

1. PURPOSE

The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* provides for the provision of free instruction in the standard curriculum program, and empowers school councils to raise funds and charge for goods and services used in the course of instruction.

This policy covers payments for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions that Northern Bay P-12 College can request and the parameters, terms and conditions within which these requests are made.

2. BROAD GUIDELINES

Northern Bay P-12 College Council endeavours to keep charges to families to a minimum and has implemented a range of strategies to assist parents to meet the costs associated with schooling.

Northern Bay P-12 College Council can request payments from parents for student materials and services charges, and for voluntary financial contributions. These payments fall into three categories:

2.1 Essential education items -These are items which parents/guardians pay the school to provide or may provide themselves, if appropriate. These items are essential to support instruction in the standard curriculum program and include:

- 2.1.1. materials that the individual student takes possession of, such as text books and student stationery
- 2.1.2. materials for learning and teaching where the student consumes or takes possession of the finished articles (e.g. home economics, photography, catering)
- 2.1.3. school uniform (where applicable)
- 2.1.4. activities associated with, but not part of instruction in the standard curriculum program, such as costs associated with camps and excursions which all students are expected to attend (e.g. transport and entrance costs).

Note: If parents/guardians choose to provide equivalent materials themselves, this should be done in consultation with the school, and items should meet the specifications provided by the school. However, there are some items (e.g. food provisions for home economics) which, due to their nature, can only be provided by the school.

2.2 Optional extras -These are items provided in addition to the standard curriculum program, and are offered to all students. They are provided on a user-pays basis and if parents/guardians choose to access them for students, they will be required to pay for them. These items include:

- 2.2.1 instructional support material, resources and administration in addition to the standard curriculum program (e.g. student computer printing for personal use)
- 2.2.2 extra-curricular programs or activities offered in addition to the standard curriculum program (e.g. instrumental music)
- 2.2.3 school-based performances, productions and events
- 2.2.4 materials for subjects where the payment sought is the difference between the basic materials/services required for access to the standard curriculum program and higher cost alternatives which may be more desirable (e.g. the use of more expensive materials)
- 2.2.5 materials and services offered in addition to the standard curriculum program (e.g. school magazines)
- 2.2.6 school facilities and equipment not associated with providing the standard curriculum program, and not otherwise provided for through the SRP (e.g. student accident insurance, and hire or lease of equipment such as musical instruments).

2.3 Voluntary financial contributions - Parents/guardians, or anyone else, can be invited to make a donation to the school for the following purposes:

- 2.3.1 contributions to a building trust fund or contributions to a library trust fund (these trust funds are approved by the Australian Taxation Office and are tax deductible)
- 2.3.2 contributions for a specific purpose identified by the school (e.g. equipment, materials or services) in addition to those funded through the SRP. This may include additional computers or student-related services
- 2.3.3 general voluntary financial contributions or donations to the school.

NORTHERN BAY P-12 COLLEGE PARENT PAYMENT POLICY

3. IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1.** School council seeks to supplement Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) resources with a variety of locally raised funds, including subject charges for Essential Education items, Optional Extras and Voluntary Levies.
- 3.2.** Charges and levies will be consistent with DEECD policy and most recent DEECD directive.
- 3.3.** Students will be charged for Essential Education items used to provide the standard curriculum program (e.g. text books, consumable items such as ingredients for Food Technology, art and technology, etc.) or as a service charge (e.g. bus fares, locker hire, etc.)
- 3.4.** Parents may choose to either provide (where practical) or pay the school to provide the Essential Education items. If parents and guardians choose to provide equivalent materials, this should be done in consultation with the school and items should meet the specifications provided by the school. However, some items (e.g. food provisions for home economics) due to their nature can only be provided by the school.
- 3.5.** Optional extras (such as school magazine and non-essential materials and services) are provided on a user pays basis and if parents choose to access them for students, they will be required to pay for them.
- 3.6.** All communication with parents will be in accordance with DEECD policy and advice.
- 3.7.** Parents will receive information each year outlining into which category charges fall – i.e. Essential, Optional of Voluntary.
- 3.8.** The purpose and amount for school charges will be decided by School Council and communicated to parents a minimum of 6 weeks prior to the end of the school year to allow parents sufficient planning time for the following school year.
- 3.9.** Students will not be denied access to a particular subject due to their inability to meet the charges or levies. However, unless the relevant subject charge is paid the student may not be provided with the higher cost materials or services relating to that subject.
- 3.10.** In 2015 due to the Education Maintenance Allowance being discontinued extra funding has been allocated directly to schools. Northern Bay College Council has approved for this extra funding to be directed to assist families in the following way:
 - 3.10.1.** All students will receive a \$60 excursion subsidy allowing for full participation.
 - 3.10.2.** Families and/or students who hold a pension card or income tested Health Care Card (with the student's name listed on the card) valid on 27th January 2015 will be eligible for a \$100 credit against their Requisites and/or Subject Contributions.
- 3.11.** The college will ensure that opportunities are available for all families experiencing financial difficulties to enter into alternative payment options through contact with the Campus Principal, College Business Manager or Learning Partner.
- 3.12.** Students wishing to participate in extra curricula activities such as camps, trips, dinners, etc, must meet the full cost of the activity and be up to date with all payments, including charges for Essential Educational items, before the student participates.
- 3.13.** In addition to school charges for essential and optional items, the School Council may also seek voluntary levies/contributions.
- 3.14.** Any unpaid voluntary levies will be written off at the parent's request or when the levy is outstanding in the middle of the year.
- 3.15.** Unpaid subject charges for Essential Education items will be carried forward to the following year.

4. EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the college's three year review cycle.

Document #	Committee Responsible	Review Date	Public Location	Ratified by School Council: 15/10/14
NBC003	Finance			
	Related document			