed a fair and equitable refund strategy.

2.0 RELEVANT BOARD MOTION/DIRECTION

None.

3.0 BACKGROUND

Staff are proposing the following framework to refund the various types of fees:

i. Standard Fees (Optional School Supply, Cultural, Student Activity Fees)

- a. **School Supply Fee (\$35/student)** – this fee will not be refunded as all supplies have been purchased and distributed to students.

- b. **Cultural Fee (\$10/student)** – this fee will not be refunded as most have been fully expended and any remaining funds will be held at the school level to support cultural events for students in the 2020/21 school year.
- c. **Student Activity Fee (\$30/student)** – this fee will not be refunded as most have been fully expended and any remaining funds will be held at the school level to support cultural and leadership activities, field study transportation and athletic equipment for students in the 2020/21 school year.
- ii. **Academy Fees** – parents will be refunded a portion of academy fees based on how much of the fees have been collected, less the amount that will have been expended by the academy program in the 2019/20 school year.
- iii. **Goods and Services Fees** – These fees vary by school depending upon the offerings. These include but are not limited to yearbooks, uniforms, field studies, and musical instrument rental and graduation ceremonies. Parents will be refunded a portion of these fees based on how much of the fees have been collected, less the amount of goods and services that the student will have been provided for the 2019/20 school year.
- iv. **Field Studies** – Parents will be provided refunds for any field studies that are cancelled, less the costs incurred as a result of the cancellation. District staff are working with travel and insurance providers to ensure parents receive as much funds back as possible.

4.0 OPTIONS FOR ACTION

1. Approve the proposed framework fee refunds as outlined above.
2. Request additional information.
3. Make changes to the proposed framework.

5.0 FOLLOW-UP

Upon Board approval, the Secretary-Treasurer/CFO will communicate to Principals/Vice-Principals to process fee refunds as outlined above.

6.0 SECRETARY–TREASURER/CFO COMMENTS

With increased certainty as to how the remainder of the school year will be proceeding, District staff are recommending this framework in order to refund parents in a fair and equitable manner. Due to the volume of the potential refunds, District staff would ask for patience while it processes the return of funds as soon as possible. Refunds will be made by cheque if fees were paid by cash or cheque and will be refunded directly to credit cards if they were paid online.

7.0 STAFF RECOMMENDATION

THAT: The Board of Education directs staff to process refunds per the proposed framework.