

POLICY - Parent Payment and Voluntary Financial Contributions

Rationale/Purpose

Locally raised funds add significantly to the school's ability to provide a diverse and high quality curriculum

Aims:

- To provide a diverse range of high quality learning opportunities for all students.
- School Council aims to supplement Department of Education and Early Childhood Development resources with a variety of locally raised funds, including charging Parent Payments.
- To provide educational support to families experiencing financial hardship.

Guidelines:

- In the November meeting of school council, the Principal, after consulting with subject coordinators and other relevant staff members will make recommendations to school council via the finance sub-committee regarding proposed parent payments for student materials and voluntary contributions for the following year.
- School council will only consider submissions for parent payments consistent with the 'Parent Payments in Victorian Government Schools' document located on the SPAG. Once endorsed the amounts will be communicated to parents as part of the school's booklist & charges during Nov and Dec of each year.
- Any charge must not exceed the cost of providing materials or services to students.
- Students must not be denied access to a particular subject due to their inability to contribute to the relevant student materials and voluntary contributions. However, unless the relevant subject levy is paid the student may not be provided with the higher cost materials or services relating to that subject.
- The provision of student reports cannot be conditional upon the payment of a student materials and voluntary contribution levy.
- Items made by students during subjects for whom the parents have contributed financially become the property of the student.
- Where a parent pays a levy for a specific purpose, the school may not use the funds for any other purpose without the consent of parents.
- As with all parent payments to the school, school council will provide opportunities for any parents experiencing financial difficulties to enter into alternative and confidential payment arrangement with the Principal in line with School Council endorsed protocols.
- In addition to a school student materials charge, school council may also seek voluntary contributions using the same process and timeline as the materials charge.

Implementation:

- Once the amount for the student materials and voluntary contribution charge has been endorsed by school council, parents should be informed of this a minimum of six weeks prior to the end of the school year and subsequently towards the end of the school year.
- Prior to the end of the year, parents will be given a booklist detailing the cost of items to be included in the book box which forms part of the student materials charge, and informed of their option to purchase these materials independently of the school. The cost of these items will be deducted from the remaining student materials charge.
- A 5% discount will be offered to parents who choose to pay the amount for the following year in full prior to the end of that school year with the book box to be distributed in the following year.
- Parents will be required to notify the school prior to the end of the current year if they would like to purchase a book box from the school or whether they will be purchasing the required items themselves and then paying the remaining student materials charge.
- For parents experiencing difficulty in paying, parents will be notified of options including the use of State School Relief, welfare agencies or through payment plans at the school
- Parents wanting to purchase a book box through an agreed payment plan will need to discuss this with the Principal prior to the book box being distributed.
- The school may request parents pay the voluntary contribution when paying the student materials charge and may send one reminder as per DEECD guidelines.

Evaluation:

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

Evaluation: In accordance with Department Guidelines

References: DEECD – SPAG

Ratified: March 2015

To be Reviewed: February 2016