

## **5800 – School Fee Waiver Policy and Procedure**

### **5801 – General Waiver Policy**

In accordance with Section 10-20.13 of the Illinois School Code, all school fees assessed by the District shall be waived for each student whose parents/guardians are unable to afford such fees. School fees include those expenses including, but not limited to, fees for rental of textbooks and other instructional materials, towels and lockers; fees for supplies or laboratory equipment; and fees for participation in extracurricular activities including athletics, field trips, and driver's education. Textbooks will be provided on a loan basis and must be returned to the District at the end of the school term.

In accordance with Illinois law, it is the policy of the District that no discrimination or punishment of any kind, including the lowering of grades or exclusion from classes, may be exercised against a student because his/her parents or guardians are unable to purchase required textbooks or instructional materials or to pay required school fees.

### **5802 – Eligibility Standards**

School fees shall be waived for any of the following students:

1. Their household is receiving aid under Article IV of the Illinois Public Aid Code (AFDC); or
2. Their household is participating in the Food Stamp Program; or
3. Their household gross income is at or below the federal income guidelines for the National Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program, set annually by the U.S. Department of Agriculture; or
4. Their household is otherwise able to establish that they cannot afford to pay school fees.

### **5803 – Notification Standards**

All parents/guardians shall be notified annually in the fall at least one week prior to registration by letter of this policy. The letter shall also include the application procedures and eligibility standards for receiving a school fee waiver. Notification of the policy, procedures and standards will be published annually in the student handbook or other general school publication and in a newspaper serving the District in the fall at least one week prior to registration. In addition, application forms will be distributed to each student at registration and will be available at each building's main office throughout the year. A copy of the District's school fee waiver policy and the procedure for application, including information on the eligibility standards and the appeals procedure, will be included with each application.

### **5804 – Application For Waiver**

An application or reapplication for waiver of school fees can be made at any time during the school year on a prepared District form (see waiver form #1).

### **5805 – Eligibility Determination and Notification**

The school principal or otherwise designated school official shall review each application received and promptly notify the parents/guardians in writing whether the waiver request is granted or denied (see waiver form #2). If the application is denied, the notice will state the reason for the denial, notification of appeal rights, instructions on how to exercise these appeal rights and that the party may reapply for a waiver at any time during the school year.

All information received in conjunction with application for school fee waivers will be treated confidentially and used only for the purposes for which it is intended.

### **5806 – Appeal Procedure**

#### **A. Informal Conference**

A party who disagrees with a waiver determination adverse to their household may request an informal conference with the school principal or other official responsible for making the determination. The request should be in writing and submitted within 30 days of receipt of the written notice adversely affecting the party.

The informal conference should be held promptly after the request is received and it should afford the aggrieved party an opportunity to receive an explanation of the adverse determination and present an explanation of why the determination is incorrect.

After the informal conference, the principal or other designated school official shall promptly notify the party in writing whether the determination has been affirmed or reversed. The notice shall also include notification of further appeal rights and procedures, and how to exercise them.

#### **B. Fair Hearing**

After an Informal Conference is held, a party who disagrees with an adverse waiver determination may request a fair hearing. The request must be in writing and within 30 days of the receipt of the notice of the Informal Conference Determination.

Fair hearing policy and procedures have been established by the District and are found at the office of the Superintendent of Schools.