



To: Dr. Charles Johns
Board of Education

From: Dr. R.J. Gravel

Date: Monday, March 15, 2021

Re: Registration and Instructional Materials Fee

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Education approve the implementation of a registration and instructional materials fee for the 2021-22 school year in the amount of \$300, inclusive of all instructional materials required for the school year. We believe that this will provide greater simplicity for our families while also reducing the cost of instructional materials over time.

Background

All students pay two general fees (Chromebook fee and registration fee) and are also responsible for purchasing instructional materials such as books, supplies, and PE uniforms. While the general fees amount is consistent, the cost of instructional materials fluctuates for each student based on course enrollment. Table 1 illustrates the average cost of instructional materials per student over four years.

Table 1
General Fees and Average Cost of Instructional Materials

	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Total for (4) Years
Chromebook Fee	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00		\$300.00
Registration Fee	\$25.50	\$25.50	\$25.50	\$25.50	\$102.00
Instructional Materials	\$275.00	\$220.00	\$316.00	\$269.00	\$1,080.00
<i>Total per Student</i>	\$400.50	\$345.50	\$441.50	\$294.50	\$1,482.00

The Instructional Supervisor recommends instructional materials for each course in consultation with the course’s teacher(s). Families can purchase some or all of their materials from our school bookstores or other vendors. Certain materials such as electronic textbooks must be purchased from the school bookstore, as they are integrated into our teachers’ instructional tools.

For the past several years, our school and district teams have been working to simplify the start of the school year for our families. For example, in 2017, we eliminated the summer booksale event following the launch of an online fee payment and book order system. In 2018, we combined the materials and towel fees into a single registration fee and eliminated individual course fees, except for driver education.

And in 2020, we streamlined the enrollment verification process, creating a one-stop location for all start-of-the-year activities through PowerSchool.

For the 2021-22 school year, we are proposing to further simplify the start of the school year by establishing a single “registration and instructional materials fee” that includes all instructional materials for the school year. As illustrated in Table 2, transitioning to a single, combined fee aligns with other area high school districts. It should be noted that with the exception of District 203, Glenbrook is the only area high school district that requires parents to independently purchase textbooks.

Table 2
Student Fees for Area High School Districts and Glenbrook Proposal

	Registration and Instructional Materials	Technology/ Device	Total
District 125 (Stevenson)	\$305	\$75	\$380
District 202 (Evanston)	\$275	\$65	\$340
District 203 (New Trier)	\$486*		\$486*
District 207 (Maine)	\$295	\$75	\$370
District 209 (Niles)	\$350	\$100	\$450
District 211 (Schaumburg)	\$170		\$170
District 214 (Arlington Heights)	\$300	\$75	\$375
Average	\$272*	\$78	\$367*
Proposed District 225 (Glenbrook)	\$300 Combined Registration and Instructional Materials Fee	\$75**	\$375

* Represents a \$211 annual fee and \$275 for an estimated cost of textbooks per student.

** Students will pay \$100 for (3) years.

Course registrations for the 2021-22 school year will not be finalized this spring. However, in reviewing course enrollment trends and the current cost of instructional materials, it is estimated that the overall cost of instructional materials for all students will be \$1.4M. This includes required eBooks, textbooks, paperbacks, workbooks, kits, and supplies. With an estimated enrollment of 5,120, the cost per student for instructional materials would be \$275, which would provide a break-even revenue/expense for the school district.

Collecting \$275 for instructional materials and a \$25 registration fee through a single fee will enable the district to provide students all instructional materials required for the school year and continue to support school district operations. The only instructional materials that would not be provided within this fee are calculators, gym uniforms/heart rate monitor strap (note: will provide one of each to new students), and locks. These items will continue to be available for purchase from the bookstore.

While the proposed fee for the 2021-22 school year is \$275, we anticipate that this fee may be reduced in future years. Like how the Chromebook fee has diminished over the past five years from \$410 to \$300, we are optimistic that instructional material expenses can be further reduced through bulk purchasing power and coordinated bookstore management.

The district and school leadership teams are confident that this transition can successfully be implemented for the 2021-22 school year. Upon approval by the Board of Education, the administration will implement a communication plan for our families. Key elements of the communication plan will include efforts to answer the following frequently asked questions:

What is changing?

- Beginning with the 2021-22 school year, parents will no longer need to purchase instructional materials from Beck's Bookstores or another retailer.
- This fee will be charged to all students, and families will not be able to opt-out of the fee.

What is included and what is not included?

- All required instructional materials will be provided to students through a single, annual fee of \$300. This includes textbooks (electronic and/or print editions), novels, workbooks, course kits, and other supplies.
- The only required instructional materials not provided for within the fee are:
 - Calculators;
 - Gym Uniforms (will provide new students their first gym uniform at no cost);
 - Heartrate Monitor Strap (will provide new students their first heartrate monitor strap at no cost);
 - Student project materials for CTE courses (e.g., wood, fabric); and
 - Locks.

How will students get their materials, and what do they need to return?

- Some materials, such as textbooks, will be checked out to students and will need to be returned at the end of the school year and identified with barcodes, similar to library books. Students will be charged for any lost or damaged materials.
- Other materials, such as novels and supplies, will not be returned and will be clearly identified.
- Materials will be made available for pick-up in early August. Students or parents will be required to sign for the receipt of their materials.
- Students will be responsible for any lost or damaged materials. Textbooks will be reviewed by the bookstore staff each year upon their return. Parents and students will be notified if a textbook returned requires replacement.

Who owns the materials?

- The school district will purchase all materials directly from publishers and resellers, and will own the materials. By purchasing materials directly, the school district will be able to leverage bulk purchasing power and achieve the best pricing possible for all families.
- Novels, workbooks, and supplies issued will be able to be kept by students and not returned.

Can I still purchase my own materials?

- Families will no longer need to purchase materials that are provided for through the instructional materials fee.

- For families that prefer print copies of textbooks to supplement the eBooks provided for certain subjects, we are pleased to share that the school district will be printing a limited number of print textbooks for all titles where one is available to support individual student needs.
- Recognizing that some families may have accumulated textbooks over the years, the school district will coordinate an extensive buyback program for all materials that are still used by the school. The buyback program will allow parents to receive a reduction to the instructional materials fee for the 2021-22 school year, or a direct payment issued by check.

Will the fee remain \$275 for all four years of high school?

- This fee is not intended to serve as an additional revenue source for the school district; we will solely utilize the fee to support the purchase and distribution of instructional materials for students.
- It is the goal of the administration to only collect the amount necessary to ensure all students have the supplies they need for their courses, and to gradually decrease this fee. The proposed fee of \$275 represents the estimated total cost of materials for all students for the 2020-21 school year, divided by the estimated student population. As each year's estimated total cost of materials is calculated, and an inventory has been established, we anticipate that this amount will decrease.
- For the past several years, a significant number of textbook adoption proposals have resulted in lower costs for families. All courses are on a multi-year cycle for adoptions, meaning that some courses will receive new textbooks next year, whereas others will maintain a prior year's adoption.

Should you have any questions regarding the communications plan or this proposal, please do not hesitate to contact me.