

EDUCATION



THE UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Report to the Education Interim
Committee and the Public Education
Appropriations Subcommittee

School Fees SY2020-2021 by Categories

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School Fees by Categories

LEGAL REQUIREMENT

U.C.A. Section 53G-7-503(5)

For each fee on an LEA's fee schedule the LEA shall by July 1, 2020, determine whether the fee is curricular, co-curricular, or extracurricular. And by July 1, 2021, report to USBE for the 2020-2021 school year,

- the money received for each fee;
- value of each waiver for each waived fee;
- measure the total number of students who pay each fee;
- number of students who receive a fee waiver.

The state board shall report on the data the board receives to the Education Interim Committee on or before the November interim meeting 2021.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the 2020 General Session, the Legislature passed House Bill 80, *School Fee Data Collections*, which tasked the Board with gathering School Fee data by the separate categories of fees: curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular. For most LEA's this required implementing new procedures in identifying and classifying fees into the three categories. This report provides a breakdown of the collected data from all LEAs that reported charging fees. Since the 2019 General Session Legislature passage of House Bill 250, there has been consistent improvement by LEAs in recognizing what classifies as a school fee and the accuracy of reporting those amounts. Of note, the 2020-2021 school year (SY 2021) data was impacted by the world-wide Covid-19 pandemic.

For SY 2021, LEAs charged \$83 million in school fees statewide. School fees grew \$4.4 million from SY 2020 to SY 2021, an increase of 5.6%. 117 of the 156 LEAs reported charging fees. The other 39 or 25% reported that they did not charge any fees. Of the 117 LEAs that charged school fees, 110 charged curricular fees, 70 charged co-curricular fees, and 94 charged extracurricular fees. Table #1 below shows the amount and percentage of school fees charged by fee category and by district or charter. The "Total Charged Fees" are as reported by LEAs and not a sum of the separate categories.

SCHOOL FEES - SY2021

	Curricular		Co-Curricular		Extra-Curricular		Total Charged Fees (as Reported)	
	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%
CHARTER	\$ 4,427,348	67%	\$ 771,970	12%	\$ 1,412,956	21%	\$ 6,604,324	8%
DISTRICT	\$ 42,986,371	56%	\$ 5,611,028	7%	\$ 27,772,858	36%	\$ 76,374,345	92%
Grand Total	\$ 47,413,719	57%	\$ 6,382,998	8%	\$ 29,185,814	35%	\$ 82,978,669	

Table #1

BACKGROUND

In the 2019 General Session, the Legislature passed House Bill 250, *School Fee Revisions*. A “school fee” is defined as something of monetary value requested or required by an LEA as a condition to a student’s participation in an activity, class, or program provided, sponsored, or supported by a school. While school fees can provide much-needed revenue, it is important to ensure they do not unfairly restrict participation.

Utah Constitution Article X, Section 2 states “*Public elementary and secondary schools shall be free, except the Legislature may authorize the imposition of fees in the secondary schools.*”

This ideal is further stated in R277-407, “To preserve equal opportunity for all students and to limit diversion of money and school and staff resources from the basic school program, each LEA’s fee policies shall be designed to limit student expenditures for school-sponsored activities, including expenditures for activities, uniforms, clubs, clinics, travel, and subject area and vocational leadership organizations, whether local, state, or national.”

Indeed, the Permanent Injunction (page 39) found “... that the current expanded school curriculum, including particular aspects designated as ‘extracurricular,’ plays an important and, particularly for ‘at-risk’ students, perhaps a critical role in encouraging regular school attendance and improved student performance. ... that exclusion from the expanded school curriculum is often tantamount to excluding the affected students from school, the savings from which action ‘are wholly insubstantial in light of the costs involved to these children, the State, and the Nation.’ ... The Court therefore finds that it is contrary to public policy and the intent of the Utah Compulsory Education Act for access to school programs which are supportive of regular school attendance and improved student performance to be based upon ability to pay.”

During the 2020 Legislative session HB80 required the collection of school fees by categories of curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular for the SY 2021. This information was required to be reported by each LEA to the State Board by July 1, 2021; thereby providing the needed data to spur legislative action to fully fund curricular and co-curricular programs and activities. To facilitate LEAs in reporting this information, a Qualtrics survey was distributed on May 14, 2021.

REPORTS

Table #1, shown above, provides the amount of school fees charged by category for the SY 2021. Table #2 below shows the amount of fee waivers by fee category for the same period. In addition, the table shows the percentage of waivers granted by category per the fees charged.

SCHOOL FEE WAIVERS - SY2021

	Curricular	Co-Curricular	Extra-Curricular	Total Waived
CHARTER	\$ 618,975	\$ 42,963	\$ 125,424	\$ 785,559
Waivers % of Fees	14%	6%	9%	12%
DISTRICT	\$ 4,257,159	\$ 223,921	\$ 972,806	\$ 5,413,245
Waivers % of Fees	10%	4%	4%	7%
Grand Total	\$ 4,876,134	\$ 266,884	\$ 1,098,230	\$ 6,198,804
Waivers % of Fees	10%	4%	4%	7%

Table #2

Table #3 compares key student and fee waiver statistics from the SY 2020 and SY 2021 LEA Statistical Data reported. Of concern shown in this chart is that 51% of students eligible for fee waivers are not participating in fee waivers. This trend is a 13% greater disparity compared to the SY 2020.

Table #3 also shows the average amount of fees waived per student has increased. This increase, however, is primarily due to less students participating in fee waivers as referenced above. The state average of fees charged per student, \$263, was compared with the state average of fees waived per student, \$168, finding that 64% of the average fees charged to students were waived. However, the total school fees waived for SY 2020 was \$6,965,451 (see table 5). This is a drop in the overall amount of fees waived by 11% when comparing SY 2021 (see Table 4) to SY 2020; while overall fees charged increased 5.6%.

STUDENTS GRANTED FEE WAIVERS AND AVERAGE FEE WAIVER AMOUNTS - SY2021

	School Year 2021	School Year 2020	Change	% Change
Estimate # Secondary Students Eligible	74,862	81,834	(6,972)	-8.5%
Count of Fee WaiverS Granted	36,975	50,823	(13,848)	-27.2%
% Participating in Fee Waivers	49%	62%	-13%	
Average Fees Charged Per Student	\$ 263	\$ 258	\$ 5	1.9%
Average Fee Waived Per Student	\$ 168	\$ 137	\$ 31	22.6%
Average Fee Waived vs Charged	64%	53%	11%	

Table #3

Complete details of the School Fees analysis for SY 2021 are given in Table #4 below, followed by SY 2020 School Fees analysis in table #5. These reports are the summaries of the LEAs' statistical data collected for each year, combined with an analysis developed by the School Fees Project Team. Annual reports are produced and distributed to each LEA, providing them a snapshot of their performance regarding school fee waivers compared to the state's overall results.

School Fees Statistical Data Analysis For School Year: 2021

State Waived vs Charged:	Overall	Charter	District
School Fees Charged	\$ 82,978,669	\$ 6,604,324	\$ 76,374,345
School Fees Waived	\$ 6,198,804	\$ 785,559	\$ 5,413,245
Waived vs Charged Fees	7%	12%	7%

State Avg Fee Amount Waived vs Charged:			
Avg. Fees Charged Per Student	\$ 263	\$ 221	\$ 268
Avg. Fees Waived Per Student	\$ 168	\$ 206	\$ 163
Amount Waived vs Charged	64%	93%	61%

State Maximum Fee per Student:			
State Highest Fee Maximum	\$ 12,000	\$ 7,500	\$ 12,000
State Lowest Fee Maximum	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 100
State Average Fee Maximum	\$ 2,276	\$ 1,216	\$ 5,152

Estimated # of Students Eligible for Fee Waivers:			
(a) K-12 Count	649,562	64,159	585,403
<i>Fall Enrollment</i>			
(b) Economically Disadvantaged Students all grades	156,210	13,982	142,228
<i>Fall Enrollment</i>			
(c) Economically Disadvantaged % all grades	24%	22%	24%
<i>(b) divided by (a)</i>			
(d) Secondary Student Enrollment	311,923	26,628	285,295
<i>Fall Enrollment Demographics by Grade</i>			
(e) Estimated Secondary Students Eligible for Fee Waivers	74,862	5,858	68,471
<i>(d) multiplied by (c)</i>			
(f) Students Granted Waivers	36,975	3,809	33,166
<i>Certificate of Compliance Statistical Data</i>			
(i) Secondary Students on Fee Waivers	12%	14%	12%
<i>(f) divided by (d)</i>			
(h) Estimated Eligible Students NOT Participating in Waivers	37,887	2,049	35,305
<i>(e) minus (f)</i>			
(j) Estimated Eligible Students NOT on Fee Waivers	51%	35%	52%
<i>(h) divided by (e)</i>			

Table #4

School Fees Statistical Data Analysis For School Year: 2020

State Waived vs Charged:	Overall	Charter	District
\$ School Fees Charged	\$78,598,733	\$6,918,467	\$71,680,266
\$ School Fees Waived	\$6,965,451	\$968,143	\$5,997,308
Waived vs Charged Fees	9%	14%	8%

State Avg Fee Amount Waived vs Charged:	Overall	Charter	District
Avg. Fees Charged Per Student	\$258	\$270	\$257
Avg. Fees Waived Per Student	\$137	\$200	\$130
Amount Waived vs Charged	53%	74%	51%

State Maximum Fee per Student:	Overall	Charter	District
State Highest Fee Maximum	\$10,500	\$7,500	\$10,500
State Lowest Fee Maximum	\$25	\$25	\$500
State Average Fee Maximum	\$2,804	\$1,568	\$5,065

Estimated # of Students Eligible for Fee Waiver	Overall	Charter	District
(a) K-12 Count	650,543	62,956	587,587
<i>Fall Enrollment</i>			
(b) Economically Disadvantaged Students all grades	174,942	15,082	159,860
<i>Fall Enrollment</i>			
(c) Estimated Economically Disadvantaged all grades	27%	24%	27%
<i>(b) divided by (a)</i>			
(d) Secondary Student Enrollment	304,311	25,584	278,727
<i>Fall Enrollment Demographics by Grade</i>			
(e) Secondary Students Not Eligible for Waivers	222,477	19,455	202,896
<i>(d) minus (f)</i>			
(f) Secondary Students Eligible for Fee Waivers	81,834	6,129	75,831
<i>(d) multiplied by (c)</i>			
(g) Students Granted Waivers	50,823	4,845	45,978
<i>Certificate of Compliance Statistical Data</i>			
(h) Estimated Eligible Students NOT Participating in Waivers	31,011	1,284	29,853
<i>(f) minus (g)</i>			
(i) Secondary Students on Fee Waivers	17%	19%	16%
<i>(g) divided by (d)</i>			
(j) Estimated Eligible Students NOT on Fee Waivers	38%	21%	39%
<i>(h) divided by (f)</i>			

Table #5