

CHAPTER 18
SCHOOL FEES

Chapter rescission date pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.7: 1/31/29

281—18.1(256) Overview. No Iowa student enrolled in a public school may be excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of course offerings and related activities due to the student's or the student's parent's or guardian's financial inability to pay a fee associated with the class, program, or activity.

[ARC 7426C, IAB 12/27/23, effective 1/31/24]

281—18.2(256) Fee policy. The board of directors (board) of a public school district (district) shall adopt a policy regarding the charging and collecting of fees for course offerings and related activities and for transportation provided to resident students who are not entitled to transportation under Iowa Code section 285.1, apply its policy to any fees charged, and develop procedures to implement its policy.

[ARC 7426C, IAB 12/27/23, effective 1/31/24]

281—18.3(256) Eligibility for waiver, partial waiver or temporary waiver of student fees. The policy mandated by rule 281—18.2(256) is to include provisions for granting a waiver, partial waiver, or temporary waiver of student fees upon application by the student.

18.3(1) Waivers. At minimum, the policy is to include the following provisions relating to eligibility for the waivers:

a. Waiver. A student is granted a waiver of all fees covered by this chapter if the student or the student's family meets the financial eligibility criteria for free meals offered under the child nutrition program, or for the family investment program (FIP), or for transportation assistance under open enrollment provided under 281—Chapter 17, or if the student is in foster care under Iowa Code chapter 232.

b. Partial waiver. A student is granted either a waiver of all student fees or a partial waiver of student fees if the student or the student's family meets the financial eligibility criteria for reduced price meals offered under the child nutrition program, based on a sliding scale related to an ability to pay.

c. Temporary waiver. At the discretion of the district, a student may be granted a temporary waiver of a fee or fees in the event of a temporary financial difficulty in the student's immediate family. A temporary waiver may be applied for and granted at any time during a school year. The maximum length of a temporary waiver is one year.

d. Fees waived not collectable. When an application for any fee waiver is granted, the fee or fees waived under the application are not collectable.

e. Distribution of policy and applications. At the time of registration or enrollment, the district distributes procedures on charging fees, a written notice of fees charged to each student, the waiver and reduction policy and procedures including income guidelines, and the application for waiver. For students or families whose primary language is other than English, the district provides a copy of the materials in the student's native language or arranges for translation of the materials within a reasonable time.

f. Annual application. The request for a fee waiver is made on application forms provided by the department of education. An application can be received at any time but may only be renewed at the beginning of the school year.

18.3(2) Applications. The procedures are to include a description of the confidential application process for the waiver and provide that a written decision be issued to the applicant within a reasonable time. If the application is denied, the decision will include the reason for the denial.

18.3(3) Review and appeals. The procedures are to include a provision for a confidential review of any denial by a person or persons designated by the board upon request and the manner in which an appeal may be taken. If the decision on review is again to deny the application, the decision maker will notify the applicant in writing that the applicant may appeal the denial to the director of the department of education by filing a notarized statement within 30 days of the applicant's receipt of the district's final decision.

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281—18.4(256) Fees covered. Fines assessed for damage or loss to school property are not fees and need not be waived. Nothing in this chapter authorizes the charging of a fee for which there is no authority in law.

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These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code section 256.7(20).

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