



# PARENT'S CONTRIBUTIONS

Every spring, governing boards (GBs) must approve the list of school supplies that parents are billed for and of the items that the students' parents must buy. Here are some of the principles that GBs should apply in approving the list.

## WHAT THE EDUCATION ACT HAS TO SAY

7. Students...have a right to the free use of textbooks and other instructional material required for the teaching of programs of studies until the last day of the school calendar of the school year in which they reach 18 years of age....Each student shall have the personal use of the textbook chosen pursuant to section 96.15 for each compulsory and elective subject in which the student receives instruction.

The right of free use does not extend to documents in which students write, draw or cut out.

Instructional material does not include pencils, paper and other objects of a like nature.

## THE PRINCIPLES THAT SHOULD APPLY

- Take the school board policy into account.
- In every decision about costs assumed by parents, aim for the lowest possible price.
- In all communication with parents about these costs, strive for clarity and transparency, especially concerning whether or not these costs are mandatory.
- Try to keep the cost of activities within the same school in the same range, apart from the costs for special projects.
- Be particularly careful about quantities per item.
- Make sure requested material is really needed.
- Have measures for making it easier for parents to pay (e.g. instalments, support from the school foundation, financial assistance organizations).

## THE FOLLOWING MUST BE PROVIDED FREE OF CHARGE

### Goods

- Textbooks
- Instructional material:
  - Dictionaries
  - Novels
  - Musical instruments
  - Laboratory equipment or material required for practical exercises
  - Compulsory items required by a given program of studies (e.g. graphing calculator)
  - Photocopies that replace textbooks
  - Music sheets

### Services

- Instruction and other services offered by the school under the Basic School Regulation (e.g. remedial work)
- Compulsory educational outings
- Normal maintenance of musical instruments
- Official retakes of examinations

## FEES COULD BE CHARGED FOR THE FOLLOWING:

### Goods

- Documents in which students write, draw or cut out
- Pencils, paper and other objects of a like nature
- Information storage material (e.g. USB key)
- Items that cannot be used by more than one student for reasons of health or hygiene (e.g. recorders, mouthpieces for certain wind instruments, headphones)
- Uniforms
- Photocopies that replace textbooks

### Services

- Optional educational outings. Students who do not participate must be offered some other educational service by the school.
- Noon-hour supervision and transportation (not in the context of the school childcare service)
- Cultural, social, sports, scientific or community activities outside class time (e.g. extracurricular activities)
- Meal services
- In the context of a special project, opening of a student file, student registration, or admission tests, when the special project is geared towards the development of personal skills (sports, artistic or other).

## SPECIAL CASES

**BRANDS AND SUPPLIERS:** Parents cannot be obliged to purchase specific brands or from specific suppliers. However, these brands or suppliers may be recommended provided explanations are given as to why (e.g. best price-quality ratio).

**REBATES:** In cases where a supplier (photographer, bookstore) gives the school a rebate for purchases by parents, the school principal advises the GB with a view to determining how the rebates will be used.

## IDEAS, TIPS AND BEST PRACTICES

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:** Establish a financial assistance mechanism for less privileged families, either with help from the school foundation or a local community organization, and provide this information to the parents.

**REUSE AND RECYCLE:** Collect the items that students want to throw out, have a cleaning bee and give the items away for free or sell them at slashed prices. Always encourage the parents to reuse last year's material if it is still in good condition.

**PURCHASING GROUPS:** Look into forming a purchasing group for common items on the list.

**TABLE OF RESPECTIVE ROLES**

OBJECTS	SCHOOL BOARD	SCHOOL PRINCIPAL	GOVERNING BOARD
	Adopt a policy on the financial contributions that may be made for the documents and objects mentioned in the second and third paragraphs of section 7 (section 212.1)	Ensure that the information is conveyed to the school staff.	In all the decisions it makes concerning the various fees required of parents, take into account the school board's policy concerning the financial contribution of parents.
List of pencils, paper and other objects of a like nature		Propose the list submitted by the teachers (section 96.15).	On the principal's proposal, approve the list of the objects mentioned in the third paragraph of section 7 (pencils, paper and other objects of a like nature (section 77.1).
Documents in which students, write, draw or cut out		Propose the principles for determining the cost of documents (section 96.15).	Based on the principal's proposal, establish the principles for determining the cost of the documents (section 77.1).
Textbooks and instructional material		Approve the textbooks and instructional material required for the teaching of programs of studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On proposal by the teachers</li> <li>- Taking into account the above principles established by the GB</li> <li>- After consulting the GB (section 96.15).</li> </ul>	Is consulted on the choice of textbooks and instructional material (section 77.1).