

Preston School District #201
Public Hearing Notice
Proposal to Adjust Fees for Non-Full-Time Students

The Preston School District is holding this public hearing to provide information and receive community feedback regarding a proposed adjustment to the fees for non-full-time students.

As our student enrollment has diversified, more families have chosen part-time enrollment options. While we support this flexibility, it creates a significant funding gap. Idaho's school funding model is based on Average Daily Attendance (ADA), which provides funding only for full-time students. The district receives no state reimbursement for part-time students, despite the fact that they still use school staff, facilities, materials, and participate in extracurricular programs.

To address this funding imbalance fairly and sustainably, the district is proposing to increase the existing part-time student fee by five times the current base rate.

Full-Time Enrollment Defined:

- Secondary Students (Grades 6–12): Must be enrolled in at least 5 class periods per day.
- Elementary Students (Grades K–5): Must receive a minimum of 4 hours of instruction per day.

Students not meeting these thresholds would be classified as non-full-time and subject to the new fee structure.

Use of Additional Fee Revenue:

The original base fee will still go to the student's school to support basic operational needs. The additional fee will go to the district office and be used to:

- Offset the cost of providing instruction, staffing, and materials for part-time students;
- Support facility maintenance and utilities used by all students;
- Fund transportation for student participation in school-sponsored events, including athletics, academic competitions, and field trips.

SEE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS BELOW

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):

Why is this change necessary?

Idaho does not provide state funding for students enrolled part-time. These students still use school services, but the cost is currently being covered by general funds meant for full-time students. This proposal ensures more equitable funding.

Why five times the current base fee?

This amount helps offset the real cost of staffing, instructional time, facilities, and transportation for part-time students. It aligns with rates used in other nearby districts and reflects actual district subsidy costs.

Does this affect homeschool or online learners?

Only if those students are accessing Preston School District teachers, classrooms, or extracurricular programs and are not enrolled full-time by the above definitions.

Will this affect dual enrollment students?

Yes. If a dual-enrolled student does not meet the full-time enrollment threshold at Preston School District, they would be considered part-time and subject to the new fee.

What services are funded by this additional fee?

The fee will help pay for staffing, instructional materials, classroom use, technology, and transportation for participation in athletics, clubs, and school events.

Can families apply for a waiver?

Yes. As required by Idaho Code §33-603, fee waivers will be available for families demonstrating financial hardship.

Is this legal under Idaho law?

Yes. State law allows districts to charge for optional services and for part-time use of public education resources, as long as required instruction remains free and hardship waivers are provided.

Will the new fee apply to students taking only one or two elective courses?

Yes. If a student is not enrolled full-time as defined, they will be considered part-time regardless of the course type.

How will the district determine who is part-time?

Enrollment will be reviewed by building administrators and district staff at the start of each term. Students not meeting full-time criteria will be notified and assessed accordingly.

Will this change reduce opportunities for part-time students?

No. The goal is to maintain access and opportunity while ensuring financial responsibility. Part-time students are still welcome to participate in programs if they contribute fairly to their cost.