

Waiver of Student Fees

The Superintendent will recommend to the Board a schedule of fees, if any, to be charged students for the use of textbooks, consumable materials, extracurricular activities, and other school student fees. Students must also pay for the loss of or damage to school books or other school-owned materials.

Fees for textbooks, other instructional materials, and driver education, as well as fees and fines for the loss of school property are waived for students who meet the eligibility criteria for waiver as described in this policy. In order that no student is denied educational services or academic credit due to the inability of parents/guardians to pay student fees and fines, the Superintendent will recommend to the Board which additional fees and fines, if any, the District will waive for students who meet the eligibility criteria for waiver. Students receiving a waiver are not exempt from charges for damaged books, locks, materials, supplies, and equipment.

Notification

The Superintendent shall ensure that notice of waiver availability is given to parents/guardians with every bill for fees and/or fines, and that applications for waivers are widely available and distributed according to State law and Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) rule and that provisions for assisting parents/guardians in completing the application are available.

Eligibility Criteria

A student shall be eligible for a fee and fine waiver when:

- (1) The student currently lives in a household that meets the income guidelines, with the same limits based on household size, that are used for the federal free meals program;
- (2) The student's parents/guardians are veterans or active-duty military personnel with income at or below 200% of the federal poverty line; or
- (3) The student is homeless, as defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. §11434a).

The Superintendent or designee will give additional consideration when one or more of the following factors are present:

- Illness in the family;
- Unusual expenses such as fire, flood, storm damage, etc.;
- Unemployment;
- Emergency situations;
- When one or more of the parents/guardians are involved in a work stoppage.

Verification

The Superintendent or designee shall establish a process for determining a student's eligibility for a waiver of fees and fines in accordance with State law requirements. The District will follow the verification requirements of the federal free meals program for a waiver based on a student's eligibility under the federal free meals program. Where a student is not eligible for a waiver under the federal free meals program, but eligible because the student's parents are veterans or active-duty military personnel with income at or below 200% of the federal poverty line, the District shall

use a waiver process that is completely independent of the student's application for, eligibility for, or participation in the federal free meals program using Exhibit 4.410-E1, *Application for Fee Waiver*. In such case, the Superintendent or designee may require family income verification at the time an individual applies for a fee waiver and anytime thereafter but not more often than once per school year. The Superintendent or designee shall not use any information from this independent verification process to determine free or reduced-price meal eligibility. If a student receiving a waiver is found to be no longer eligible during the school year, the Superintendent or designee shall notify the student's parent/guardian and charge the student a prorated amount based upon the number of school days remaining in the school year.

Determination and Appeal

Within 30 calendar days after receipt of a waiver request, the Superintendent or designee shall mail a notice to the parents/guardian whenever a waiver request is denied.

The denial notice shall include:

- (1) the reason for the denial,
- (2) the process and timelines for making an appeal, and
- (3) a statement that the parent/guardian may reapply for a waiver any time during the school year if circumstances change.

If the denial is appealed, the District shall follow the procedures for the resolution of appeals as provided in the ISBE rule on waiver of fees.

LEGAL REF.: 42 U.S.C §1134a, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
105 ILCS 5/10-20.13, 5/10-22.25, and 5/27-815.
23 Ill. Admin. Code §1.245 [*may contain unenforceable provisions*].

CROSS REF.: 4.130 (Free and Reduced-Price Food Services), 6.140 (Education of Homeless Children)