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School Fee Waiver Amendments

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Doug Welton

Senate Sponsor:

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LONG TITLE

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General Description:

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This bill amends provisions related to school fee waivers.

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Highlighted Provisions:

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This bill:

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- ▶ defines terms;
- ▶ limits the number of fee waivers a student may receive;
- ▶ requires local education agencies to establish a cap on fee waivers;
- ▶ allows a student to request a fee waiver for a second trip; and
- ▶ makes technical and conforming changes.

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Money Appropriated in this Bill:

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None

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Other Special Clauses:

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This bill provides a special effective date.

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Utah Code Sections Affected:

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AMENDS:

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53G-7-504, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 497

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Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

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Section 1. Section **53G-7-504** is amended to read:

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53G-7-504 . Waiver of fees -- Appeal of decision.

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(1) As used in this section:

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(a) "Action plan" means a written agreement between a principal and a student that outlines specific, reasonable steps the student will take to contribute to the school or community in exchange for a fee waiver for a second school trip.

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(b)(i) "Trip" means a school sponsored travel activity of two or more nights that requires a student to pay a fee for participation in the activity.

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(ii) "Trip" does not include a travel activity of two or more nights related to an in

state activity sponsored by an association as that term is defined in 53G-7-801.

[4] (2)(a) Subject to the provisions of this part, if an LEA or a school within an LEA charges one or more fees, the LEA shall grant a waiver to a student if charging the fee would deny the student the opportunity to fully participate or complete a requirement because of an inability to pay the fee.

(b) An LEA governing board shall:

(i) adopt policies for granting a waiver;

(ii) limit waivers to no more than two trips per student per year;

(iii) adopt policies for a dollar amount cap on total fee waivers; and

[**(ii)**] **(iv)** in accordance with Section 53G-7-505, give notice of waiver eligibility and policies.

(3) A student who qualifies for a fee waiver may request a waiver for the fee of a second trip if the student:

(a) meets with the principal or an individual the principal assigns; and

(b) develops an action plan with the principal that includes school-related contributions, including:

(i) performing custodial work;

(ii) participating in school-related service programs; or

(iii) completing other contributions that the principal, or an individual the principal assigns, approves.

(4) The action plan described in Subsection (3)(b) shall:

(a) match a student's abilities and availability;

(b) consider a student's individual circumstances;

(c) specify the type and duration of the contribution to the school or community; and

(d) avoid interference with a student's academic or personal responsibilities.

(5) Nothing in this section prohibits a:

(a) school from offering additional trips each school year to a student who receives a second fee waiver under Subsection (3); or

(b) student from participating in additional trips each school year after receiving a second fee waiver under Subsection (3).

[(2)] (6)(a) An LEA that charges a fee under this part may provide a variety of

alternatives for a student or family to satisfy a fee requirement, including allowing a student to provide:

(i) tutorial assistance to other students;

- (ii) assistance before or after school to teachers and other school personnel on school related matters; and
- (iii) general community or home service.

(b) Each LEA governing board may add to the list of alternatives provided by the state board, subject to approval by the state board.

] (7) With regard to a student who is in the custody of the Division of Child and Family Services who is also eligible under Title IV-E of the federal Social Security Act, an LEA governing board shall require fee waivers or alternatives in accordance with this section.

] (8) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the state board shall make rules:

- (a) requiring a parent of a student applying for a fee waiver to provide documentation and certification to the school verifying:
 - (i) the student's eligibility to receive the waiver; and
 - (ii) if applicable, that the student has complied with alternatives for satisfying the fee requirements under Subsection [(2)] (6) to the fullest extent reasonably possible according to the individual circumstances of the student and the LEA; and
- (b) specifying the acceptable forms of documentation for the requirement under Subsection [(4)(a)] (8)(a), which shall include verification based on income tax returns or current pay stubs.

] (9) Notwithstanding the requirements under Subsection [(4)] (8), an LEA is not required to keep documentation on file after the verification is completed.

] (10) If a school denies a student or parent request for a fee waiver, the school shall provide the student or parent:

- (a) the school's written decision to deny a waiver; and
- (b) the procedure to appeal in accordance with LEA policy.

This bill takes effect on July 1, 2026.