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Spring 2021 System Fees and Affordability Survey Results

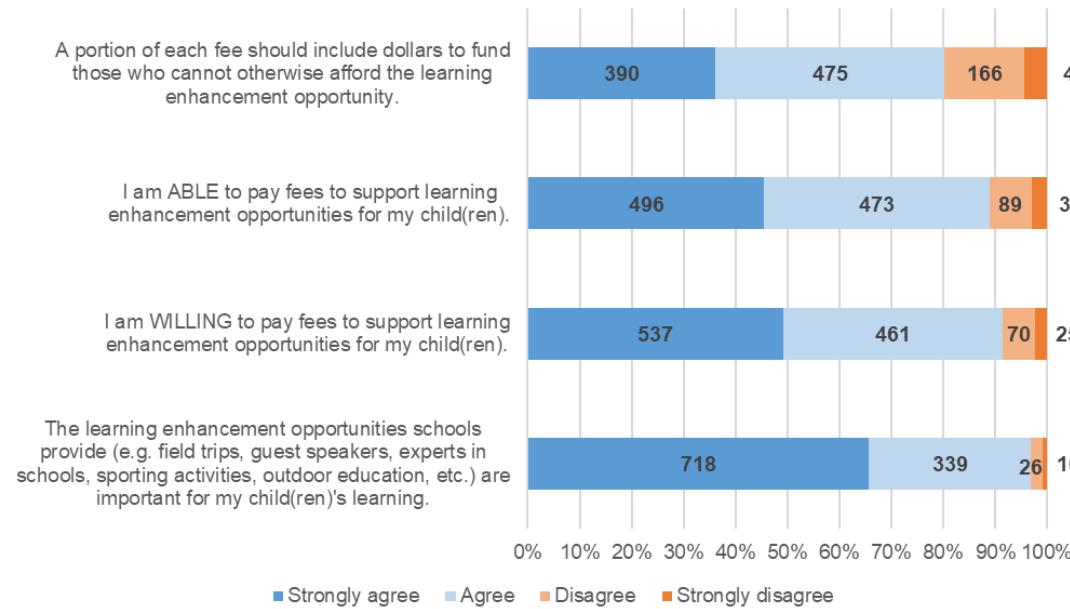
In April 2021, schools gathered feedback from parents on school budget and school fees through online surveys. On those school surveys, there was a link to questions on fees and affordability.

These questions were designed to gather feedback to be reviewed centrally by CBE Finance to better understand parent perceptions related to value, affordability and ability to pay for fees for learning enhancement opportunities such as field trips and guest speakers. This information will also be considered by the CBE's internal fees committee and help inform the system vision and approach for fees and fee waivers into the future.

Three system questions were asked, with responses to each question ranging from 1,093 to 666.

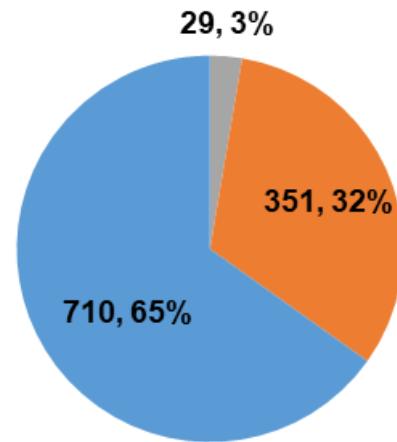
1. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.

(Responses: 1,079-1,093)



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2. Choose the statement that best represents what you consider when making decisions about school fees for your child(ren). (Responses: 1,090)



- It's all about cost.
- It's all about how beneficial the opportunity will be for my child(ren).
- I consider both cost and the benefit for my child(ren).



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3. Economic circumstances vary by family. How should the CBE evaluate affordability given this reality? (Responses: 666).

Below you will find all comments provided in the survey as they were written by survey respondents. Comments have not been edited for accuracy, spelling, grammar, sentence structure or otherwise. Comments have been edited to ensure anonymity. We also edited or omitted abusive, discriminatory and otherwise inappropriate comments.

- Family's income
- "Use your funds wisely and effectively."
- Hire your vendor wisely and competitively . School system waste tons of money . Their vendors charge more money than average of the industry for that work . Evaluate the cost and value for particular activity . Example is going to a nature watching trip vs spark centre . Which trip gives more value for the kids to learn in fun way and what is costing what money "
- In the current covid scenario everything has changed. Everyone should be given the fee waiver options considering lots of people's work has been hit and are currently unemployed.
- Family incomes
- Education must be made available to all, regardless of affordability. Eg. I support higher taxes, in order to allocate more dollars to schools - knowing this may mean I pay more than "my child's share".
- Even families that have decent jobs are becoming more and more strapped for cash- adding fees to courses is a hardship and forces families to asked their kids to not do activities because it would create further hardships to do so- school choices should be available to all students - and the middle class studentâ€™s families are being pushed to the max as they have to pay for everything with no breaks- they don't qualify for subsidies and they pay for everything on limited budgets.
- I don't have an answer for this. Some thoughts may be to have confidential surveys for parents at the beginning of the year as to what level of field studies they can afford. Ask parents if they can help support the field study fees for other kids that cannot. Ask the parent society to fund field studies for those families that cannot afford the costs. Provide some field studies of higher value as optional and perhaps there are methods for having charitable funds that kids who cannot participate have the ability to apply for (like a scholarship).



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- Invite families who are not able to afford the costs to participate in fundraising to help raise the funds to cover the needs of their children and other students.
- Cost of bussing to attend the school should be borne by parents who choose that option.

- If the cost is more than \$20 per student, maybe a survey could go out or give advance notice so that the family can budget appropriately.
- Take into account that just because a family may seem to have a higher income, it doesn't mean they are not financially supporting elderly family outside of the home. I never qualify for assistance, but I do not always have the funds.
- There are standard base metrics but the challenge is that different families will put different priority on spending for school provided opportunities. How do you manage that gray area?
- Be fiscally prudent and spend to the approved budget or less. Budget should be equally shared. If all cannot afford then the programs should be reduced.
- Opportunities need to be made available to all, regardless of ability to pay. I support a sliding scale, but given that not all parents will, the CBE should have money set aside to allow families who can not pay to participate.
- Ask parents for feedback anonymously. Ask parents if they would like to contribute to another student's fees.
- Annual city property tax assessment and income tax
- Perhaps the best way to approach this delicate issue is to provide different activities to different schools depending on the area with a particular school is located.
- Who is working & who isn't. Our family has only 1 income so far and it's been rather hard.
- I think the staff at the schools probably have a good idea of which families need support. The staff or families (if any self-identify) should be trusted to make those decisions on a school by school basis.
- Having subsidy for those that can't afford fees so no child misses an opportunity
- To not use the current equity model to determine what school in what area gets funding but to look at each individual school, and student and their needs and circumstance. Basing funding on postal codes is not effective and leaves many families and students who appear to come from a more affluent part of the city in a tight situation when it comes to school fees.



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- Besides tax return, it also depends on the honour system as some families tax return don't reflect the actual financial situations.
- Allow families to request or apply for fee support when necessary in a confidential way or use the honor system, if parents do not send in money to cover fees understand they simply cannot afford to do this.
- Serious consideration needs to be made as to the value of the opportunity. For example, the Trickster residency was, in my opinion, a serious waste of money even though families didn't have to pay for it. I would have rather the money school council spent on Trickster have gone to ensure that all students could attend swimming lessons or skiing/snowboarding lessons or to have brought in someone to teach basic cooking/food prep or disability awareness or to develop an indoor food garden.
- Parents also need to be informed of the possibility of fees in advance. As far in advance as possible. The notices should also include how the opportunity ties in to curriculum and other life skills, like for swimming lessons it's not just to meet phys ed objectives but to prevent drowning and promote an active lifestyle which helps to reduce obesity and chronic disease... The expected list of fees and their planned date (or estimate) should be included in the beginning of the school year or possibly even earlier so parents can prepare. Those who struggle with fees may be more able to pay if they are told in May that in October their child will have the opportunity to go to Outdoor School but it'll cost \$300 - they may choose not to take a summer trip or buy a pool if they know to expect this cost and how their child will benefit from participating.
- All opportunities should be evaluated not just for their cost and curriculum tie-ins but their value to the child and child's family and society as a whole. Is it better for kindergarten kids to learn how to make puppets or learn how to swim? Is it better for a grade 3 child to learn how to write a play or learn how to make a healthy meal? Is it better for a grade 6 child to design an escape room or develop an understanding and appreciation for natural environments? "
- Try and do more from the school and on school grounds to cut down on the financial burden on parents.
- What does the school expect - when due to economic circumstances if a family could no longer afford the (too much) increased Transportation fees? The same rule should apply to all other scenarios (Especially since the TLC is a program of choice and not compulsion)
- Eliminate fees

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- Not sure
- Open discussion with families on a case by case basis as circumstances change throughout the year
- The families should be responsible to pay for school supplies. To avoid any issues with bullying over who has the better supplies, the school should publish and provide a standard list of supplies for parents to purchase.
- Ask by email, one single email, or by text dedicated to the question, not 400 different topics. That might give you an idea of who is struggling financially and who is not. Straight to the point.
- It's public education. You must provide for all. If portions of my fees go to pay others that is expected.
- Case by case analysis
- All children should benefit from these experiences but cost is always going to be a major consideration for some, including myself
- "Stop extravagant field trips they are not worth the money. More emphasis should be placed in the class room. Way too often a field trip is viewed as nothing more than NOT being in the classroom and a time to socialize.
- There is way too much emphasis on technology at the expense of readable handwriting, spelling, grammar or the ability to recall the times table or do mental math. I'd gladly pay a fee for getting back to basics in order for our children to have the ability to write, spell and recall mathematical facts!"
- More of our fundraising should go to offsetting the cost of field trips and athletic teams, so that there are fewer financial barriers to participating.
- Covid made things hard this year and we can't afford to pay fees
- "Increase fees.
- Those who can't afford get reduced structure or don't have to pay.
- We can pay a bit extra to benefit all!!!"
- Make waivers and subsidies for fees available to families if they ask for it.
- Check whether parents have job or not, if the children/child are living with a single parent, etc.
- All students regardless of ability to pay should be able to participate in activities
- Very difficult but must consider each student's ability to pay so that no student is left behind. Opportunity for kids should never be prevented based on ability to pay.

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Perhaps fundraising efforts could go towards creating a fund that parents who are in need could access to pay those fees for student programs.

- I guess everyone can afford the fees for CBE
- Ensure that all students are able to participate regardless of the ability of their families to pay for activities.
- All kids should have access to enrichment activities independent of family finances.
100%
- Could we offer a scale of fees so people can select what they can afford? Put a minimum amount and then allow for a sliding scale.
- Household annual income & employment status. Someone could have been working last year, but lost their job this year, so annual income alone will not represent an accurate picture.
- Make sure the cost will be somewhat everyone can afford
- Level of household annual income.
- Many families are struggling with current economic circumstances and shifts in income. Please don't make assumptions, even with students living in presumably affluent areas, that families can afford to support the shortfalls of the system.
- I am not sure how they should evaluate, but I would check students that are able to pay for themselves, students that can contribute to the success of others and let CBE budget to cover expenses of those that cannot afford.
- Cbe should evaluate by past year's financial statuses and not just some proof of current year.
- CBE is not in the position to assess each family's financial situation. To make things simple, fees based enhancement opportunities should be optional
- It would have to depend on what school and area they are in. Every Student has the right for equal opportunity as the next student!
- Families should have to complete an appropriate form and background check providing the required and pertinent information necessary for the school to make an informed decision regarding the family's circumstances and how best to help them.
- We believe that learning/educational opportunities should never be lost (or forced to be passed on) because of affordability - where the collective can support the one, they should. Ideally cost and fees would be structured in a fashion that those that can afford to support those who cannot would be able to.



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- Families should have to prove that they cannot afford fees, not just claim that they can't pay. Make sacrifices to your own spending for the children.
- Sliding Scales, and not just on the low income cut off
- I have indicated I can support this cost but barely... it is expensive
- We are collectively experiencing a global pandemic and the after effects to our economy has been grim and substantial. Being prudent in considering that most families long to support their childre's educational experiences but equally have to provide for basic needs and mental wellness needs to be considered and supported. Prudence and wisdom are required in decision making to allow for inclusivity, diversity and equality among all people groups represented among the student population. Consideration of long term impact on mental health holistically needs to be prioritized!
- Pay for use basis with perhaps some loan provisions but no free rides.
- those who are able to give more financially can contribute more to those who are in economic circumstances.
- "Fundraising should be used to subsidize those children who actually reside in the community and whose families can not afford to pay.
- It is not reasonable to expect avg. income parents to pay a portion of their fees to those whom can not afford it when the school has opportunities to volunteer for casinos (70k) and the like. "
- All families should have the same access to opportunities. I like the idea of "A portion of each fee should include dollars to fund those who cannot otherwise afford the learning enhancement opportunity".
- Voluntary system
- By comparing with what others in the same area are paying for that activity.
- Family income range to determine affordability
- In my opinion, there should be a cap of the cost for enrichment programs and it should be adjusted by school grade/age. The CBE needs to evaluate the cost/benefit of a particular opportunity. Then the CBE would compare the cost to other age-appropriate programs to see if such cost is reasonable or if there's a more economical option. An option should always be given to each family to decide whether or not to participate. For example, a family which normally would not be able to afford a day to the zoo at the full price might consider it a good opportunity for the child to visit the zoo with the class at the group discounted rate.



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- Another factor impacting affordability is the frequency of the enrichment opportunities. Two activities per school year is more affordable than four activities.
- Average the cost so all the children can participate. If some students who cannot afford to pay should be subsidized on case by case basis.
- Situation changes anytime, currently I can afford my kids fees
- Excellent question that I wish I had an answer for. But I'd rather have too many than not enough families apply for it.
- One method is trusting the families in communicating their affordability on a case by case basis. Alternatively, the school board may rely on procedures introduced by other civic institutions for evaluating affordability, such as ""Fair Entry"" program and so forth.
- Parents and students should be offered the option to choose whether they wants to benefit from learning enhancement opportunities. There should be a process in place for families who are willing to participate but they have concerns about affordability to share their circumstance with the school administration. The process should allow those ""willing"" families to benefit from the leaning enhancement opportunities by charging a reasonable mark up on charges paid by other students."
- I feel as though you are able to assess this on a case by case basis.
- I don't think it's fair to remove opportunities completely because it might be too expensive for a small percentage of the overall group, so I think that offsetting cost for some students by increasing it for others is fair. Parents should also have a say before something is cancelled or not considered.
- Charge a bit more, use extra funds to lower costs for those who can't afford it. It's important to give all children equal opportunity.
- Fees could be on a sliding scale based on income. A portion of fundraising dollars could go towards the fees of families that can not afford them. Also families could be asked to volunteer in exchange for reduced fees (post pandemic).
- A middle ground. Not too many extra expenses, worthwhile ones when they come up.
- It's about priorities, and many families do not make education a priority. Students of truly limited means should be supported but also the case for parents making this a priority is important
- keep costs of learning enhancement opportunities to under \$15/child or consider not using that experience
- similar to how transportation/noon supervision fees are working for families in need



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- Opportunities should be accessible to all students. I would support some dollars from those who can pay the cost being pooled to help support those families who cannot necessarily afford additional educational opportunities. Fundraising is another possibility to allow those who need to gather funds the opportunity to generate necessary funding.
- Let people explain the various circumstances. the pandemic was really hard on a lot of families and the tax return of the prior year (the way the government decides) may not apply to the current situation of a family. Kids/youth will have extra needs in the coming year or years to catch up, not only on academics, but many will also need some support in social skills, physical skills, and mental health.
- Allot funds
- Have an option for families with financial needs to be given support through a discretionary fund set aside by either school council or other group. The school admin can be in charge of this fund.
- I think that some costs can be covered by other students, as well as the school. It would make sense for the CBE to more support schools in low socio economic areas than ours.
- Sharing school fees for ALL items up front, at the beginning of the school year is beneficial for budgeting for families.
- Ask families what is affordable
- Not sure, but school fees are not excessive and parents should do their best to budget. I think the current system is easy to ignore.
- Consider school demographics and don't offer programs that are likely to be unaffordable for some families unless subsidies are available.
- With the money received, we should spend it on our kids and on laptops, books, etc.
- I believe that the CBE needs to take a ""middle of the road"" stance. While I do not mind paying a little bit more to subsidize another family in the class who may not be able to afford the fees for field trips, I need to make sure that they are truly needy. How is that determined? Do they need to hand in their tax forms to the CBE qualify? I am not knowledgeable enough on the process. I do understand that we do not want any child to have to go without but I also do not see why the rest of the kids have to forgo an opportunity because one or two families are unable to pay for the extra field trip. In that type of situation, I would be absolutely willing to pay more so that everyone can go. I recognize that this is a sensitive and complicated situation.
- Have families indicate at the start of the year if they will require financial support for children to participate. To help school plan and support.



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- Consider making the fee include an element in the fees that will cover the children who cannot afford to pay, so that all children can participate.
- Only book events that have tangible, obvious benefit to student learning. If it's not obvious, maybe there is another, better choice to spend the money on.
- I think it's great to ask families to pitch in for those that can not afford something. Just like a fundraiser, I'm happy to donate when asked, particularly if it's a child I know and the teacher of that class asks for help for them personally...As a past volunteer in my kids classrooms and seeing the children that may not have extra's, I'd always want to be a parent who can give an extra pair of shoes or a swim class etc.
- Don't know
- Government subsidy programs should be in place to cover costs for families that are unable to afford additional fees.
- The CBE should evaluate some of the in school special activities and look at whether similar programs could be run internally for lower costs so that those opportunities could be accessible to all schools not just high income ones.
- It will depend on the locations of the schools and the average income of the students parents. I would say in the poorer areas the students parents will not have as much money to go around for school fees than other areas. So maybe have a survey given out by each school to their parents.
- If we can pay in instalments like I did for lunch fees, it helps
- I think asking 20-25 for an event is doable and have a separate place where people better off could donate to use funds for others that have less of an ability.
- more inclusive interaction with parents across economic strata
- Flat fee for everyone with consideration for low income families with multiple kids, also i only have one kid, im willing to adopt a kids fees where i can afford it
- Yes. I support the CBE to focus on benefit to students, and structure fees so that families able to pay fees also provide these valuable opportunities to students in families that are not able. All students deserve the same opportunities regardless of their family's financial situation. Affordability should consider CBE's ability to cover the cost with the collection of fees from those able to pay.
- Based on median income of communities served. Knowledge from teachers when they know of a families situations. Results of this survey.



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- All children should be given the same opportunities and those that cannot afford it should have grants or have the fees waived. I am willing to pay a few extra dollars on my own child's fee's if I know they are being used to support equal opportunities for others.
- 10-20 dollars per activity should be mostly affordable.
- Parent councils can help add in an extra dollar or two to fees to help cover other students
- Ensure funding is in place for families who cannot afford it- funding could be provided by waivers, fundraising or casinos so that each child/ family has opportunities
- They should have options for people to pay based on what they can afford. Public school is meant to be available to everyone free of charge. I think that charging \$300 for the privilege of your kid to stay at school all day is offensive on its face. People who work need to know that they won't have to come rushing back to school to pick up their kids at lunchtime. Charging them for the peace of mind of having someone at the school make sure that their kid doesn't wander off during the 30 minutes they get for lunch is ridiculous. That is the public school system failing at its duty. It already does the bare minimum and requires additional fees for all the extras it claims the up front fees pay for, paying the school like you would pay a babysitter or a daycare is just too much to ask. And that doesn't even touch the insanity of charging kids to ride the buses that government already pays for. A single kid outside of walking distance can cost their parents over \$600 a year in school fees that pay for nothing but transportation and supervision. A family with three children will be looking at nearly \$2000 in base fees for elementary school. And then every little thing on top of that costs more. The law requires that kids be in school. If the government allocated funds cannot pay for the kids to be in school, then that is something the board of education needs to sort out with the government. The bill should never be passed on to the parents.
- Not by using tax information! Because my husband apparently makes to much, we cannot access support. One income. All the money he gets goes to mortgage, bills, groceries, etc.! Our children don't attend extra curricular activities because we can't afford it!
- I don't know, I don't have information/expertise in this area
- CBE should request funds from Provincial government as well as municipality. Should not hesitate to reach even federal government or business house
- low income family defined by authority.



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- With so many interruptions to the typical school year and rarely a full 5-day week, field trips and speakers can take away from core curricular time. I don't think my children typically find value in guest speakers or field trips.
- Allowing principals to add a dollar to everyone's cost to use towards helping pay for those who can't was good. It is a shame that got removed.
- You are smarter than I but all should have opportunity in our system to experience variety.
- Although economic circumstances change all the time for families but this year and last year were exceptions where all families suffer income drop in one way or other so CBE should keep in mind about this and keep fees at the levels that families can afford. My suggestion is whatever decision you make keep in mind this year almost all families economics are not same as before so provide services that families can afford.
- Currently we can afford our fees, but that may change in future. It would be nice if an exemption could be made if we are having a tough time financially. I'm sure there are families right now that can't afford the fees but I feel they still deserve to get a good education for their children.
- Various options.
- More funds allocated directly to the classroom and less to the board members. Fees should be charged in schools to enhance learning and a higher income threshold given for exemption so that those who can afford it are helping to support not only their children but the community
- Honour system
- CBE should try and ensure that all children have the same learning opportunities no matter what the economic circumstances are for each family. They need to find a balance between budget and quality of education. They should be offering fee relief based on economic circumstances.
- Support should be provided for those families who are unable to pay fees.
- Parents should be asked for input before deciding which programs to register for.
- Number of children, gross income, number of wage earners, total in family, housing situation, special needs/expenses, need for transportation, need for extra child care.
- Try to supplement a trip or event as much as possible to make it affordable.
- I think this is a conversation that needs to happen on a school by school or even case by case basis. Although field trip experiences enhance learning, I don't believe that they are essential or necessary as part of an excellent program, especially given all of the



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resources and experiences that are available remotely (online). Schools should very carefully evaluate field trip benefits before undertaking the trip and should only participate if there is not an in-class or community based alternative that could fill the requirements.

- Affordability across the board
- Waiver for families that can't afford
- Case by case if allowed
- Have an even fee for everyone attending the school.
- At the least minimum.
- This is a good question. As a single mom of 3, money is always tight. However, I have a great job so we do not do without and I would not consider myself in need of assistance. I would, though, be quite annoyed if assistance was provided to someone in a better situation than myself because they asked for it and I didn't, or because they chose to be a one-income family so one parent could stay home, whereas I am a one-income family who also has to pay for childcare. I have no idea how you determine or calculate that.
- Schooling should be free, period, regardless of class, race, religion or gender.
- Financial impact should be considered when making choices on enhanced opportunities.
- Provide an option for those who are financially able to support those in need an opportunity to do so.
- People should be able to apply for a waiver and it should be based on income
- Every one should pay equal fee.
- Charge enough so that 80% of students can pay for an event/trip/activity for all the students. Offer reduced or free fees to families that request help... but ensure you have proof of income to make a fair and well considered decision. Give families and idea of the general level of income that warrants requesting help.
- Bases on parents' annual tax return. Families want to have funding need to submit their annual tax return as evidence,
- By looking at the percentage of affordability
- No broad idea about that
- Evaluate with a balanced approach to both cost and benefits for the students, but striving to ensure that no students are excluded from a programs due to economic reasons.
- Whether parents are currently employed and the gross revenue of the family
- more funds given to school that have waivers

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- Individual family financial condition
- pay fee if you can or volunteer if you can not pay fee
- CBE should evaluate parent affordability on individual financial circumstances
- I think they should apply a percentage in all fees to offset families that can not afford the fees.
- Include an ask to the families when asking for fees, as you are doing now. ie ""I am able to pay this fee""
- I want to believe that no one would lie about their financial situation to get their child a free pass to something related to their school classes I know that there are parents who do so. I believe a case by case basis may be needed for review if a child's parents are always requesting assistance.
- Its extremely important. Affordability is not only a matter of household income
- Teachers make great decisions and know their classes. Let them decide as a team what the priorities are, survey parents to choose between 2-3 options. Always ask parents to consider paying at one of 3 levels- minimum, minimum plus extra to help others, or plus another extra amount to help out. Parents will donate as able to support their children and classroom.
- Work with the City of Calgary and tie into their Fair Entry program. If a family qualifies for Fair Entry, then they qualify for CBE subsidies (as long as the Fair Entry criteria cutoff is not too low).
- If CBE has a general understanding of the percentage of families who cannot afford field trips then I'm in favour of augmenting the remaining parent fees by that % to subsidize those costs. Year over year it should roughly average out and reduce the burden placed on the school's budget.
- Honour system. Do not require parents to prove income status etc.
- Shread the management culture at CBE and transfer savings to teachers for all day kindergarten so mommy and daddy can work to make money instead of daycare. Also less teachers days off, in particular we have noticed professional days or otherwise alway falling on mondays or fridays, to which means we pay for day care. You have a right to manage and a responsibility to manage appropriately.
- as system-wide as possible, so inequity isn't created between schools with parents that can afford more/less
- cap on amount spend per activity for elementary, provide more optional programming as children get older



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- weigh close alignment of learning outcomes to student needs and/or curriculum when deciding, would be interesting to consider those activities or experiences that are most ""different"" from the students' day-to-day to help broaden perspectives
- I think that evaluation of this reality should be done in a way that provides discretion for families and children who may not be able to afford opportunities. Families should not have to provide extensive documentation demonstrating that they cannot afford something for their child. Obviously, never should children be excluded from opportunities due to payment and families and children should not be exposed as being unable to pay for an opportunity. When schools are planning activities/programs, affordability and inclusion should be at the forefront the discussion.
- Is there a way that parents can help sponsor those families that can not afford the extra fees? We are in a situation where we would be able to do this and I want all children to benefit without a fee barrier. Is there a base fee (reduced fee) that they could pay and then a slush fund set up for parents to contribute to that to make up the difference?
- I think that some schools might need some more support over others based on overall income for the areas etc. This obviously won't work everywhere, but it should be kept in mind when allocating some funds.
- As a professional accountant I always go back to the tax return, net or taxable income could be used similar to many government programs.
- This is a hard one to gauge as some families have the means to support their child with ease while others are struggling just to get by. Personally our budget would be blown if we had to pay for a few field trips, noon supervision and then having to cover the expenses of others too. I think doing fundraising for field trips would work of each child brought in \$10 per trip.
- This survey is a great start. Fundraisers for fieldtrips would be great.
- I like the idea of those who can afford subsidizing those who cannot. The real question is in how to decide who can afford and who cannot.
- We are in a different climate now than we were a couple of years ago. I think now we need to focus on safe in school programs or local (within Calgary area). These will be lower cost and more feasible for more students whose families have been impacted by the repercussions of the pandemic.
- Trust. I don't think we can demand proof of high (or low) income or wealth.
- Honour system



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- Perhaps a parental vote, per class if it seems on the high side? This is difficult, what one family views as an extraordinary expense, others will view it as commonplace.
- cost should be based on being able to have 99.8% attendance / finding the cost that makes it affordable for everyone
- "Sibling discounts would go along way to helping make fees more affordable."
- Families should be able to apply for reduced fees based on need"
- In the pandemic situation every one are struggling with the financial support for their own family expenses. So CBE must grant some money for the activities instead asking from families.
- Doing this survey to understand abilities of families to afford extra activities is a good step. I absolutely appreciate that opportunities for enhanced learning should be equitable and I am fine with a higher fee being charged to those who can afford it to allow for subsidized fees for those who do not have the disposable funds, as long as there is an awareness and transparency that this is being done. What would be unfortunate is if those paying higher fees were doing so to subsidize those who could afford to pay the fees but simply forget to, or don't want to pay them. As a family that is in the fortunate position to pay higher fees, I wonder if the subsidized (or free) fees could be made available by exception (i.e. people have to ask for them or make a declaration that they are choosing to access subsidized fees due to financial circumstances), rather than by rule (i.e. if fees aren't paid because someone forgets they get covered by the school). I value both equity and accountability in this situation.
- find the middle ground but also provide resource information for those who cannot if subsidy is available.
- Good question. I'm not sure. Maybe through eligibility for the Child Tax Benefit as it is a sliding scale.
- Looking at income of parents of students and taking into consideration number of children going to school in the family.
- By checking their notice of assessments.
- Families have been hit hard, and parents are trying their hardest for their children not to be the one who has to miss out from a certain experience.
- The CBE must have a huge data trove from family participation in various events and payment of fees in the past. Would this provide a means to assess which events/classes/extracurricular programs are worth their value?



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- The big question is figuring out the best way to provide the same opportunities to students in low income families and all other students. Already many families (20%?) do not pay fees required for field trips or other activities yet participate anyway. "
- Not all families in need qualify for help offered solely based on line 150 of their tax docs only. Should be exceptions...
- Yes absolutely they should look at this but to families that really need it, not just people complaining about taxes and not wanting to pay a fee.
- It should be based on how much people make and if the funds are not there for certain families an application process should remain in place for all of those that need it; but again this needs to be financially justified and not just for the complainers "
- Personal surveys or a questionnaire
- I believe if a family can pay then they should. If they need some help so children are not left out, then we can fundraise.
- Provide options and gather parent inputs
- That's a tough question to answer. Perhaps finding programs in the mean cost range.
- By depending on the household income of that child
- Unsure
- Hard question. Pick a dollar value that seems reasonable for a family making the average income in Calgary, take into account number of children in the family, then, using the honour system, let people know there are subsidies if they cannot afford it.
- Ask individual families? I don't know how these could be determined as I have no experience with it. Does the CBE have access to the median and range of income earners in each school based on census data? Can you then combine that data with the requests to the school from individual families to determine the need for fee assistance and hence the affordability of the fees?
- Kids who TRULY cannot afford the costs should be given an opportunity to participate... but there needs to be a rigorous process that prevents abuse of this. Sadly, stories of parents who COULD afford it but chose to claim they could not are out there.
- Always consider accessibility needs, and consider options with no cost. Consider a donation-based model to directly help the kids in my school when I give, so that my donation to my school helps kids at my school, and not just anyone in the entire CBE.
- I do not know. I do know, however, that I would be happy to sponsor another child for a school year, if they were not able to pay for enhancements. This could be done wholly or



dialogue)))

in part. I would like all of the students to have their education enhanced as much as possible.

- to have KG every day
- I do not think CBE has access to such information.
- Household income
- Provide families opportunity to voluntarily and anonymously express need in support of school/activity fees.
- By having families fill out forms where they specify their financial situation (household yearly income, consumer proposals, etc)
- There is a huge income range in schools. Some people cannot afford to pay the fees. Other folks avoid paying the fees if there's a loophole. I think the government should do a better job of funding education. I also find these sorts of questions being asked of parents to point to be problematic. What do I know about budgeting for an enormous school board? Surely, there's some expertise in the CBE or in the province at large. Of course there's another perspective... It sometimes feels like the many surveys are meant to create an illusion of our input being valued when the decisions are going to be made by other folks anyways.
- As the family says
- Hold more high-value fundraisers at the school (silent auction, raffles, 50/50, etc). People who can afford more will contribute more.
- Make it as affordable as you can within budget.
- I believe so family income has to be considered and please make sure eligibility criteria should be implemented in the proper way.
- Take a voting from the parents.
- CBE should have some money for low income students to participate. Schools should be able to do their own fund raising (not just parent committees), have large scale events to provide extras for students and spend that money towards low income families.
- CBE should charge school fees, most families can pay for these and understand it goes towards the students. I would happily pay \$500-\$1000 for my child's education and I am on a very fixed income but understand the importance of school fees."
- I have no idea how this is evaluated now as I have never used it. I'm guessing that the school and teachers already assess this well.
- that is a really difficult question!



dialogue)))

- The small portion of families who cannot afford the fee should be covered by government grants, not by other families.
- Not sure in this environment at this time. There will be lots of families that need support.
- As a public school system, for-fee opportunities should not be based on the relative wealth of the neighbourhood a given school its located in. This is currently the situation. In an ideal world, I would like to see funding to subsidize or even completely cover these opportunities distributed evenly to all schools.
- The government needs to provide better funding for education.
- Income tax but not always showing the reality.
- We came from a private school to CBE. My only school fees this year we're \$20.00. That's too low. I would have happily paid \$100 a year for the fees as long as I knew it would help lower income families be able to pay. If families can't afford the fees then we should all be pitching in but we can't do that if we don't others need the money.
- By lowering the cost of lunchroom supervision and school fees
- Base it on ability to pay
- Assuming no activity is mandatory, affordability really comes down to the choices made by individual families. In cases where families have applied for, and been accepted, into Federal, Provincial, or CBE programs then consideration should be given to attend the same amount of activities as the average child in their school (which may not be all available activities).
- based on total house income divided by number of children from the same household
- A specified list of proposed activities and their costs provided at the beginning of the year that parents can opt in or out of. Those who opt in are aware their fees will be higher and for those who opt out there will be an alternate arrangement within the school made for those children not participating with little to no additional fees.
- A small amount added to each opt in fee that will be pooled and give the opportunity for a child whose parents reach out requesting help.
- Option for opt in parents to pay double for any particular event they choose (i.e. field trip or enrichment activity) that will be added to the pool to help the other children wanting to but unable to participate."
- Afterschool clubs could be paid extra just like any other activity class.
- During school extras should not exceed 20/month since it might be too much for families with more kids"
- No comments



dialogue)))

- provide ways for family who cannot provide/afford the cost to be exempt.
- I like the idea listed above about a portion of funding being allocated to low-income families to participate.
- If anyone approaches the principal for help with fees, they should have help with their fees.
- If they are applying for a waiver, it should be based on the last three months family income. Basing anything on the previous year's family income is not an accurate picture of how things are for that family now."
- 10-20 dollars per student per trip
- I am guessing 80 percent of the families can afford the activities. Based on that budget the event so it is covered by 80 percent of the families. the rest can enjoy. As well in September the opportunities for the year can be handed out to the families with cost. This can be voted on or signed as to what a family can or would be willing to pay for. I don't think students should be excluded based on not being able to afford. In the end funds could be requested to raise the amount so that all families can be involved for the yearly activities. EXAMPLE. we expect an deficiency of \$1200 to cover all families and are requesting any donations as well as inputting funds from fund raisers. This would allow TIME to get the funds for a great education. As well Nothing wrong with offering school uniforms to those kids who want to wear the colors and RAISE MORE MONEY.
- Choose learning experiences that deliver the best most enriching experiences for the most children.
- Offer support for those who cannot afford to pay for learning enhancements opportunity.
- I believe field trips, guest speakers, etc., are mostly waste of time and money.
- I think that the health course is delivered poorly at my children's school.
- Specialists are obviously needed for the hard of hearing kids.
- You do not have the slightest idea how to support gifted kids and how to keep them engaged (not wasting their time, while attending school). Writing an IPP is a token, it is not support!!! You need specialists with long time experience dealing with gifted kids, who you have been lacking for a while.
- Yes, we can pay, BUT WE DO NOT SEE THE BENEFIT FOR IT.
- #NAME?
- By number of students per family
(Full price for first, 10% less for the second...)"



dialogue)))

- Establish a standard criteria for affordability. Not wanting to pay and not being financially able are not the same, however adjustments can be made for both. Payment plans, child does't participate (for those not wanting their child to participate, or proving them an in-school alternative etc)
- These families should be sharing their financial information in that a ranking system can be in place. In making the process transparent, without compromising privacy, it would be easier to see which families need it more. It would also be dependent on the number of children and if basic needs are met.
- Maybe cap how much an experience should be paid for by parents and the rest would need to come from somewhere else, such as school council. If the money isn't there, the experience is not offered to the entire class/school.
- Fees should include some extra to cover the cost of those that may be unable to afford the fees or perhaps and option upon payment to cover the cost of an anonymous child.
- In public school, I believe that no student should go without. The CBE/school should weigh the benefit and cost of the opportunities using input from TEACHERS and PARENTS. If the schools cannot cover these fees with their budget or by fundraising, another strategy must be developed. If there were a way that people could donate to a school fund or even CBE fund to support kids whose families cannot pay, that would be wonderful. My family is very fortunate, and I'd be willing to support other kids in all quadrants of the city so that their family doesn't feel the added stress of these fees. There are systemic disadvantages encountered by POC, that must be addressed by making school and learning opportunities effortlessly available.
- It's difficult because taxes should be the mechanism for redistribution of wealth, not charity. And yet, with the current government we must look to a charitable approach so that lower income children are not left behind. As for CBE, you must use an equity lens when looking at affordability and opportunity; those who need more MUST receive more. It's the foundation of public service.
- Reduced cost for each additional child in the system, and cost-exemption for families that cannot afford to pay.
- Option to 'donate' a school fee for families that have the financial ability to do so. Then, money should be evenly distributed across the board so that ALL students have the same opportunities, regardless of family social economic status. "
- financial difficulties



dialogue)))

- Parents can be given the option to subsidize other families fees, however, the school and the system should be able to assist families that need support with fees.
- Limit events like field trips to one per year, and possibly fund students who truly cannot afford it with shared funds. If it is a one day event, ask whether it is truly going to impact a child's learning and development enough to warrant the cost. Maybe a trip to the Glenbow Museum every year is not that valuable in the grand scheme of things.
- All families should be given equal opportunity and no one should be excluded due to economic circumstances.
- I would like to see families or school communities that have the ability to pay for these types of programs pool resources to share with those school communities or families within our schools who may not.
- Choose 'low-cost' activities; subsidize those who can't afford it.
- I think affordability should be evaluated from the perspective of a single-payer system, e.g. AHS. By pooling our resources we can potentially lower our costs, and provide the best experience for all of our future citizens.
- Given our new reality I am no longer employed by a company. My income varies depending on if I have work, if I can work from home, if my child home I can not work at all. This year was a very difficult year and basic food and housing had to be priority. So fees were not paid on time. Basing from income tax does not tell the whole story. Expenses do. For a parent of a special needs child our expenses are often much higher. So a better way to determine fees is needed
- Demographics of the families that attend the school, and when charging fees charge enough to cover a certain percentage of students anticipated to not be able to afford the opportunities. Any extra money can contribute to more activities or lower the cost of the next activity. Fund raisers would also help to lower these costs for families who are unable to pay out of pocket.
- My family can afford some of these, but we find them a waste of time and money and mostly being pro forma. Below I am answering another question: Are these really needed?
- I do not know what you mean by experts in the school. If these are the support personnel for the deaf students - they for certain need their needs appropriately addressed.
- Better support needs to be provided to GATE students.
- I think that you can always have an option for families to subsidize other families when they pay their own fees for their own child.

dialogue)))

- Net income or low-income status with City of Calgary
- Allow the community to pitch in to benefit everyone as needed
- Use common sense.
- Come to a balance and decide to offer some things to add value add but also be affordable. All parents should understand that public school is about accessibility and strong education first before extra add ons.
- Affordability based on the demographics of each school.
- I feel that for the most part, people will contribute what they can. If something costs \$20 per child but they can only contribute \$5, there should be that option. There should also be the option for parents to pay extra to help out other families.
- Some proof of income / tax return should be required to be excluded from fees. This should be done once at the beginning of the year at the CBE and not be dealt with at a school level. Allowing individuals dignity to pay for their kids programs through a credit system.
- subsidize with school fundraising.
- Income and number of children in family.
- Hard question. I'd keep costs low so affordable, accessibility to all would be the priority. Finding value for reasonable cost is a challenge. Maybe more in-house residencies or experiences makes more sense.
- the cost of activities should be considered against the outcome of the experience. Is it a one time experience vs a series of experiences? Does it build upon skills? Is there an effective alternative that can be provided (ie. virtual experience, or by volunteer) or are there grants that can be accessed for larger projects? Is there fundraising that can be done to offset costs? \$10-50 would be considered reasonable expenses to pay per activity.
- Tough to do. Be transparent. Share the economic diversity of families in the school and provide options on how things could happen to make them equitable i.e fundraising, extra fee on those who can afford. Consider adding an opt in when paying fees as a taxable donation.. Support another child's fees in your school who can't afford their fees.
- I think a child's admission to the Zoo or Telus spark (~\$20) should be reasonable for family to afford.
- This should be a very important factor. School should be a place for equity in opportunity for students



dialogue)))

- Forms sent out to parents for their consent on paying full or partial fees depending upon their financial situation
- Affordability should be quantified in an enhancement learning plan and voted by parents in the school council.
- I have no idea
- Tax returns
- Family size
- number of people working in household"
- Household income structure
- Number of kids should also be considered. Yes I can pay for extras but they do add up for people with more than 2 children
- Tax returns along with the number of people working in the household and the number of children in a particular household.
- I don't think you can subjectively evaluate affordability, nor should any student be at risk of not getting the same opportunities as all students, therefore NO fees.
- I am not sure.
- Based on median income.
- Based on the learning benefits and opportunities for the students of the right age groups. Also under safe conditions during COVID time.
- Let families decide if they can afford fees at the time the fees are due. Make it very clear and simple and dignified to access fee assistance if they need it, no questions asked. Hopefully the families that need help will access it.
- Promote donations, fundraising etc
- Annual income? We are a single income family and know the difference between wants and needs. We sacrifice things other people have for the sake of more important things and we rank education high. It would frustrate me if people said they couldn't afford it and we would have to subsidy people who could pay, but won't.
- I have no idea how it should be evaluated. We are not well off by all means, but our family has the privilege of being able to budget accordingly to make something work if we need to. I am aware that not all families are lucky enough to do that and I don't think those students should miss out on important (or even just fun) opportunities just because of that. I wish I had a suggestion about how to evaluate the affordability (I will put some effort into researching this so I can offer feedback in the future) but I really appreciate that there is an option for families to contribute extra to make up for those that can't



dialogue)))

afford the extras. I think CBE (or at least the school my child attended for K-6) did a FANTASTIC job making an effort to include everyone.

- i do not
- Because it does very so much, I think it is a conversation that needs to be had with each family. With also the question of "How much can you afford". If the field trip is \$20.00 can they pay \$5.00? Are they willing to volunteer with Healthy Hunger or to assist the school in other ways than just paying cash
- CBE should have a dedicated dollar amount for students who truly cannot afford fees. There should be a process in place to filter out those who cannot and those who "don't want to".
- Creating a fund to help students that are unable to afford extra curricular. Setting up some fundraising programs within the school, creating something the students can get involved with that build the fund. Make it school specific. Maybe each school buys a couple vending machines that profits support.
- I am considered high income but with the COViD circumstances I really can't afford many of extra fees like ceremony fees or trips it has been tough
- Have a basement family income below which families qualify for fee waivers.
- Reduction of school busing fees, given we don't have a choice since there is no school in our community. That would save parents a significant amount of money to be able to pay for the school field trip experiences.
- Have a range of calculating affordability, and if families fall just outside of this range, then see it as a case-by-case situation, requiring a decision
- Include options to support others. I would check a box to support students whose families cannot afford the fee.
- Sliding scale based on ability to pay. But if families cannot afford it then it should be optional.
- Offer based on educational benefit - families can consider affordability
- I think CBE should evaluate affordability base on family income.
- If it's under \$100, it should be achievable
- Approaching these issues from a lens of balance is important and considering families that have multiple children. In our home, it is much better if we have notice of fees and can spread costs out over the year.
- I'm not sure.
- Yes



dialogue)))

- Choose activities that are affordable to most families, and provide assistance to those who need it.
- Yes provided that the criteria is clear and reasonable.
- ahsdl;kfjkskl;d
- Base on what parents have expressed they can afford or income
- Family income verification by Income tax returns.
- Give a lot of notice for budgeting opportunities. Things spring on families last minute especially with multiple children has been difficult in the past
- As above, perhaps 10% can be added to each fee to subsidize those who cannot afford it.
- Some of the listed activities are more essential to kids daily enhancement and there for more with the cost involved. Not all are are of equal value to a child
- Everything should be looked at for value for money. If it is less than \$20 per student itnahoukd be offered to all. If it's a bigger item but say you could try skiing then perhaps make it optional.
- In light of the fact that covid has resulted in many families losing a significant source of family income, I believe we should be asking families to contribute a monthly amount to help subsidize those who have been hardest hit (financially) by the pandemic and those whose financial situations could otherwise preclude their children from accessing or participating in school related things.
- I think asking people to include a donation at the time that school fees are due is likely to receive little support, but if a pre authorized monthly donation could be offered or suggested (based on family income) I think this would be more palatable for families. I think making this ask should include a very clear explanation of why the funds are required (eg the pandemic resulted in an average family income loss of money, budget limitations due to xx, xx and xx mean that the CBE will have a funding shortfall of \$xx/student compared to last year and \$xx/student compared to 5 years ago or some other relevant time frame). It should also include very clear indications of how the money will be spent (eg how much will stay at my children's school, how much will cover subsidizing fees for low income families and what defines low income, how many low income families do we have in CBE and what sort of funding shortfall is created when they cannot pay their fees what the impact of not receiving these extra funds would be for individual students and schools, how will these funds improve the classroom experience for the average child as well as children who would benefit from additional

dialogue)))

classroom support but for whom that support may not be possible if there is not sufficient funds for EAs at the school - this would ideally include factual data about how many children in CBE are coded mild moderate and severe and how many coded children are in an average classroom as well as what impact that has on other students' learning if the teacher is the primary/only support for coded children, how the learning experience for children is enhanced by non-core learning opportunities and what this means for short term and long term outcomes such as daily attendance and high school completion rates, etc). Essentially, give evidence, including cited studies, for why giving a monthly donation will benefit my family as they are in the school system as well as how society benefits as a whole and how that ties back to me

- (Eg, providing physical ed., art, drama, and music classes for grade x to x results in decreased missed days of school and greater high school completion. This results in x% more young adults enrolling in post secondary education. Increased high school completion and post secondary enrollment results in a decrease in those requiring social services support which means that (municipal, provincial, and/or federal tax rates for the individual rise at a slower rate or whatever the situation is).
- Providing suggested monthly donation amounts based on family income would be ideal as it is less painful to make several smaller donations over time than even one medium donation at the same time as all the fees are due. Eg total family income of \$xx/year suggest \$5 monthly donation, \$xx/year suggest \$10 monthly.... \$xx/year suggest \$25, 30, 40, 50, etc monthly donation."
- We find things as a community. Set fees based on 80% families covering cost for the program. Then when a family is short, there is enough for those kids to go anyways. Offer work for kids they want to earn credits for the inclusion fund. (All kids can donate time to the inclusion fund.)
- Historical stats on payment and participation
- Look at all fee requests holistically by grade (overall fee request?)
- Hard to say this year because of Covid.
- Maybe base it on tax bracket?
- I am not sure what this question is asking me. Affordability has to do with frequency of an ask, and the the schedule of payment of fees - asking me for \$50 several times a year would be more affordable than asking me for \$400 in one month. Affordability may also relate to planning ahead - letting families know the estimated annual cost of enhanced learning opportunities at the beginning of the year would allow folks to put

dialogue)))

money aside. Can families be offered a sliding scale fee - as in offering the choice of a full or partial subsidy for enhanced opportunities, based on affordability to individual families?

- i thought the goverment said no more fees to be paid to schools? after the year with layoff and no work and home schooling etc parents don't have the money to be paying the schools....
- Could make some of the activities optional or use income from fundraising to subsidize portion of the cost
- I am not sure of a fair evaluative process but I feel that there should be an opportunity for parents to donate extra money to cover some of these expenses. A notice for an initiative to donate funds to families who would need help in general to cover costs?
- There should be reduction in fees
- This is a tough question. We can chose to do events and activities that have a lower cost or a set cost for the entire school. With a program that is a set cost for the entire school, those parents that can afford it can contribute and the parent council picks up the rest of the cost. We need to look at activities available within each community that the kids do not need transportation to get to. This year I was impressed with the activities that our students could get involved in at a low cost. For example: walking in our community, going on a nature walk , virtual hip hop dancing program (HUB learning), virtual visit with the community helpers (firefighters). I would highly recommend that our school look at a resource called URSTRONG (friendship skill videos) that could be done with the entire school via virtual delivery. Administrators and parents can access these videos which teaches social emotional skills and conflict resolution skills. This program was developed by a teacher from Calgary. The website is www.urstrong.com. I highly recommend this program for parents and school staff. It gives a common language for the entire school for all the grades to apply to conflicts (friendship fires) and how to support students with conflict resolution skills.
- CBE may consider the benefits more than affordability.
- Given the unique situations of every family, this is very difficult. considering the value of each activity/need is extremely important. Lots of times what is out there is not absolutely necessary for learning, just a bonus
- it's really difficult because each family has a different situation. Value for each opportunity is very important to consider.

dialogue)))

- All families could be charged the same fees. Families that need support can speak directly to the school administration who can decide on supports along with the families.
- We can do fundraising activities to help families who need financial assistance so that we can improve the overall affordability.
- on a case by case basis
- yes
- Extra fees are contrary to the very concept of public education.
- If opting out of paying fees then should be willing to submit their taxes and/or pay stubs to prove their under a certain income (i.e. <\$36 K household).
- We support our child's education and the school he is attending. We will give up something in order to accommodate his education.
- CBE should have funds to help support the children whose families can not afford these opportunities or have an option for a school family to sponsor a child or families fees.
- Many families in our school community would be capable and willing to contribute for families who can not afford additional fees. If the activity requires any additional fees the consent form should indicate as such and have a box that indicates whether the family can contribute, not contribute or contribute plus contribute for additional students.
- Honestly, anything that the CBE believes to be essential to a child's learning should be supported financially by Alberta Education. So if Alberta Education and/or CBE believes that children need to be increasingly tech savvy, which they do seem to with the increasing PUSH that students have their own chromebooks or laptops and ipads to use at home and / or school, then this needs to be realistically accounted for when Alberta Education and thus CBE does projections and budgeting. Our school is very fortunate thank you to School Council and Parent Council. The Councils will not hold back money if it is believed to bring value to the students. However, we would prefer to use it as enhancement for students such as the arts, author visits, or bringing in programs that the children would no otherwise have access to.
- Help to those who need financial assistance.
- I think we live in a community where money can be tight for families, and appreciate what the school does for our kids. I don't know how you could evaluate it besides looking at past school fee payment (unable to pay fees on time in previous years, or inability to pay at all). Maybe a form could be offered to families, if they would like to apply to have the activities supplemented? I'm not sure.



dialogue)))

- Many of us including my husband have been laid off of work for the last year. It has been very hard not only paying bills but paying various school fees. Somehow, there should be a way that if a person is laid off of their job, the fees would automatically be covered. Most people do not want to click the box in the fee section of PowerSchool that says if you need financial assistance, click here. Maybe they could word it are you currently employed or have you been laid off due to Covid so that people don't feel embarrassed clicking the box for financial assistance.
- I believe looking at the cost and benefit of each option is important and all children should be given equal opportunities. There is financial support available to families who need this and fundraising is a great way to raise money for options as well. I feel the lunch incidental fees currently charged (and sent to collections if not paid) should be discontinued as I don't believe this is a fair fee being charged to parents.
- Use the community census as a guideline. There are many classes of families in this area. Bring in programs that have proven they are effective in enhancing a child's learning. Avoid things that have little benefit such as field trips to go bowling in PE. For less than half the cost you could do cricket or lawn bowling.
- Cost should be reasonable and if possible partly subsidized
- A strong cost-benefit analysis should be done on each learning enhancement activity to ensure each one benefits the majority of students vs the cost associated. School fees should be set in consideration of the overall median income of the demographic area of the school. Each family should be charged a few dollars more to cover the cost of the small percentage of families that truly cannot afford to pay.
- Instead of relying on LICO school should make another bench mark and charge parents on sliding scale method of earning. I mean charging zero from low income and full from parents have extra cent earned from low income is not justified
- Society keeps preaching and complaining about equality...so don't make someone pay \$100 for something then offer the same thing to someone else for \$20 (subsidizing the fee). Instead make fees equal for everyone...make that \$100 into \$60 for all!
- I think a small portion of each fee could go to support those who cannot go, however, I imagine there needs to be a balance for extenuating circumstances if a majority of students cannot afford.
- When there is a cost required, ask families to pay their child's fee and have an option to add a few More dollars, the extra dollars going to a child who needs support to attend/participate in this extra activity.



dialogue)))

- Whenever possible support families who are unable at times to afford these things. Maybe make the fees slightly higher by a couple dollars per student to maybe pay for ones that can't
- It is a good!
- maybe come up with survey sheets for specific event and allow families to decide if they will or not join an activity.
- Please make it easy and not embarrassing to apply and get help. A simple online application that quick and easy to follow. Offer a sliding scale. I don't know the options available because I was too embarrassed to ask when we didn't have the money. A simple tax receipt may not give an accurate picture of someone's current burdens, such as illness or debt loads. I guess my hope would be that if someone called for help, then there would be another there to answer that call, instead of turning them down because they weren't able to prove their situation was needy enough. Now that we've been able to participate in the fun lunches, It feels good to put extra so someone who otherwise isn't in the position to pay for theirs ATM.
- Please offer the service/opportunities that CBE can afford.
- According to last school year, because of COVID school has been operating on and off and because of that reason schools has extra money in budget that can be used to pay towards school fees.
- The LICO barrier fixed by AB is too low and parents fee waiver application is declined most of the time. We recommend introducing a sliding scale fee methods with parents with modest income. For example a couple with 3 children and 41000 income is considered low income and eligible for waiver but a cent more than 41000 is suddenly high income and pay all the fee.
- The CBE should evaluate on a case by case basis. They should also have a slush fund for such circumstances
- Tax assessment? Or case by case basis.
- I don't know how this is currently assessed other than seeing a statement that says to contact administration if I am unable to afford an activity.
- Focus on and enrich core subjects and local field studies
- A survey should be sent to parents to gauge their interest in a particular activity with an estimate of the cost involved. Based on the survey the CBE will then be able to allocate resources for activities.
- I don't know how the CBE should evaluate.



dialogue)))

- I don't know.
- Base costs on the average Canadian family income, not previously seen Alberta average. Keep fees small, under 35\$ per activity, unless a field trip justifies a higher cost due to the activity, ie, skiing, etc...
- Provide fee waiver for families whose income falls below the LICO if requested. Provide proof such as Alberta Works Health card or City of Calgary Access Card.
- Income tax
- I think it's important to focus funds where all kids can benefit - I see athletics being something only top performers can attain. I only think drama, music etc are only interesting to certain kids.
- If the fee is core course related and the opportunity to learn and gain knowledge has a impact on many students than it's of great value.
- should everyone pay their education fee.
- Schools can survey each year on how much each family is able to spend on learning enhancements to get a ballpark amount for affordability. Families requiring financial assistance should then apply for it after fees are determined and CBE can do income verification.
- Every school and family is different, so that is extremely hard to do.
- I am happy to pay a fee for something that benefits my kids. I would like to see the extra spending (that we currently see spent on presenters and field trips that relate to art & dance) reallocated to subjects that directly relate to the curriculum or directly benefit all kids (such as life skills). I would absolutely support extra programs that teach skills such as cooking, budgeting, gardening, personal safety, mental health wellness and hygiene.
- Priority should be given to these basic education needs, and other optional programs may have to have fees associated with them.
- I would prefer highest priority spending on those things that directly relate to the curriculum and benefit all kids. Extra programs are optional and fees likely apply for families- if I think my kids would benefit from it I would be happy to pay for it... there have been many things brought in to the school that I don't think my kids benefitted from, and I would not have paid for if I had the option.
- I would LOVE to see more spending (residencies, presenters, etc.) on life skills... cooking, budgeting, gardening, personal safety and hygiene rather than art and dance varieties.



dialogue)))

- The CBE should evaluate affordability based on similar criteria to the City of Calgary's fair entry program. Eligibility is based on your income. The accepted proofs of income are:
 - Assured Income for Severely Handicapped benefits (AISH)
 - Alberta Works: Income subsidy/support
 - Alberta Works: Learners
 - Alberta Works: Alberta Health Benefit
 - Resettlement Assistance Program
 - Independent youth letter (a letter from school principal, guidance counsellor, or Child and Youth Support Program of Alberta Childre's Services)
 - Canada Revenue Agency: Notice of Assessment
 - The combined total income from line 15000 for all adult household members is required.
 - Letter from a Registered Social Worker (RSW)"
- Use parent council funding to supplement low income families. Students should not miss out on opportunities because some cannot afford
- Perhaps sending home a survey at the beginning of the year or the end of the prior year asking families how much they would be willing to spend per year per student. Then taking those answers and using an average amount as a guideline for planning.
- Factor this in the cost. Those that pay can cover costs for those that can't, or VAS parent fundraising can cover additional costs.
- Determine if the number of students requiring subsidies is too large for the remainder of the students to subsidize.
- Based on previous year tax return if CBE has access to this information.
- Families should be able to apply for support when needed and if reasonable.
- The CBE should consider the average household income in the surrounding neighbourhood when deciding on assessing fees. Forest Heights is very much a working class area of the city and I don't want to see our local kids miss out on educational opportunities bc of socio-economic reasons.
- If a better overall program can be delivered to children with income tested user fees to help subsidize families with affordability challenges, I would support that and contribute.
- Individual tax returns maybe
- Base on household income
- Varing level of payment based on income level shown on tax forms.



dialogue)))

- Families that needs assistance should show proof of personal income tax returns that have been submitted to the government. Higher income earners with above average spending habits to service debt or holidays or lavish styles of living/eating will be reflected and the honest lower income earners will get the help they need.
- "Set fee(s) per student to cover over-and-above costs not covered through budgetary funding. Use existing financial support data/enrolment at the CBE to understand which students may need support - then offer that child's family the option to 'pay what you can'.
- The CBE cannot argue set fees for each CBE family's economic situation. Providing visibility on actual cost via the activity fee, then offering a 'pay what you can' option to those enrolled may result in no student being excluded."
- What do the kids talk about the following year, what do they talk about to the parents. No survey 1 or 2 weeks post a trip has been done, consider getting the feedback. This will determine if the 'cheaper' trips are better than the costly trips, and therefore the value to the child.
- Have an option for those who are unable to pay apply through CBE, when they apply, they would have to provide financial documentation of their inability to do so such as income tax and number of dependents etc.
- I often feel pressure to pay for all the 'fun lunches' at school. This is something the students become very aware of - who can and cannot afford to get a special lunch.
- I think it would be better to evaluate by each family's income.
- Put the fee structure in place based on the average income of a household in the province and provide financial support to the families who have income less than the average.
- Try to make opportunities affordable to all families. This could be done by supplementing the fees or providing families the chance to apply for a reduction in cost or to have the cost covered.
- CBE must provide help to students in need or in all cases.
- I believe that funding should be allocated to provide for children who might not be able to attend due to affordability. However, to request that other parents make this contribution, given the large sum of funds provided by AB Ed and the wages paid at the school level, I believe that these opportunities should be budgeted from the school funds without them costing additional to certain families.
- Reasonable cost for the average family. Then help those who need financial assistance



dialogue)))

- try to figure out an income bracket per family and the number of children attending schools, then try to ask for funds for low income people from government and top up with fees raised by overall parent population
- Balance it out kids waste so much time on busses need to have schools in newer communities
- I think quality learning enhancements are important and realize that a number of families may not be able to support extra fees. If the school were to need additional fees for a few activities/enhancements a year, I think that is reasonable and families can budget for the cost. Also, families who can afford to support more, could donate the fee for additional students to be covered.
- Fundraising abilities for each event. Strengthen option through parent council.
- "Possibly their income
- I trust CBE to know which families are in need and to do all that is possible to help them for their children "
- I think currently there is unfair opportunities given to families because they fall into a certain income bracket. There are many families that both parents work so their income is considered higher but they are struggling as well because there is no break or help with fees. Everyone ultimately has the right to participate and should not be discriminated for lack of income but everyone should be given an incentive or price break as well.
- I would assume that each class has a overall spending limit that they must work within to limit overall cost throughout the year. I feel some years I have paid more than others, and assume that some teachers choose more field trips than others. It would be helpful for parents on a budget to know the entire projected cost, rather than getting the surprise notice. Sometimes these notices seem to come frequently especially with multiple kids.
- Put out some options of costs/fundraising for trips/activities. I heard from a number of parents that if they knew it only cost \$200 to get a whole class on-line field trip to the zoo they would have paid for the whole thing. Other schools do a cheque drive where people donate what they can. Some people don't have time to gather/store bottles but would be willing to donate cash.
- Affordability is usually about choice. I think my child's school should clearly state fees in advance of the school year and the parents can decide. If it is your designated school and you have little choice to go to another place you should receive assistance if needed. Transportation should not be subsidized.

dialogue)))

- I'm not sure but I am shocked how little there are for fees, we don't even pay for supplies, could families buy supply bundles through the school? . I think there could also be general school fee additions and it be on a prorated scale for affordability
- How do you determine who has need and not?
- Just ask if they can afford or not for their child/children .
- This is difficult. I am not sure the best process.
- Family income valuation putting in brackets to determine which ones are needed some financial help
- Use your current guidelines
- Lower the fees of every activity .
- Allocate enough funds so every child has equal opportunity to learn.
- Field trips should be affordable for most but each family could pay a bit extra to offset costs of those who can't afford it
- Subsidies available based on 2020 income
- CBE can evaluate affordability by the results of this and similar surveys as well as other feedback from families. Building in an amount for families in need is also a great inclusive practice.
- By family income.
- The "option" to contribute to Angel funds/ charity funds to help support families which cannot pay fees themselves; continue to consider cost of program/opportunity against the benefit to education.
- Subsidies for those who need financial support.
- Stop deferring responsibility to individuals and reaffirm education as a right. Political government of the moment is detrimental to our education system.
- 10% reduction on activities but asking for parents or families to pay got additional costs.
- Good luck, many can afford more but choose to allocate elsewhere. Those that truly have less should be supported while those that complain tend to be able to afford it but not at the expense of something they see as higher value i.e. skiing, golfing, vacationing.
- Allocate a school budget to support families unable to cover the costs of learning enhancement opportunities, as needed.
- Every kid should have the opportunity to get education and be treated equally at school. I am not sure how school collect info (anonymous family income survey?) but I am willing to pay a small share for students who can not afford the basic education.

dialogue)))

- This is a difficult question. Some families in theory could afford the payment, but then not have anything left to save. Some parents say they can't afford the payment but how can this be honestly assessed without an infringement on their rights? Perhaps a payment option of: pay what you can, pay X amount (the base amount), pay X amount and amount willing to donate to cover the cost for less financially fortunate students
- Aim for low-cost, high value opportunities. Ensure subsidies, bursaries or sliding scale fees are an option for higher cost activities and that families know how to access these when needed.
- Print off a letter to send to parents detailing the cost of what the field trip /presenter/whatever it is the class is preparing to do and have the parents send the letter back with their response. Ie) yes I can pay, or no I can't pay
- Consider use of fundraising dollars to support those unable to afford the extra activities available
- Provide a clear description of what is potentially being offered and cost per pupil, then allow parents to decide whether to participate or not. CBE are not in a position to be able to assess affordability for all families, especially as different families will place different priority on this type of spending.
- Make the fee optional
- I don't know
- Either way, with covid, having speakers, field trips, and new gym equipment should be factors out of the budget.
- If there are more than one kid, allowance should be given to families.
- I think the CBE needs to look at their overall spending from top level down instead of always looking at bottom level up and see where they can cut so they can offer more to the physical schools.
- survey is a good way
- All kids deserve equal access and cost should not be the determining factor for educational opportunities.
- I am not sure how economic circumstances are evaluated at the present time. I feel that children should not be punished for their family's economic disadvantage. Childhood is all about learning. Hopefully, when all fees are collected, each child that is interested in a particular activity will be able to participate.
- Families should have to apply for support if they require it and should have to meet a standard set of criteria to qualify

dialogue)))

- Current paystubs and/or EI docs or 2020 taxes
- Assume everyone is cash-strapped and plan accordingly.
- Should assume everyone is strapped for cash and plan accordingly
- Confidential evaluation of last tax return, and/or current employment. I.e. someone may have lost their job since last year.
- I don't agree that fees for transportation and lunch room asked to be paid months in advance.
- During this difficult time, the costs for activities in many cases should also drop. Excepting safety requirements, costs for activities that do proceed may actually be lower in many cases.
- Perhaps there can be a fundraising arm of the CBE.
- If it is more than weekly groceries price for a family, should ask before offering a program.
- Given that those families able to afford it may choose private schooling, the CBE should assume families CANNOT afford additional fees of any nature. This is particularly important due to the dire employment situation in the city.
- Maybe a survey to indicate a dollar amount that families would be willing to contribute per school to supplement their child's learning and then work within those parameters??
- CBE should evaluate affordability with respect to current pandemic situation.
- proof of income
- What do you mean?
- Having a fund to help those who can't afford it is a great idea. And/or even having the opportunity for families who can afford the fees to adopt another child or children to pay for as well at the time of payment. There could also be cheaper options offered for those who can't afford the more expensive ones, and those that prefer the cheaper option, possibly with a combined group from different classes. Offered only as an alternate instead of indicating it is for those who can't afford it.
- The CBE (just like any family or organization) has limited funds so should work with parents to determine what the priorities are. The child's education and experience needs to be at the focal point for decision-making.
- Teach the kids.
- Not sure value of bringing in experts on the subjects you should be experts in
- Ask parents who are happy to contribute an amount and see with the pool how much can be done. As this will benefit to all kids.



dialogue)))

- Such a tough question!
- Pressure the government to fund public schools and keep funding for private schools up to those who can afford it. Equal does not always mean fair!"
- All kids should have as many learning options as possible regardless of financial circumstances, but for families experiencing financial constraints any ask from the school can be overwhelming and difficult when they have to decline because they can't afford an option or a field trip. In our large system the solution is often to limit options to make less things accessible to everyone, which creates bigger barriers and applies them everywhere. It's hard to make things equitable. It takes a lot of creative thinking, but that should be the goal.
- Number of children in one household and their monthly income.
- "My family survives on CPP and CPP-D payments. We do not qualify for fee or lunchroom program waivers because we are considered to make too much money. We are not asked our income vs. our expenses, just our income which is unfair. For example: If my family's monthly income is \$3000.00 And our monthly expenses exceed \$2800 (rent, utilities, groceries) how can I pay \$300 a month for the lunchroom program? My opinion is, do not base eligibility just on a family's income, take in to account their monthly expenses as well and go from there. (I hope this makes sense)
- I think this is a very difficult question to answer. All children must be given the same opportunities as this is how we build our next generation up regardless of circumstances. However in some areas that is just not the case. I don't know how to solve this
- Not sure and I know tough as traditional fundraising through pizza lunches and dances not available. Is it possible to do go fund me type fundraising
- Offer the most economical options, plan ahead to budget, ask parent council to fund for those who can't afford. Make fair to everyone (more accountability from parents to ensure paying for fees on line) as often can afford but choose not to pay. Assume at discretion of principal to determine to ensure council dollars are used for those students who truly would miss out on the opportunity.
- There should be zero costs for families. Reduce teacher salaries, eliminate unions and pensions. Allocate that money to classrooms and students.
- How? You can't. no without private demographic data or data from Stats Can (which will only tell about things in general)
- Try to create opportunities for a variety of kids from different socio-economic groups. If those with extra means can pay a little extra for their kids' teammates to be able to



dialogue)))

participate, ask them. We would do so. Also try to offer programs that aren't always high end - but still enriching

- Yes. Covid-19 has eliminated my job and we are living only on my spouse's income which has been very difficult.
- Somewhat yes. We all live on money - some better than others, but it also depends on the families, how they prioritize their money. For some, it's just not important to pay attention to their kids and the fees they need to pay (although they could afford). I don't feel those should get the benefit of being helped by other families.
- Our tax money should be used properly for the best studies of our children.
- This is tricky for sure. I would not want to see students who could benefit from essential learning opportunities be deprived of these opportunities due to cost. Would support chipping in to benefit these students. That being said, essential learning opportunities would generally be defined as something the teacher feels would benefit the whole class (ie. a field trip to explore something curriculum related). Not necessarily something they self select in to participate in (ie. would be nice to have student learn poetry, art, dance in excess of the regular curriculum, ie. club or hobby).
- Offer payment solutions at the beginning of the year.
- Offer ""flat"" 9 moth payment of predetermined fees. Maybe a median of what fees ""could"" be in a 1 year high school period. At the end of the year if those fees are not maximized the balance could be carried over to the next year for the student, lowering the costs each year for families. At the end of the grade 12 year, if all fees are not utilized by that student a refund credit can be processed."
- Be reasonable and only choose things that are real world learning
- Honour system not requiring evidence of financial challenges but a way for families to communicate discreetly that a program is unaffordable.
- great Financial difficulties starting from 2019, 2020 and 2021 because of covid.
- There should be subsidies for families based on income. I'm happy to pay a little more to help another family who needs it. No child Left behind, no child held back.
- By evaluating their income taxes
- Frequency of the activities listed above. Cost per activity. Importance of topic.
Example: Swimming lesson vs pet guess speaker day. Swimming should be in a higher prioritization than the pet guess speaker, because knowing how to swim can save lives.



dialogue)))

- Income.... A double income family is much more likely to be able to pay additional fees where as a single mother of 3 may need assistance so her kids can have the same programs/trips/experiences.
- I think the number of children in one family should be considered, as well as if the family can or cannot afford the high cost of multiple children in the school system. If the family has proven with taxes and/or shown financial living costs, that they cannot afford the fees for multiple children. The school board should consider a discount. The money needed to cover the cost of the discount can come from fundraising. Also, not everyone believes in gambling. So if other forms of fundraising were also available, you might have more people attending (of course once Covid is over).
- Consider the cost and value add balance. Either less frequent and higher cost trips, or the opposite - less trips at a lower cost.
- I think that every child should be able to participate and that economics should not be a barrier to their education and inclusion. I think the best guide would be a household income threshold but also keeping costs within reason as well as many may not want to provide their economic situation and will struggle to pay for the extra costs.
- Parents/Caregivers should be required to fill out an application to be exempt from the fees.
- I am very concerned that during this pandemic time, when many families are experiencing financial hardship that asking them for more money will be stressful. I feel for families who are made to feel "less than" when asked to pay these fees. I think it's paramount that CBE ensures that ALL children have access to these enrichment programs and no student is left behind in this ever increasing "user pay" approach to education
- As of now that we are new I am still observing this around.
- Using the household income
- All children in public school should be able to participate in the chosen activities, so subsidies may be required for those families who cannot afford additional fees in order to allow their children to participate too.
- All fees should be optional to all families. All fee payment options should include the ability for a parent to (anonymously) pay for other children/the whole activity.
- there should always be funding to support every child to have the same opportunity as those who can afford it.



dialogue)))

- CBE should bundle more fees into a single charge or checklist of options at the beginning of the year to provide a fulsome, complete experience to students. Currently it is irritating to be nickel-and-dimed for small field trips and projects that are the cost of a coffee or an adult value meal at McDonalds. While money may be an issue for some families, you might be able to bill families once, and with certainty of attendance, get discounts from vendors and suppliers with timely bulk orders earlier - rather than scrambling last minute (and administrating these multiple cash requests).
- Questionnaires like this one are good.
- This last year has taught our family that the "extras" are not that necessary and can actually take-away from time spent on core subjects, which means more after-school homework. Our Gr8 son is doing the Hub Online Learning program and still struggles to get all of the work done in a week. He works well independently and achieves good grades. We are continually surprised at the amount of schoolwork since there are no "extras" - no Options, very little PE, no field trips, no guest speakers, no camps, etc. I think that our kids would feel less stressed if there was less on their plates.
- No child should be left behind. Economic circumstances should never impede their ability to attend field trips, etc. ALL children should attend regardless. But fees should also not be high or asked for too many times in one year.
- The CBE should fall the Fair Entry program that the city of Calgary uses to determine who is eligible for financial assistants that why it can make it fair for all and money can be allocated as need and of course the principal / teacher could most like make exceptions as they came up.
- See the requirements below that Fair Entry- Calgary uses
 - Assured Income for Severely Handicapped benefits (AISH)
 - Alberta Works: Income subsidy/support
 - Alberta Works: Learners
 - Alberta Works: Alberta Health Benefit
 - Resettlement Assistance Program
 - Independent youth letter (a letter from school principal, guidance counsellor, or Child and Youth Support Program of Alberta Childre's Services)
 - Canada Revenue Agency: Notice of Assessment
 - The combined total income from line 15000 for all adult household members is required.
 - Letter from a Registered Social Worker (RSW)

dialogue)))

Also on statistics Canada they have more detail information on what amount the household should earn and how many people live in each household. This should be strongly considered to use this going forward.

- To begin with, the activities should support BIPOC members, should pay them a reasonable amount, and then charge-back the families for the activities.
- Provide income levels like City of Calgary Fair Entry Program (not just personal opinion)
- It was a tough year for most people. This should be taken into account.
- Based on the lowest income families.
- Linked to child benefit.
- Annual income or just by self report by families. everyone wants to be able to afford activities for their children
- It should advocate for more dollars from the provincial government as it will be handing more money out over the next two years to try to buy us back prior to the next provincial election.
- Fees for participation instantly put families that cannot afford it in an undesired situation where kids are well aware the burden it could place on the parents and don't even ask to join, knowing they would have to put their parents into the awkward conversation or asking for financial help, or straight out be told no. "
- The CBE overall needs to put more money into students, schools and teachers. Too much money is being spent on salaries for CBE staff that don't directly work with students.
- I think this is difficult as schools within different neighborhoods may have differing family incomes and it depends how it is divided as this could potentially increase any socioeconomic divides and not allow all children equal opportunity. Perhaps an extra fee for all families could be applied to cover all children in CBE who are under a certain threshold for affording opportunities. If spread out amounts many families that may also keep the costs reasonable.
- Salary and number of kids in CBE
- (referencing a question above) - am open to helping fund those who cannot afford but wouldn't want that amount built-in to my own fee (How do you determine the amount needed? What if there is overage?, etc) - Would rather
- Use a survey like this to determine the number of families who have difficulty paying for trips, and how many would be willing to support another family. Use those numbers to decide whether funding for a trip is possible. Also, provide options for



dialogue)))

educational/worthwhile/proven trips or activities early on to build interest (and motivate contribution), and provide parents with an option for installments if the cost is substantial. School-led planning of activities rather than isolated efforts by classes/teachers.

Research other less-expensive in-house options.

- I think Covid has shown that we don't need so many out of school activities to thrive. A lot of enrichment can come from within the school and or classroom.
- Hard to do but given an \$800 bussing fee and a \$300 noon-supervision fee per kid it's going to be pretty limited...
- I am uncertain
- Focus on a less expensive learning style.
- It's not about the shiny, new, expensive things in life. Technology is NOT everything.
- learning from the basic things all around us is in much more valuable in the long run
- Self-assessed need
- Preference should be given to students from within the community. Community schools are more affordable than programs of choice. Parents in programs of choice should not be offered subsidies. This should be for families in need at home schools.
- Providing equity grants to schools that need it to offset the costs of programs.
- Could it be part of people's provincial taxes? Basically, if people are at a certain income level they receive a grant to pay for school fees? Or the fees are waived?
- So hard to determine CBE -wide. I'm sure there are many schools where an increase in fees would clobber a large percentage of families, and others wouldn't bat an eye.
- I was also wondering if schools could have ""sister"" schools where fees are collected and then redistributed? e.g. 70% fees come from school A, 30% come from school B. Put it in a pile, cut it in half (or per student), and each gets 50% of the \$\$.
- What about an option for people to donate \$\$ to the school board of their choice as part of their property taxes?
- By creating cutoffs based on income of the families.
- Tough to decide how to offer for people going without, I don't envy your decision making...
- It should all be the same fee
- yes, but it should be transparent. There are families that refuse to pay fees regardless of their ability.
- Finding a middle ground is challenging for CBE. Continue to offer families who can't afford options for it to be covered by school councils or ask for "school sponsors" for kids



dialogue)))

that can't afford. Either other parents in the school or a combination of families pooling resources.

- Being mindful of what is part of the fees, benefits to students and cost.
- Reduce CBE overhead/admin. Direct savings to schools.
- It needs to be an important part of the decision-making process. Does the cost justify the benefit? Is there a demand? Are there options?
- Fees should be increased to subsidize those who cannot afford to pay, T4s should be submitted on an application basis to prove low income and be given grant for subsidy.
- Income scale
- Consider a slightly elevated charge to those that can afford to be used to subsidize or pay entirely to those that cannot.
- I just wanted to speak out about the Ski trips that happened the previous year(s). I feel that it was a large financial ask for families and it would limit who would be going on the trips. I can afford the trip, but I felt that the money should be used for different experiences. If there is a ski trip offered this year, I would hope it would be for a club or an optional outside of school activity experience.
- We think it is silly that we pay low fees, when we can afford more, while those same fees could be burdensome to other families. It doesn't make sense we all pay the same.
- I think parents who can afford additional fees to enhance learning and experiences (music, theatre, sports, tech) should pay and for parents who are not able to afford, CBE should assist children to be able to participate.
- No child should be denied access to learning.
- Government funding should cover the full cost of education. Children are our future and by funding a quality education it leads to more economic production. More economic production allows for increased funding. This should be coming from tax dollars and should NEVER be asked for on an individual bases. Fund raising should NEVER have to happen. All children should be given equal opportunity regardless of how much money their parents make or give to the education system. The CBE should do more to advocate for more government funding. Fight for our children's future. So at the end of the day I would rather work overtime or a second job and pay more in school fees in order better our children's future. Whatever the cost. The fees should also be a reflection of the individual family's income. A percentage of their overall yearly income. A poor family should not have to pay a dime. We are all in this together.



dialogue)))

- I believe most parents who can afford to pay fees for activities would gladly pay a bit extra to support those who cannot afford to pay. All students regardless of economic circumstances deserve to have a variety of rich learning opportunities and this should not be limited because of the neighbourhoods or schools that children attend. CBE should reconsider how the funds are allocated so that no matter how many students attend a school or how affluent or poor a neighbourhood is all students receive the SAME opportunities. We must do a better job of creating equity in learning opportunities.
- Maintain programming for our children.
- School fees are necessary to provide appropriate supports and opportunities for our children. Don't reduce service to save parents a few bucks.
- Family income and individual financial circumstances
- a case by case basis
- I'm a low income Grandma raising my Grandson some stuff I can afford and some I can't. If there was some sort of funding in place for us low income Grandparents or Parents that would help in the long run.
- Look at available data for communities (i.e. mean household income) to help estimate affordability level for each one. To ensure equity amongst all communities in Calgary, look to use a common funding pool for fees and use a bracket system like our taxes to determine percentage that each community should contribute to help ensure equal opportunities for the children at all schools in Calgary.
- Income means testing
- In tough times like this, families may or may not be able to afford extra curricular, however I feel that education cost and fees to provide for the children is very important. I think we need to break down what is most important and provide a breakdown of what we can allocate the money. I.e sacrificing field trips because of covid health reason/cost, and save that money towards school curriculum activities.
- Times have changed in Calgary since COVID-19 and there are many families now that could have afforded \$100 school fees prior, that will be stretched to do so now. When looking at affordability for the upcoming school year, I would roughly guess that most families now will only be able to afford half of what the costs were prior. Opportunities and enrichments provided need to be interdisciplinary in nature and provide deeper learning opportunities. Surface level and "fun" activities used to be great but may no longer be the most value-added option for families and learners now.
- School is going to cost more. CBE should increase School fees.



dialogue)))

- It's a challenge. It seems that different schools have different methods of approaching this, some fundraise, charge a fee per student or do an AGLC casino. Some add cost on for social activities. I think this should stay with the school. Unfortunately it means some schools have more money for enrichment and some have less because some areas are poor and some have wealth. It is not equitable. Therefore, some kids will have a better school experience than other schools.
- By parent and students reports
- Difficult to evaluate. Every family should be responsible for the fees if they want the kids to participate the activities.
- Parents income should assist in determining if assistance is required with flexibility that if a teacher notices absence in certain children not participating they can raise supplemental funding with the parent
- make the price affordable for all
- Yes!
- We are willing to sponsor two other kids for their learning enhancement opportunities. I am sure there are more fortunate families who are willing to sponsor more. Do you want to post the question to see if there are enough families willing to sponsor others? I think it is a special time in our time and we need to help each other out.
- Rich schools should ask parents to pay more! CSSD expects parents to send supplies. It's annoying but a teacher should send out needed lists and see what shows up. A lot of parents would love to contribute to the school in small financial ways like buying all the white board markers for the year.
- I'm not sure how it's currently done (see the option in powerschool for a waiver for families to waive fees currently?) but I'd completely support the continuation of casino fundraisers (ie not selling cookie dough, flowers, etc every other week to suspecting family and friends) ; to build the parent council purse to fun activities and the school must choose activities that fit the budget of that purse and that's it.
- This is dependent upon the activity and context of the situation.
- - The straight answer is, CBE may ask the parents to vote (like this survey)
 - CBE may show the break downs of each package (school fee alone; school fee and few other activities; school fee and other extra activities) to parents with associated costs an"
- It should be based on household income.



dialogue)))

- School teachers and staff will have a good understanding of family/student situations and should have input into each case individually.
- Consider key vs optional enrichment activities so that all student can pay for core experiences at a lower fee and then additional enhancements are optional and individually priced. Plan in advance - lots of notice so that families can budget and plan for optional opportunities .
- Evaluate affordability by requesting a copy of their last year tax returns
- Minimize cost to families
- Don't know what this means
- Increase the principal's discretionary fund so that anyone who cannot afford something can approach the principal in confidence
- Consider the availability of parent council funds. Link activities with a cohesive plan for the school so the activities might be able to build on each other over each school year or within one school year so the learning gels more rather than feel adhoc. Affordability should also consider the income of the neighbourhood, family sizes, etc.
- In similar ways the city used to evaluate their low-income accessibility programs and discounts.
- I don't know.
- Have a chance for some youth programs to have many options to fundraise as part of a school project or curriculum. Those students who qualify for financial assistance can pull from these funds. Families stay anonymous.
- Considering how COVID devastated the economy assume everybody is poor and cannot afford anything outside of basic tuition.
- 1) Persons must request the assistance
- 2) If a child is not participating, a query should be made as to why. If it is financial, then an offer of assistance can be made.
- 3) Determine Eligibility Through:
 - Option 1: Family is a verified recipient of:
 - AISH: Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped
 - Alberta Works: Alberta Health Benefit, Income Subsidy/Support
 - City Of Calgary Fee Assistance Card
 - Letter from a partnering organization



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- Option 2: The family qualifies as a low income family using the government's Low Income Cut-Off Chart (LICO) as a guideline. Verified recipients have would qualify for assistance.

4) It should be noted, that there is a ceiling to the number of assisted - the more people who don't pay the fees, the higher the fee's, the more people can't afford to do the extracurricular events. I am guessing a max of 5% but don't know the math to make an educated guess.

- The school is representative of its community. If one member of the community needs a little help, I think there should be a buffer to offer that help. Every student should have the opportunity to participate.
- If a family claims that they cannot afford a school fee, I suppose that you will have to trust that this is true.
- They should ask if anyone participating in an activity is willing to contribute extra to fund those who cannot afford to do so.
- One ask in a year if people have challenges affording a fee... when you ask people to indicate or share that they are struggling to pay a fee every time there is a field trip or activity, you make them feel shame. Often they won't say so they just don't participate. Find a better method...
- I think charging the haves a few extra dollars to help the have nots be able to attend is a great way to equalize this. Even make it transparent so the parents can choose how much they want to donate.
- The waiver program is quite useful
- Consider poor families
- Have pre-determined costs shared ahead of time so that families can prioritize this cost when budgeting; monthly payment options
- Be clear to parents about the shortfalls and then divide the money needed by family. If there are instances of families not able to afford the fees, connect with parents to see if the majority can cover these costs.
- set a threshold. a single parent of 2, should not pay as much as a two parent family
- It depends our children will be going to online school. Field trips wont benefit our children unless the school makes an effort to include online kids. It seems unfair for online kids to miss out.
- Fundraisers..catalog orders



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- If something is unaffordable to most then cancel that activity or field trip. Especially during a pandemic some things are not of utmost importance. Health and safety comes first along with social distancing measures. Parents don't need to attend field trips for free or having other parents pay etc Unaffordability right now should be considered for all parents seeing as how many jobs have been lost and the economy is definitely not what it used to be. All these things and more should be considered for budgeting. Desks and chairs are important for students over certain activities. The basics are important.
- If it is not affordable for all families then it probably should not be done. For example Dance Creations is not a necessary thing nor do all kids like dance or be made to participate. Some of the more expensive outings such as the zoo could be cut since they tend to go repeatedly in grades.
- Family income, number of children
- Being a single parent, I always have to be mindful of costs. Offering payment plans and the ability to opt out of activities if I can't afford them would help.
- Low income students should be exempt of fees
- I think the parent council is a good sounding board for these answers. They are typically made of parents who would have a good idea of affordability for community families.
- Using the same guidelines a bank does for considering a loan. Debt ratio
- I think they should be inclusive for all families, but still reasonable. Given all the virtual tools available, if it's too expensive to justify there are so many options
- Case by case.
- Please refer to question 4 above.
- Based in a realistic expectation of what people can afford.
- I think putting a portion of fundraising dollars aside to support families who cannot afford the fees makes sense, and defer to school admin as to how well you think this works. It's been harder to fundraise without being able to hold events. I believe many within my child's parent community would donate directly or are happy to donate items/time/etc. to organize fundraising for the kids.
- Donations? School council funds?
- Yes, it's very difficult for us to pay fees and we aren't low income so we don't get government support
- We are at the lowest income as per fee assistance. I think this is a fair evaluation tool, but I wish there was a way for families who are exempt from paying due to assistance to



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donate a portion of the amount if they can/want to. Sometimes we can't pay, but when we can I'd like to try.

- When I was higher income, I used to leave cash at the office so they could comp kids for things like donut day or field trips without anyone having to ask. If this was an option on fee payment, some people might do it. Even ""would you like to round up and add a dollar today"" like at the grocery store would add up
- Allow principals to evaluate the affordability and from there allow teachers to build in a buffer for field trip costs so that these extra funds can be used to pay for those in financial hardship. Alternatively, can School Council's build in a budget to help pay for those less fortunate, based on principal's confidential input.
- Offer the opportunities, support families with financial limitations to ensure students have the opportunity and work with these families. Spread the shortfall this entails and add these to our general school fees.
- All children should have equal access to field trips etc. Therefore I think it's reasonable to have costs be a little higher to cover the costs of those students who may otherwise not attend.
- Choose quality over quantity. Focus on core subjects. I want you to teach them math, reading and writing. Stay in your lane and budgets won't be a problem.
- The number of children in each family. If a family had 2 or more students, discounts or lower fees could apply.
- The CBE should simply believe people if they say they cannot afford to pay for something and allow the family to access waived fees for anything as needed. Children should not miss out on field trips / events because of financial restraints. In addition if waivers were available by case basis that would help a family who might be perfectly able to pay for a field trip one month but three months later have unexpected bills (like a car repair or something) and now they can't pay for example.
- If there are family's who cannot afford it perhaps some of the cost could be covered by council or by donations? The affordability for each family should be confirmed by the school so everyone doesn't all of a sudden say they can't afford it. In the past the cost for these field trips has been so low (for our family) and I'd be happy to help support another family with these low costs.
- The CBE should have programs and grants in place for families who need access to funds for learning enhancement opportunities. I don't feel that other parents should have to subsidize the costs for others.

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- Set fees to cover costs plus amount needed to cover fees for those who cannot afford.
- We are broke. Food cost has gone up.
- I think the Govt/CBE needs to put funds forward for kids who can't afford these opportunities. In many cases, school is the only way they would get to experience some of these events/experiences. They are critical for learning.
- I believe the CBE should be looking more importantly at the benefit to the children and alignment to curriculum and learning vs. cost."
- test
- When schools are transparent as to what possible future costs will be for the year, I think it'll help parents plan ahead
- I had no idea
- A blanket policy on affordability put forth by the CBE may not be feasible. School based decisions should be made as there are a variety of socio-economic situations at each school. Moreover, the financial status of each household is more volatile in the current pandemic. School could potentially tap in into parent council funds to support those families that need financial assistance.
- Given this time of covid all fees should be considered. Unfortunately, many working class homes are being negatively affected by covid and fees are more difficult to manage.
- I believe CBE should consider broad affordability in an effort to include as many students in programs as possible, AND a should continue with its programs of offering support to those otherwise unable to afford access.
- Based on income-tax or monthly income
- We agree this is very difficult. School specific surveys are probably the way to go here.
- My answers are based in current circumstances- I am finding it difficult to keep up with the fees but also understand budget issues and need to help less fortunate. Difficult times but kids need the activities etc especially after this year of Covid.
- Equity and dignity matter and we are grateful to be a part of a school board that is trying to figure out together. Perhaps at the beginning of a school year families pay a lump sum fee that ranges based on each's family's personal ability to pay . The funds are pooled and each class is given that much /student for these enhancement opportunities throughout the year.Perhaps, as well, the CBE could partner with some of the most popular service providers, and these family-raised funds could go to hire these providers for the system, rather than just school-by-school, allowing more schools more equitable



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access to these enhanced learning opportunities. Also - on a different, but related note - casino funds - encourage schools to partner up within the CBE so that more schools are able to access a percentage of this funding.

- They should ask the Parents or Guardians of their students if they can afford to pay those specific amount that you're asking just like this survey.
- I think at the beginning of the year parents should be given a tentative list of the upcoming years events so that parents can budget appropriately. 1-2 weeks notice prior to an event is not enough time for a struggling family to budget for an event, I also think it is unfair for the school or other families to have to subsidize for those struggling families to attend events, it should be optional for parents to add to a subsidize fund for parents who can't afford it. I feel there are quite a few families who take advantage of the generosity of the school system.
- Opportunities for parents to help subsidize other families
- Income.
- Provide a survey on estimates of cost for the programs in mind
- I think we are lucky to be able to supplement budgets with council raised funds so that everyone can enjoy enhanced learning. I personally could afford to pay some more if needed
- This is difficult to answer. I wish every family could afford every opportunity provided to their kids in school and even in depending on fundraisers to help support, the same families likely can't afford to support fundraisers either. It would be nice to offer a sliding scale of affordability or potential costs for the year ahead so families can either budget for events or know there is a sliding scale so they don't have to feel left out.
- To ensure activities are funded in a way that all children can participate. Possibly offer parents the opportunity to pay an extra dollar, two, 5, or 10; or to pay for a second ticket to anonymously pay for a student who cannot afford the opportunity.
- Schools with low-income populations should get extra funding to cover those costs. At other schools low-income families could fill out a form asking for assistance.
- Sliding scale based on each family.
- expensive!Very
- No sure, how is it currently assesed?
- Families should apply for subsidy when needed.
- Post pandemic, you will need to be really sensitive about asking families for extra \$\$. The teacher gets paid for 100% of their day, then a "supplemental" service comes in and



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adds to that cost. The teacher is not "off the clock" and the teacher's salary is not displaced.

- Open & warm communication & (respectful/private) opportunity for families having financial difficulties to self-identify need for help
- equity vs equality. It is difficult to see some schools who are able to give their children better or more opportunities, while some schools do not get those opportunities. As a public system, the money should be distributed more equitably.
- There must be an effort to help families that cannot afford (e.g. donation from families that can, Parent Council support,...) however I am not in agreement to halt activities because not every child will be able to attend. I believe it is better to challenge/give opportunities at least some kids that none.
- Families incomes
- Subsidies and financial help shouldn't be based off of the previous year's income. My husband was off work for all of 2020, but we didn't apply for any help because I'm pretty sure we would have been denied because of the way the application process works. I still haven't paid fees for the 2020-2021 school year because we are a dual income family that has had to live on one income so other bills have been the priority.
- Test
- Affordable field trips. More expensive trips like Nordic center (\$75) and outdoor school (\$300) in the same year.
- Income tax return
- Pay if you can, opportunity to pay extra for other children
- With knowing things about covid some families can not afford a lot but I don't think it's right for any student to lose an opportunity to learn outside of the school
- how has CBE done this in the past? I don't know how other families do this as we are fortunate enough to not have to make these types of decisions, however, if they are important to me for my children's learning opportunities, I assume those who struggle with the fees would also feel this way. I don't mind paying a small portion of fees for these opportunities, however, I'm not sure that they 'even' across all the different schools in all of the districts as some higher income areas may be able to do more than lower income areas. Should higher income areas have access to these programs and lower ones not? Should higher income areas subsidize lower income areas so everyone can have the same opportunities? but then miss out because they can afford x program but

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CBE has dictated that any program should be available to anyone who wants it? I don't envy you. Good luck.

- I feel that the government should be paying for all areas of education including bussing and Lunchtime supervision and support at an earlier age/grade for special needs students. This is why taxes are paid and good education and support should not be for those who can afford it only if need be stop field trips except swimming that is a safety issue and should be part of the physical education. Paying for outside people to come in to talk to children is not a necessary part of education that can be done by the teachers that we are already paying as it is their job to teach save the money for supporting the children in the classroom.
- Given the current situation field trips and camps do not seem to be the best option. I don't mind someone coming in to talk to students but not with this pandemic. so the choice is clear to enhance activity and sports programs at school. May be partnerships with sports equipment companies or other larger companies that can offer grants can lessen the load on both parents and cbe.
- Maybe depending on the income or employment of the parents.
- Should look at best pricing and wants that students will get value from.
- Just ask voluntary contributions
- Keep the cost as low as possible or make sure that people are getting their money's worth.
- Tax statements
- I would be willing to contribute to a subsidy fund for families that cannot afford fees, especially if it enables teachers and the school to be able to provide a better learning experience for the students
- Affordability is subjective so I don't think it is something that should be looked at. The question is value to the student and likelihood of having a minimum buy in (attendance). If the estimated paid attendance is less than 85% (for example), then the fee is what it is and we recognize that only certain students will attend. If it is more than 85%, then a buffer is added into the paid fees to cover those that can't afford them.
- Everyone has been through a lot this past year. So everyone's interests should be considered.
- It's tough and I don't have any easy solutions but if you were able to identify for each opportunity that you have XX number of students that would need a full sponsorship or a partial sponsorship, you could match a willing parent donor to help out, anonymous both



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ways. The criteria that you design to determine eligibility would be sent to parents at the beginning of the year and then when each opportunity comes up, they could indicate if that was one time that they could handle the cost on their own or would only require partial subsidy, or a full subsidy. Circumstances also may change throughout the year so those who may have been okay at the beginning of the year are no longer able to handle the cost of the event and may need help as the months go on.

- I would trend based on historical numbers - ie. in the past, what % of families paid to send their kids on field trips. Then for the (assuming small) % of families didn't pay to go, offer incentives to them directly if they are in fact in a lower income bracket (have to voluntarily share this info of course)
- Is this how CBE should evaluate or how the school should evaluate? There are supports and programs for families to help with expenses. Should a family have challenges paying fees then the options that the student can take should be limited - they should not be able to take all of the most expensive options. I am not saying that they can not take any option or go on any field trip as what the student's parents can and can not afford is not their fault.
- By taking this survey?
- If it's not necessary to have field trips or have speaker then leave it for now
- Lunch room fees are ridiculous compared to other school boards and the agendas provided are cheap and flimsy. Having 2 kids in school and almost \$600/yr for extremely strict lunchroom supervision that is poorly managed is beyond frustrating. My kids both complain daily and I've seen no changes after several discussions over the years. Lunch first and then outside play not the reverse. Also bring back morning outdoor recess instead of "snack time" Kids have "breakfast program" at 8am and snack between 9/10am and then lunch at 11/1130am depending on if they eat first or "recess" first... no wonder kids aren't hungry at lunch and just wanna play or chat with friends but aren't allowed to talk during lunch and not just since covid became an issue.
- Yes. However, anyone driving a Mercedes wouldn't be eligible for waivers.
- Family Income
- All kids should have access to a great education. Those who can't afford should not bring down the quality of education. Fundraising needs to happen so that all kids can access a great education.
- I don't think there is an easy answer for this. I imagine that the money has to be taken from somewhere to cover costs for families that are challenged to pay. I think the idea of



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fees being increased by a few dollars is a good one. Those funds can be placed in a trust for pre-qualifying families to access so that their children do not lose out.

- Instead of paying prior to each individual activity or field trip throughout the year; a flat fee should be charged at the beginning of the year for the years activities and field trips. Hopefully, teachers and administration would already know how many families will require financial assistance and could set the activity fee accordingly. We would be happy to have that fee increased by a few dollars to support families in need. If a flat fee is collected at the beginning of the year, administration and teachers can better plan their activities and field trips knowing that the funds are in place regardless of any changes in family income or circumstances throughout the year. There could also be an option of a sliding scale payment - so that pre-qualifying families could pay what they can afford.
- I cannot pass judgement on other families circumstances, only my own. Each situation should be rated accordingly.
- It's irritating that in middle school we have to pay lunch time supervision. A cost to families that's ridiculous and not necessary.
- Supplement core educational opportunities for all students, offer additional opportunities that are not required for a cost
- Don't just look at household income. A family with 1 adult and 1 child making \$75000/year is a lot different than 2 adults and 4 children making the same amount. Also take into consideration how many children in CBE and how many fees a family has already paid.
- I think a fund could be set up to help students who otherwise may not be able to afford going. Maybe special lunches planned or fundraising ideas. An option for families paying fees to donate a small amount for less fortunate students at their school. All students shouldn't miss out on opportunities.
- Sliding scale based on income and individual circumstances. Give principals discretion.
- I think the CBE needs to survey its families to see what is affordable for them. The economic climate has changed so much in the past 13 months that possibly supports need to be in place for the upcoming year or two that can then be drawn back once families are back on their feet. Please don't make families decide between affording "public" school and putting food on the table and a roof over their heads. If each school could have the possibility of having their own miscellaneous expense account that can be used for fieldtrips etc for those that can't afford them.



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- Economic circumstances can change year to year, or even season to season. A number of people have lost their jobs since COVID hit, and many of them still are unable to work. I think that the CBE should consider whether one or both parents are working in a household (if they traditionally had two working parents before the pandemic), and net family income.
- If a child's parent hasn't paid by the deadline their should be an overflow fund to pay for the child to attend or participate in the activity.
- Income with room for discussion regarding why you may need support even if you are not low income.
- If the opportunities for learning enhancements are democratically agreed upon (majority consensus) then having a shared funding pool makes sense. If I am able to help those who need assistance to access STREAM programs or technologies in order for students to keep pace with classmates this benefits everyone. I would love to see more marketplace-related focuses so that in the future students have job-ready skills as they venture on in the CBE system and beyond.
- There should not be fees for public school. We already pay thru our taxes!
- Should be based on household income with the ability for people above the margins to present a case for temporary hardship situations. These could either be done based on numbers or case by case review which may be more time consuming but likely more accurate.
- Families can chose to pay cash for those that have the means, for families that require more support can be given the fundraising opportunities.
- On a case by case basis-not just money/household income
- Pay fees based on household income surveys. I understand some families cannot afford basic necessities