



DROUIN SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT PAYMENT POLICY

Purpose

This policy covers the payments for essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions that Drouin South Primary School may request, and the parameters, terms and conditions within which these requests may be made.

Aim

To ensure parents, guardians, teachers and other school staff are aware of the school's policy on parent payments and that this policy meets the legal requirements of the Education and Training Reform Act (2006).

Context

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

Free instruction includes learning and teaching, instructional supports, materials and resources, administration and facilities associated with the provision of the standard curriculum program. The standard curriculum program includes core learning and teaching activities associated with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) and senior secondary certificates (VCE and VCAL, including VET programs).

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) provides funding to schools through the Student Resource Package (SRP) and various programs. This includes funding for the standard curriculum program and associated education items, equipment and operational costs which are an integral part of the SRP.

School councils have the responsibility to develop policy and plans to allocate their overall resources – human, financial and physical – in accordance with the goals, targets and strategies outlined in their strategic plan. This includes the allocation of funding provided under the SRP, any other funding provided by DEECD and locally-raised funds.

Implementation and Administration

The school council can request payments from parents for student materials and services charges, and for voluntary financial contributions. These payments fall into three categories:

- 1. Essential education items** which parents and guardians are **required** to provide or pay the school to provide for their child (e.g. stationery, text books and school uniforms where required)
- 2. Optional extras** which are offered on a user-pays basis and which parents and guardians may **choose** whether their child accesses or participates in (e.g. excursions, visiting performances)
- 3. Voluntary financial contributions** which parents and guardians may be **invited** to donate to the school (e.g. grounds beautification, additional computers).

The school will ensure that parent payments are kept to a minimum and do not exceed the cost of the relevant materials or services to the student. The Principal is responsible for the implementation and administration of the policy developed by the school council. This includes ensuring that the policy is communicated within the school and that all staff are familiar with and adhere to it.

This policy on essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions ensures that:

- Parents and guardians are provided with early notice of requests for payment of essential education items, optional extras and voluntary financial contributions. A minimum of six weeks notice prior to the end of the previous school year will be given to allow parents and guardians sufficient planning time. Payment may be requested but not required prior to the commencement of the year in which the materials and services are to be used
- Items that students consume or take possession of will be accurately costed.
- Payment arrangements coincide with the timing of the availability of Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) support for eligible parents/guardians. Parents will not be pressured to sign over their portion of the EMA.
The school's portion of the EMA will not be used to offset voluntary financial contributions.
- There will be a clearly articulated process for the administration of the Education Maintenance Allowance
- Administrative and financial processes are compliant with Departmental requirements.
- The school will not withhold access to enrolment or advancement to the next year level as a condition of payment of essential education items, optional extras or voluntary financial contributions.
- The status and details of any payments or non-payments by parents and guardians are confidential.

Evaluation

This policy will be made available to parents and guardians on enrolment and is available from the school website www.drouinsouth.vic.edu.au .

References

Parent Payments In Victorian Government Schools

Published by Office for Government School Education Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2008

Also published on www.education.vic.gov.au