



## REGISTER OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

### SCHOOL AND CONTINUING EDUCATION FEES POLICY

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*Note the addenda are for reference and administrative purposes. Addenda are subject to updates and modifications without consultation.*

## 1. **Introduction**

The Lester B. Pearson School Board is dedicated to providing a wide range of services and educational opportunities for its students.

According to the Education Act, as part of its general function, the school board shall adopt a policy on fees that may be charged for: the documents in which students write, material for the student's personal use, material to which the right to free use does not apply as per the regulation of the Minister<sup>1</sup>, lunch hour supervision<sup>2</sup>, and for the cost of transportation. In addition, schools may also provide services over and above those prescribed by the Basic School Regulation, which may require a payment of fees by the users.

The board is committed to promote accessibility to the educational services provided for in the Education Act and prescribed by the Basic School Regulation established by the Ministry, while respecting the responsibilities and powers of the governing board.

## 2. **Objective**

*Every resident of Quebec, who is between the ages of 4 and 18, or between the ages 4 and 21 in the case of a handicapped person, is entitled to receive, free of charge, the educational services provided under the Education Act and prescribed by the Basic School Regulation.*

*The right to free educational services also extends to vocational training, however students 18 years of age or older, or 21 years of age or older in the case of a handicapped person, are subject to the conditions prescribed by the Basic vocational training regulation.*

*Residents of Québec who are no longer subject to compulsory school attendance are entitled to free literacy services and the other learning services prescribed by the Basic adult general education regulation, subject to the conditions prescribed by this regulation.*

*Non-residents of Québec may be entitled to free educational services in certain circumstances.*

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to the *Regulation respecting free instructional material and certain financial contributions that may be required* (Addendum B)

<sup>2</sup> Refer to the LBPSB Policy on School Daycare and Lunch Program Services

This policy aims to ensure that there is a common understanding and interpretation of the principle of free education<sup>3</sup>, what must be provided free of charge and what fees may be required of parents.

The policy describes the principles that must be taken into account before fees are charged, and the responsibilities of the school board, principals, governing board, parents and students in relation to school fees.

The policy also provides useful guidelines to assist schools in setting these fees.

### **3. Principles**

School boards and governing boards may only charge a fee in order to cover costs of certain materials and services. The following basic principles must be adhered to when establishing school fees:

- A required contribution may not exceed the actual cost of the good or service in question. The actual cost includes taxes and excludes tax rebates. Proposals concerning required contributions must be justified in terms of the nature and amount of the fee required;
- Every effort should be made to keep school fees at a minimum;
- Every financial contribution required for a service, activity or material which can be charged must be the subject of a clear and detailed invoice. Where a voluntary contribution or a donation is requested, no amount related to it may be included in the total indicated on the invoice and additional charges over and above the required fees must be clearly communicated to parents as being optional;
- Fees may not be charged to cover the salary of personnel to provide regular ongoing additional services during the students' instructional timetable but fees can be charged to cover coordination services specifically provided for special projects or to cover the cost of hiring a substitute if the teacher needs to be replaced for an activity outside the school<sup>4</sup>;
- Students shall not be denied educational services as prescribed by the Basic School Regulation based on the parents' inability to pay any associated fees;

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<sup>3</sup> Refer to Addendum C for information on free educational and administrative services, services requiring a financial contribution, free textbooks and instructional materials and materials to which the right to free materials does not apply.

<sup>4</sup> Refer to LBPSB Extra-curricular activities and Field Trip Policy

- In cases where fees are unpaid, procedures outlined in the document entitled “Recovery of Unpaid Fees” will be followed;
- No financial contribution may be required for a service, activity or material that is subject to financing provided for in the budgetary rules determined by the Minister, such as paper tissues and other items required to be supplied for health or hygiene reasons. Such financing must be deducted from the amount of the financial contribution required where it covers part of the expenses incurred;
- No supplier or specific brand may be imposed with reference to material for a student’s personal use, other than activity or exercise books.

#### **4. Provisions for Imposing School Fees in the Youth Sector**

##### **4.1 Instructional Material**

Textbooks and instructional materials required for teaching must be provided free of charge. Instructional materials are those objects needed to meet the objectives of the programs of study (including laboratory equipment, physical education equipment, art supplies and technological devices).

The Education Act provides two exceptions to this right, thereby allowing school boards to charge fees for:

- Documents in which the student writes, draws or cuts, and which the student cannot reuse;
- Material for personal use, except documents and material specified by regulation of the Minister and to the extent and on the conditions provided in the regulation.

“Material for personal use” includes school supplies, such as pencils, erasers and day planners, material for personal organization, such as pencil cases and school bags, and clothing items, such as school uniforms and physical education clothing.

Typically, these objects are non-specialized and inexpensive objects that are used on a regular basis in schools. If an object is specialized and is required for a specific course or program, it is considered to be instructional

material and must be provided free of charge, otherwise the use of the object must be optional.

## 4.2 Fees for special school projects and certain school activities

Fees may be charged to parents for special school projects and for certain school activities.

### 4.2.1 Special school projects

A special school project is a project approved by the governing board and carried out for one or more groups of students enrolled at the elementary or secondary level among the following:

- (1) sport-study programs recognized by the Minister;
- (2) arts-study programs recognized by the Minister;
- (3) programs recognized by Baccalauréat International;
- (4) Concentration or Profile type projects, that is, those intended to meet the student's interests by activities or one or many local programs of studies and school interventions related to the field of activity specifically covered by the project.

The services provided within the scope of a special school project to which the right to free access does not apply are the following:

- (1) certification by an outside body required for the carrying out of the project;
- (2) the issue to the student of a certificate from an outside body within the scope of the project;
- (3) the school coordination required to allow the carrying out of the project;
- (4) the participation of a coach or other specialist not acting as a teacher in a study program;
- (5) the renting of a sports facility or of premises required for the carrying out of a project.

### 4.2.2. School activities

The school activities to which the right to free access does not apply are the following:

- (1) the activities conducted outside the premises of the educational institution attended by the student, including transportation to the premises of the activity;

(2) the activities conducted with the participation of a person who is not a member of the staff of the school board and similar to those referred to above.

#### 4.3 Daycare Services

At the request of the governing board, a school board must provide childcare for preschool and elementary school students, in the manner agreed to with the governing board.

Daycare budgets must be presented to governing boards for approval and fees charged separately to parents. They must be charged in accordance with the school board's School Daycare Services and Lunch Program Policy.

#### 4.4 Lunch Program

School boards must ensure supervision of students who stay at school during the lunch hour, whether or not student transportation is available. They may impose a fee for this service, but such a fee may be imposed only on those students who stay at school, and not on students who leave the school premises and return once the lunch hour period is over, in accordance with the School Board's School Daycare Services and Lunch Program Policy.

Lunch hour supervision fees must be presented to governing boards for approval and charged separately to parents. At the elementary level, they must be charged in accordance with the above-mentioned Policy. The lunch program is self-financed.

#### 4.5 Transportation Services

Student transportation must be provided by school boards free of charge before and after classes each day. As an exception, the Education Act states that where the transportation is provided under a contract with a public transit authority, the school board may claim from a student that portion of the cost of the transportation pass which corresponds to the service in addition to service before the beginning of classes and after the end of classes each day.

Transportation fees can be charged to users according to the appropriate provisions of the Education Act and the guidelines established by the school board in its Transportation Policy. These fees are approved by the Council of Commissioners and managed directly at the school board level.

## 4.6 Other Fees

A governing board may organize educational services other than those prescribed by the Basic School Regulation, including instructional services outside teaching periods during the school day or on non-school days, and may organize social, cultural or sports services. In these cases, governing boards may require a financial contribution from the users of such services.

Governing boards are also responsible for approving costs associated with field trips, athletics, extracurricular activities, and any other optional charges to parents. These costs should be separate from the consumable and activity fees.

## 5. Responsibilities

### 5.1 School Board:

- Oversees the implementation and monitoring of the policy;
- Ensures that the prescriptions and provisions of the law are respected, and more specifically, that schools and centres do not require payment of fees contrary to the law, including administrative fees;
- Provides training to principals to assist them in establishing school fees;
- Ensures that school budgets clearly include all fees charged to parents;
- Ensures that fees charged to parents reflect actual costs;
- May determine a maximum amount for the type of material or services for which fees can be requested;
- Periodically studies fees charged to parents at each school.

### 5.2 Principal:

- Prepares a proposal for governing board approval in order to allow its members to establish the principles for determining the cost of the documentation and services that are not free to students in accordance with the Education Act, the school board's School Fees Policy, and in keeping with the school budget;
- Approves, on proposal of the teachers, the textbooks and instructional materials for the teaching of programs of studies;
- Presents to the governing board, for approval, a list of supplies developed for each specific grade or class, as deemed appropriate, and all associated costs, and is prepared to explain the details;
- Presents to the governing board, for approval, the fees for daycare services and lunch hour supervision, if applicable;



- Ensures that all fees are established at the minimum level necessary to recover the actual costs;
- Allows the governing board sufficient time to study the fees prior to the adoption of the school's annual budget;
- Prepares a cover letter to accompany invoices sent home, which provides parents with a clear and itemized breakdown of what is included in the fees, along with conditions for payment.

### 5.3 Governing Board:

- Establishes the principles for determining the cost of the documentation and services that are not free for students, as proposed by the principal;
- Approves, as presented by the principal, the list of supplies developed for each specific grade or class;
- Approves, as presented by the principal, the school/consumable fees;
- Approves fees associated with lunch hour and daycare services, field trips, extracurricular activities, and any other optional charges to parents;
- Before approving any contribution proposed by the principal, takes into account the other contributions proposed as well as the ones it has already approved;
- Implements measures to facilitate access by each student to all services, activities or materials for which financial contribution is approved;
- Informs the school board of all financial contributions it approved.

### 5.4 Parents:

- Verify and pay the fees invoiced based on the conditions set forth in the principal's cover letter;
- Advise the principal and make alternate arrangements if unable to pay the fees under the conditions set forth in the cover letter.

### 5.5 Students:

- Take good care of the property placed at his/her disposal and return it at the end of the school activity/program.

## 6. Timeline

School fees are approved on an annual basis and are included in the school's annual budget, which is adopted in May or June of each year. Governing boards

must be given sufficient time to review the fees proposed by the principal before approval is required.

If, in exceptional circumstances, additional fees are charged during the school year that are not related to field trips or extracurricular activities, they must be approved by the principal and governing board.

## **7. Provisions for Fees in the Adult and Vocational Education Sector (Continuing Education)**

The basic principles of this policy apply to the Adult and Vocational Education Sector with the appropriate adaptations for each applicable situation as determined by the *Education Act*, the *Regulation respecting free instructional material and certain financial contributions that may be required*, the *Basic adult general education regulation* and the *Basic vocational training regulation*.

In general, vocational students are provided with the tools needed and are encouraged to manage and be responsible for these tools and educational materials. Depending on practices and traditions of specific trades, it could be beneficial for students to own their own tools.

In all cases of Adult or Vocational Education, the cost of the documents in which students write, material for the student's personal use, material to which the right to free use does not apply as per the regulation of the Minister may be charged.

The purchase of uniforms, boots, and items of clothing required for vocational training is the responsibility of the student. The governing boards must approve the cost of these on an annual basis.

## **Addendum A: Excerpts from the Education Act**

*Up to date as of May 5, 2020*

### *Section*

**3.** The educational services provided for by this Act and prescribed by the basic school regulation established by the Government under section 447 shall be provided free to every resident of Québec entitled thereto under section 1.

Literacy services and the other learning services prescribed by the basic school regulation for adult education shall be provided free to residents of Québec contemplated in section 2, subject to the conditions prescribed by the said regulation.

The educational services prescribed by the basic vocational training regulation shall be provided free to every resident of Québec, subject, however, to the conditions determined in the basic regulation if the person is 18 years of age or older, or 21 years of age or older in the case of a handicapped person within the meaning of the Act to secure handicapped persons in the exercise of their rights with a view to achieving social, school and workplace integration ([chapter E-20.1](#)).

The right to free educational services provided for in this section does not extend to services provided within the scope of special school projects determined by regulation of the Minister or to school activities determined by such regulation, to the extent and on the conditions provided in the regulation. However, the right to free services does extend in all cases to administrative fees such as selection, file opening and examination fees as well as staff training fees.

#### **In force: 2020-07-01**

Despite the fourth paragraph, schools may require a financial contribution for a service provided within the scope of a special school project only if they offer the choice of an educational pathway exempt from such a contribution. This paragraph does not apply to schools established under section 240.

**7.** Students other than those enrolled in adult education have a right to the free use of textbooks and other instructional material required for the implementation of programs of activities or 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, or 21 years of age in the case of handicapped persons within the meaning of the Act to secure handicapped persons in the exercise of their rights with a view to achieving social, school and workplace integration ([chapter E-20.1](#)). 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, except in the cases provided in the applicable basic regulation.

The instructional material referred to in the first paragraph includes laboratory equipment, physical education equipment, art supplies and technological devices.

The right of free use does not extend to documents in which students write, draw or cut out, nor to material for personal use, except documents and material specified by regulation of the Minister and to the extent and on the conditions provided in the regulation.

“Material for personal use” includes school supplies, such as pencils, erasers and day planners, material for personal organization, such as pencil cases and school bags, and clothing items, such as school uniforms and physical education clothing.

**77.1.** Based on the principal’s proposal, the governing board shall establish the principles for determining the cost of the documents referred to in the third paragraph of section 7. Those principles are taken into account when the choice of textbooks and instructional materials must be approved under subparagraph 3 of the first paragraph of section 96.15.

The governing board shall also approve the list, proposed by the principal, of the material for personal use referred to in the fourth paragraph of section 7. That list shall be developed in collaboration with the teachers.

The principles are established and the list is approved, taking into consideration the school service centre’s policy adopted under section 212.1 and the other financial contributions that may be claimed for services referred to in sections 256 and 292.

**96.15.** The principal is responsible for approving, on the proposal of the teachers or, in the case of matters referred to in subparagraphs 5 and 6, of the members of the staff concerned,

- (1) in accordance with the policies determined by the governing board, the local programs of studies developed to meet the special needs of students;
- (2) the criteria for the introduction of new instructional methods;
- (3) in accordance with this Act and in keeping with the school budget, the textbooks and instructional material required for the teaching of programs of studies;
- (4) the standards and procedures for the evaluation of student achievement, in particular, how parents are to be informed of the academic progress of their children, in keeping with the prescriptions of the basic school regulation and subject to the examinations that may be imposed by the Minister or the school service centre;
- (5) the rules governing the placement of students and their promotion from one cycle to the other at the elementary level, subject to the rules prescribed by the basic school regulation;
- (6) the measures selected to achieve the objectives and targets set out in the educational project.

Before approving the proposals under subparagraph 3 of the first paragraph and the proposals relating to how parents are to be informed of the academic progress of their children under subparagraph 4 of the first paragraph, the principal must consult with the governing board.

The proposals of the teachers or the staff members under this section shall be made according to the procedure determined by the teachers or the staff members at general meetings called for that purpose by the principal or, failing that, according to the procedure determined by the principal.

A proposal of the teachers or the staff members concerning a subject referred to in this section must be made within 30 days after the proposal is requested by the principal, failing which the principal may act without such proposal.

If the principal does not approve a proposal of the teachers or the staff members, the principal shall give reasons, in writing, for the decision.

The standards and procedures for the evaluation of achievement referred to in subparagraph 4 of the first paragraph may not have the effect of allowing a student's result to be reviewed by the principal. However, they must allow the principal to ask the teacher to whose care the student is entrusted to review the result assigned to the student or, if the teacher is absent or unable to act, to entrust the review to another teacher, in accordance with the conditions and procedures determined by regulation of the Minister. The principal must give reasons in writing for his or her request for the grade review.

**110.3.2.** Section 77.1 applies to the governing board of a vocational training centre as regards the students referred to in section 1, with the necessary modifications.

**192.** The functions of the parents' committee are

- (1) to raise awareness of the value of public education among all the parents of students attending one of the school service centre's schools;
- (2) to propose to the school service centre ways of supporting parents' involvement in their role with their child in order to foster their child's success at school;
- (3) to propose to the school service centre ways of facilitating communication between parents and school staff members;
- (4) to promote parents' participation in the activities of the school and of the school service centre and, to that end, to designate parents to take part in the various committees established by the school service centre;
- (5) to inform the school service centre of parents' needs, especially their training needs, as identified by the school representatives and by the representative of the advisory committee on services for handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities;
- (6) to develop, with the school service centre's support, a policy on financial contributions and propose the policy to the school service centre for adoption; and

(7) to advise the school service centre on the special school projects offered or considered in its schools, on any matter likely to ensure the best possible operation of the school service centre and on any matter on which it must be consulted.

**212.1.** On the proposal of the parents' committee, the school service centre shall 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, or that may be claimed for services referred to in sections 256 and 292.

This policy must respect the powers of the governing board and promote accessibility to the educational services provided for in this Act and prescribed by the basic regulations established by the Government.

If the parents' committee fails or refuses to submit a proposal to the school service centre within the period specified by the school service centre, which must be of at least 30 days, the latter may act without such a proposal. After consulting with the parents' committee, the school service centre shall adopt a policy on the financial contributions that may be made for the documents and objects mentioned in the third and fourth paragraphs of section 7, or that may be claimed for services referred to in sections 256 and 292.

**256.** At the request of the governing board of a school, a school service center must provide childcare for preschool and elementary school students, in the manner agreed with the governing board, on the school premises or, if the school does not have suitable premises, on other premises.

**292.** Student transportation provided by a school service centre before the beginning of classes and after the end of classes each day is free of charge. Where the transportation is provided under a contract with a public transit authority or with the holder of a bus transport permit, within the meaning of government regulation, the school service centre may claim from a student that portion of the cost of the transportation pass which corresponds to service in addition to service before the beginning of classes and after the end of classes each day.

A school service centre that provides student transportation at noon to allow students to have their meal at home may claim the cost thereof from the students who elect to use that service.

Whether or not a school service centre provides transportation at noon to allow students to have their meal at home, it is required to ensure, in the manner agreed upon with the governing boards and on such financial conditions as it may determine, supervision of the students who stay at school.

## **ADENDUM B**

*Up to date as of February 1, 2020*

### **Regulation respecting free instructional material and certain financial contributions that may be required**

#### **Education Act**

(chapter I-13.3, s. 3, 4th par., s. 7, 3rd par. and s. 457.2.1; S.Q. 2019, c. 9, ss. 1, 2 and 13).

#### **DIVISION I**

##### **GENERAL**

M.O. 2019-06-07, Div. I.

**1.** This Regulation determines the services provided within the scope of special school projects and school activities to which the right to free school services provided for in section 3 of the Act does not apply.

It clarifies the scope of the right to free instructional material provided for in section 7 of the Act. It also establishes standards for the financial contributions that may be required for the services and activities referred to in the first paragraph, for material to which the right of free use does not apply and for supervision at lunch time provided for in the third paragraph of section 292 of the Act.

M.O. 2019-06-07, s. 1.

**2.** For the purposes of this Regulation, “special school project” means a project approved by the governing board and carried out for one or more groups of students enrolled at the elementary or secondary level among the following:

- (1) sport-study programs recognized by the Minister;
- (2) arts-study programs recognized by the Minister;
- (3) programs recognized by Baccalauréat International;
- (4) Concentration or Profile type projects, that is, those intended to meet the student’s interests by activities or one or many local programs of studies and school interventions related to the field of activity specifically covered by the project.

M.O. 2019-06-07, s. 2.

#### **DIVISION II**

##### **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

M.O. 2019-06-07, Div. II.

**3.** The services provided within the scope of a special school project to which the right to free access provided for in section 3 of the Act does not apply are the following:

- (1) certification by an outside body required for the carrying out of the project;
- (2) the issue to the student of a certificate from an outside body within the scope of the project;
- (3) the school coordination required to allow the carrying out of the project;
- (4) the participation of a coach or other specialist not acting as a teacher in a study program;
- (5) the renting of a sports facility or of premises required for the carrying out of a project.

M.O. 2019-06-07, s. 3.

**4.** The school activities to which the right to free access provided for in section 3 of the Act does not apply are the following:

- (1) the activities conducted outside the premises of the educational institution attended by the student, including transportation to the premises of the activity;
- (2) the activities conducted with the participation of a person who is not a member of the staff of the school board and similar to those referred to in paragraph 1.

M.O. 2019-06-07, s. 4.

### **DIVISION III**

#### **MATERIAL**

M.O. 2019-06-07, Div. III.

**5.** Within the framework of the activity programs and the teaching of programs of studies approved by the Minister and local programs of studies that are not included in a special school project, the right of free use applies in particular to the following material:

- (1) tools, machine tools, instruments, chemical products and other scientific and technological material;
- (2) balls, rackets, helmets and other physical education equipment;
- (3) paint, pastels, clay and other art supplies;
- (4) reeds for musical wind instruments, flutes and other musical instruments;
- (5) novels and albums, and reference material such as dictionaries, grammars, atlases, guides and encyclopedias, whatever the media;
- (6) photocopied texts, reproductions of copyrighted material such as partitions and any other reprographic material that replaces or supplements a school manual;
- (7) solid and geometric form kits, counters, base 10 kits, dice, card games and other manipulatives;
- (8) modelling clay, wood, plaster and other similar materials;
- (9) computers, laptops, tablets, technological applications, graphing calculators, earphones and other technological tools;
- (10) protective helmets, safety glasses, hairnets and other protective items;
- (11) sensory stimulation material intended in particular for handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities.

The material referred to in the first paragraph is maintained free of charge.

M.O. 2019-06-07, s. 5.

**6.** Despite section 5, the right of free use does not apply to specialized material specifically required for the carrying out of a special school project, or to the maintenance of the material.

M.O. 2019-06-07, s. 6.

**7.** The right of free use provided for in section 7 of the Act does not apply to the following material:

- (1) activity or exercise books or reprographic material replacing or supplementing an activity or exercise book, including those on a medium based on information technology;
- (2) notebooks, pads of paper, sleeves, binders and separators;
- (3) standard calculators and scientific calculators;
- (4) memory sticks;
- (5) rulers, protractors, squares, compasses and other geometry tools;



- (6) highlighter pens, markers, pens, coloured pencils, pencil sharpeners, scissors and glue;
  - (7) running shoes, dancewear and shoes, lab coats, aprons or shirts to protect clothing;
  - (8) uniforms, boots and other clothing required for vocational training;
  - (9) towels and blankets for rest periods;
  - (10) locks.
- M.O. 2019-06-07, s. 7.

#### **DIVISION IV**

##### **STANDARDS RELATING TO CONTRIBUTIONS THAT MAY BE REQUIRED**

M.O. 2019-06-07, Div. IV.

**8.** The governing board must implement measures to facilitate access by each student to all services, activities or materials for which financial contribution is approved under section 75.0.1 of the Act.

The governing board must also inform the school board of all financial contributions approved under that section.

M.O. 2019-06-07, s. 8.

**9.** Every financial contribution required for a service referred to in section 3, for an activity referred to in section 4 or for material to which the right of free use does not apply must be the subject of a clear and detailed invoice. Where a voluntary contribution or a donation is requested, no amount related to it may be included in the total indicated on the invoice.

M.O. 2019-06-07, s. 9.

**10.** No financial contribution may be required for a service, activity or material that is subject to financing provided for in the budget rules determined by the Minister, such as paper tissues and other items required to be supplied for health or hygiene reasons.

Such financing must be deducted from the amount of the financial contribution required where it covers part of the expenses incurred.

M.O. 2019-06-07, s. 10.

**11.** No supplier or specific brand may be imposed with reference to material for a student's personal use, other than activity or exercise books.

M.O. 2019-06-07, s. 11.

#### **DIVISION V**

##### **FINAL**

M.O. 2019-06-07, Div. V.



**12.** *(Omitted).*

M.O. 2019-06-07, s. 12.

## Addendum C

### **Information on free educational and administrative services, services requiring a financial contribution, free textbooks and instructional materials and materials to which the right to free materials does not apply**

**REFERENCE:** MEES website <http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/parents-and-guardians/references/school-fees/>

#### **Free educational services**

For **preschool, elementary school and secondary school students** in every public school in Québec, the right to free educational services applies to the following services:

- Preschool education services
- Elementary and secondary school education services
- Complementary educational services (support, school life, promotion, prevention and student assistance), including:
  - Services designed to promote student participation in school life
  - Services designed to educate students about their rights and responsibilities
  - Sports, cultural and social activities
  - Support services for the use of the documentary resources of the school library
  - Academic and career counselling and information
  - Psychological services
  - Psychoeducational services
  - Special education services
  - Remedial education services
  - Speech therapy services
  - Health and social services
  - Services in spiritual care and guidance and community involvement
- Special services, including:
  - Welcoming services and French-language instructional services
  - Schooling in a hospital setting or at home

For students 18 years of age or younger (or 21 years of age or younger in the case of handicapped persons) enrolled in **vocational training**, the right to free educational services applies to the following services:

- Training services, including:
  - Instructional services
  - Orientation services

- Complementary educational services (the same as in preschool, elementary school and secondary school education, with the exception of services in spiritual care and guidance and community involvement)

For students under 18 years of age (or 21 years of age in the case of handicapped persons) enrolled in **adult general education**, the right to free educational services applies to the following services:

- Training services, including:
  - Instructional services offered by various means:
    - Pedagogical support services
    - Literacy services
    - Preparatory services for secondary education
    - Secondary Cycle One education services
    - Secondary Cycle Two education services
    - Social integration services
    - Sociovocational integration services
    - Francization services
    - Vocational training preparation services
    - Preparatory services for post-secondary education
  - Orientation services

### **Free administrative services**

A clarification has been added to the Education Act to indicate that the right to free educational services applies in all cases to administrative services, including:

- Admission
- Opening of a file
- Administration of examinations
- Training of staff

Free educational services also include grade review requests submitted to school boards or to the Ministère.

### **Services requiring a financial contribution**

The Education Act now specifies that the right to free educational services does not apply to certain services provided within the scope of special school projects and certain school activities determined by regulation by the Minister, according to the terms and conditions therein.

### **Special school projects**

A “special school project” is a project approved by the governing board and applicable to one or more groups of students enrolled in an elementary or secondary school, including:

1. [Sports-Study programs](#) recognized by the Minister
2. [Arts-Study programs](#) recognized by the Minister
3. Programs recognized by the International Baccalaureate Organization
4. Concentration- or profile-type projects aimed at responding to students' interests with activities or local programs and teaching practices related to the field of activity specifically targeted by the project

Special school projects may apply to all students in a school if the school is approved by the Minister as a school for the purposes of a specific project (Education Act, s. 240).

Services provided within the scope of a special school project to which the right to free educational services provided for in section 3 of the Education Act **does not apply** include:

1. Certification by an outside body in order to carry out the project
  - o Clarification: In most cases, the program certification requirement applies to programs recognized by the International Baccalaureate Organization. Non-mandatory certifications and affiliations cannot be subject to a financial contribution from parents.
2. The issuing to the student of a certificate by an outside body within the scope of the project
  - o Clarification: Only programs recognized by the International Baccalaureate Organization may be subject to such financial contributions.
3. The school coordination required to allow the carrying out of the project
  - o Clarification: Only the coordination of educational services specifically provided for in the special project may be subject to a financial contribution from parents; for example, the coordination of services for interdisciplinary projects or students' community involvement within the scope of the International Baccalaureate program.
4. The participation of a coach or other specialist not acting as a teacher in a program of study
  - o Clarification: This could be a person offering peripheral services for identified sports, a specialist music teacher, a coach or a specialist in theatre or dance.
  - o Clarification: A program of study involves subjects taught by a teacher and cannot be subject to a financial contribution from parents since this is an instructional service.
5. The renting of a sports facility or of premises required for the carrying out of a project
  - o Clarification: A school cannot require a financial contribution from parents for services offered on its own premises, since no rental fees apply.

The right to free educational services does not apply to specialized equipment specifically required to carry out a special school project or to the maintenance of such equipment.

According to the fifth paragraph of section 3 of the Education Act, which will take effect on July 1, 2020, a school may require a financial contribution for a service provided within the scope of a special school project only **if it also offers a choice of an educational pathway exempt from such contribution.**

## **Additional information**

### **Relationship between special school projects and a school's educational project**

A school's educational project contains the school's specific policies and the objectives selected for improving student success. These policies and objectives are designed to ensure that the Québec education policy framework is implemented, adapted and enriched. They must also be consistent with the school board's commitment-to-success plan (Education Act, s. 37). Consequently, the implementation of special school projects must be consistent with the policies and objectives contained in the school's educational project.

### **Departures from the Basic school regulation**

Some school projects may require a departure from the Basic school regulation for preschool, elementary and secondary education. According to section 222 of the Education Act, a school board may, subject to the rules governing certification of studies, permit a departure from a provision of the basic school regulation so that a special school project applicable to a group of students may be carried out.

Special school projects other than those provided for by regulation are also offered in the school system. These include special school projects preparing students 15 years of age or older for admission to vocational training. Exceptions to the right to free educational services provided within the scope of special school projects prescribed by regulation and exceptions to the right to free instructional materials do not apply to these types of projects. Financing for the implementation of special school projects preparing students for admission to vocational training is provided for in the [school boards' budgetary rules](#).

### **Schools established for the purposes of a specific project**

According to section 240 of the Education Act, by way of exception, at the request of a group of parents and after consulting with the parents' committee, a school board may, with the Minister's approval, establish a school for the purposes of a specific project other than a religious project, subject to the conditions and for the period determined by the Minister.

As of July 1, 2020, only schools established for the purposes of a specific project under section 240 may charge fees to all students attending such a school. Other schools must offer an option that is exempt from these financial contributions.

### **School activities**

The legislative and regulatory provisions stipulate that school activities may be subject to financial contributions from parents.

## Activities outside the school

A financial contribution may be required for activities carried out off the premises of the educational institution attended by the student. These activities involve travel outside the school or centre, either on foot, using public transit or with transportation organized by the educational institution. Contributions may be required for activities carried out within the scope of a special school project or regular program.

They include educational activities; for example, visits to a museum, theatre, farm or market. They also include more recreational or social activities such as visits to an amusement park or picnics at an outdoor recreational area. They usually take place during school hours. Sometimes they may take place outside school hours, such as in the case of end-of-year trips.

The Education Act stipulates that contributions cannot exceed the actual cost of the activity. The actual cost of an outing includes:

- Transportation
- Admission fees
- Registration fees in the case of a competition
- The cost of hiring a substitute for a teacher accompanying a group of students, if the teacher needs to be replaced
- The teacher's participation fee

Also, when a school does not have the facilities necessary to offer a compulsory course and there are costs associated with the use of other facilities, it **cannot require** a financial contribution from parents. This is the case, for example, when students in Physical Education and Health go to the pool. However, if the use of other facilities is required to carry out a special school project, it **may be subject to a fee** from parents of students enrolled in the project.

The Education Act provides for the funding equivalent of two free school outings per student per year in preschool, elementary school and secondary school.\* To this end, it requires that the [school boards' budgetary rules](#) include subsidies to finance these two school activities. It is up to schools to decide how to use the amounts earmarked for outings, provided they respect the guidelines of the school boards' budgetary rules.

Vocational training and adult general education students are also entitled to cultural outings during their training process.

*Note: The Ministry of Education grant for school outings is calculated as a maximum per capita amount. When selecting outings, schools must be cognizant of the funding available.*

## **Activities at the school**

A financial contribution may be required for activities similar to school activities taking place outside the school and requiring the participation of a person who is not on the school board's staff, for example, a scientific guide or an animal expert. These types of activities take place in the school or on school property.

They are carried out during school hours and may or may not be within the scope of a special school project.

## **Additional information**

Practicums for students in the Work-Oriented Training Path are not considered outings subject to a financial contribution.

## **Extracurricular activities and summer courses**

According to sections 90 and 91 of the Education Act, the governing board may organize educational services other than those prescribed by the Basic school regulation. These services, often referred to as extracurricular activities, include instructional services outside teaching periods during the school days of the school calendar or on non-school days, as well as social, cultural or sports services, such as language, karate and drama courses. The governing board may also allow other persons or organizations to organize such services on school premises.

A financial contribution may be required from parents for the goods or services offered, except if financing is already provided for in the school boards' budgetary rules.

A financial contribution may also be required for summer courses held on non-school days.

## **Free textbooks and instructional materials**

Students have the right to free textbooks and instructional materials required within the framework of activity programs and the teaching of programs of study. They have this right until the last day of the school calendar in the school year in which they reach 18 years of age, or 21 years of age in the case of handicapped persons within the meaning of the Act to secure handicapped persons in the exercise of their rights with a view to achieving social, school and workplace integration. The right to free textbooks and instructional materials applies to:

- Preschool activity programs
- Elementary education programs
- Secondary education compulsory programs or optional subjects for which a ministerial program has been established

- Local programs of study not included in a special school project
- The Prewrite Training and Training for a Semiskilled Trade programs
- Programs for students with an intellectual impairment
- Vocational training programs

An exception applies to students enrolled in adult education services.

Free instructional materials include, in particular, lab equipment, physical education equipment, art supplies and technological devices. The right to free instructional materials also applies to the following:

- Tools, machine tools, instruments, chemicals and other scientific and technological materials
- Balls, racquets, helmets and other physical education equipment
- Paint, pastels, clay and other art supplies
- Reeds for wind instruments, flutes and other musical instruments
- Novels and picture books, as well as reference materials such as dictionaries, grammar guides, atlases, guides and encyclopedias, whatever the medium
  - A school cannot claim that asking students to highlight or annotate passages in a novel gives it the right to require payment for such novel. The school can ask students to use other means to ensure that the novels are reusable.
  - Novels are covered by the right to free instructional materials even if they are required within the scope of a special school project.
- Photocopied texts, reproductions of copyrighted material such as sheet music and any other reprographic material that replaces or supplements a textbook
- Solid and geometric form kits, counters, base 10 kits, dice, card games and other manipulatives
- Modelling clay, wood, plaster and similar materials
- Computers, laptops, tablets, technological applications, graphing calculators, earphones and other technological tools
  - The technological applications in question are those used for the same purpose as textbooks. This category also includes computer software suites.
  - When a school chooses to use a computer or tablet for teaching or learning, the devices must be provided free of charge when students are required to use them in order to learn at school. If these devices are required for specific learning within the scope of a special school project (e.g. robotics or programming), they may be subject to a financial contribution from parents.
  - Funds are allocated in the budgetary rules for students with handicaps, social maladjustments or learning difficulties who require technological learning aids. No financial contribution may be required from parents for these aids.
  - Protective helmets, safety glasses, hairnets and other protective items
  - Sensory stimulation material intended in particular for students with handicaps, social maladjustments or learning disabilities
  - Food is sometimes used as positive reinforcement for students with handicaps. Since food is not an instructional material, it is not covered by the right to free instructional materials.



Maintenance costs for free instructional materials are not covered.

For hygiene purposes, parents may decide to buy some of the above items for their child at their own expense, but the school cannot require them to do so.

### **Clarifications concerning the right to free non-instructional materials**

The school boards' budgetary rules include funds allocated for the organization of services. As a result, no financial contribution may be required from parents for the following materials:

- Materials for the organization of the classroom or the school, such as bins, locker shelves, storage boxes and tennis balls to be attached to the legs of chairs
- Items to be supplied for health or hygiene reasons, such as paper tissues, wipes, cleaning products and disinfecting products for music instruments

Parents may choose to purchase certain items for their child, but the school cannot require them to do so. For example, parents may decide to buy a folding shelf for their child's locker to help the child organize their personal belongings. The school cannot require parents to purchase such shelves.

### **Clarifications**

The list included in the regulation is not exhaustive. Similar items can be added to the examples listed under each category.

### **Access to bibliographical and documentary resources**

The Education Act stipulates that school boards must ensure that schools provide students, free of charge, with the textbooks and instructional materials used for the teaching of the programs of study. School boards must also provide students with free access to bibliographical and documentary resources such as books and encyclopedias. Schools cannot require a financial contribution for the library card providing access to these resources.

### **Materials to which the right to free materials does not apply**

The right to free materials does not apply to documents in which students write, draw or cut out or to materials for personal use.

"Materials for personal use" include, in particular:

- School supplies (e.g. pencils, erasers, day planners)
- Material for personal organization (e.g. pencil cases, school bags)
- Clothing items (e.g. school uniforms, physical education clothing)

The right to free materials also does not apply to:

- Activity or exercise books or reprographic material replacing or supplementing an activity or exercise book, including those on a medium based on information technology
  - For example, when a technological application is used to replace an exercise book and the student has individual access to that application
- Notebooks, pads of paper, pocket folders, binders and separators
- Standard calculators and scientific calculators
- Memory sticks
- Rulers, protractors, squares, compasses and other geometry tools
- Highlighter pens, markers, pens, coloured pencils, pencil sharpeners, scissors and glue
- Running shoes, dancewear and shoes, lab coats, aprons or shirts to protect clothing
  - In the case of the Retail Butchery program in vocational training, the centre receives an allowance for the purchase of aprons for students.
- Uniforms, boots and other clothing required for vocational training
- Towels and blankets for rest periods
- Locks

Moreover, the right to free materials does not apply to specialized equipment specifically required to carry out a special school project or to the maintenance of such equipment.

No supplier or specific brand may be imposed with reference to material for a student's personal use, other than activity or exercise books.

### **Clarifications**

The list of materials is not exhaustive. Similar items can be added to the examples listed under each category. The term "in particular," however, precludes broadening the scope to other categories of material.

### **Replacement of lost or damaged materials provided by the school**

The Education Act stipulates that students are to take good care of the property placed at their disposal and return it when school activities have ended. If a student damages the property, the school board may claim the value of the property from the student's parents if the student is a minor, or from the student if the student is of full age (s. 18.2).