




Bullitt County Public Schools

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MEMO

To: Board Members

From: Keith Davis 

Date: May 10, 2018

Re: School Fees and Supply Costs Recommendation

One of the three items that the Board approved as part of the 2017-18 superintendent evaluation process was as follows:

Investigate school fees and make recommendations to the Board on ways in which the district may be able to ameliorate this burden so that all children will be able to access opportunities in our schools without negatively impacting their family budget.

Attached are the results of the investigation of school fees at various levels. Some observations include:

1. The fees vary substantially, despite the fact that there is a Board policy for reviewing and having SBDM approval for school supply lists.
2. The fees charged tend to vary based on the overall wealth of the school as expressed by the percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch, with higher wealth schools tending to charge more fees.
3. There is no indication that the fees are wasted or that they are outrageous - they are, in almost all cases, spent wisely to provide materials for the school.

I believe that there is room for improvement that will create more equity for our schools and students. Families - even those families that do not qualify for free or reduced lunches - may still struggle to pay these fees, particularly those who have multiple children in the school system. If a family has two children at the highest fee elementary school and another at the highest cost middle school, then - in addition to school clothes and other back to school paraphernalia, they would need to come up with \$330 in supplies and fees, not counting the middle school Chromebook fee. The generalization that the parents in those "wealthier" areas can all easily afford those fees is false, and the fact that the "less wealthy" schools tend to be more conservative in the fees asked/required can lead to inequality in opportunity within our own school system. This should be unacceptable to the Board, and the Board has the authority to regulate fees to be charged.

Another point to consider is that the district has never lowered the allocation per child, even though it could have "saved" the district close to a 1/2 million dollars each year under state law. Next year, just at the elementary and middle levels, the differential between what is required to be allocated to the schools for instructional materials and what we intend to allocate is \$359,000. I note this not because I believe the money is wasted; our schools almost without exception, use it for excellent instructionally focused purchases. I note it to illustrate that many schools in many other districts get by with less, so placing some restrictions on schools in order to increase equity among the schools and the children in them should not pose a large problem.

The average elementary cost for the school supply list, the wish list, agenda fees, and school fees (not including an optional take home technology fee at one school) is \$67.92. Across all elementary schools, this is an approximately \$430,515 cost to the parent community. At the middle level, the average cost for the same materials (also not including the \$35 Chromebook fee) is \$80.83, which totals approximately \$246,765 across all the middle schools.

My recommendations are as follows:

1. Prohibit Bullitt County elementary and middle schools from requiring or requesting children and their families bring any school supplies or charge any fees whatsoever, aside from the \$35 Chromebook fee, reasonable field trip fees to cover the cost of the trip only, and Board approved fees for non-mandatory extracurricular activities.
2. Set a per pupil amount based on the 8th month attendance report that the district will provide an allocation to each school's site-based council under Section 6 of 702 KAR 3:246 of \$50 per student at the elementary level and \$65 per student at the middle level as an addition to the minimum Section 6 allocation.
3. This additional allocation per pupil will be increased each year to correspond to the rate of inflation.
4. Continue funding the SBDM councils at 3.5% of the base seek as the district has done in the past.
5. Given that many parents will wish to make donations, direct that the schools may accept any direct parent donations during the first month of school, but that those donations be utilized to establish a discretionary fund for the principal's use in assisting families with school lunch charges to avoid the alternate meal situation. This will not apply to donations by the organized PTSA group at the school, or to any athletic booster group.

The approximate cost for this plan to make our public schools a place where all our children have the same access to a free public education is \$494,145. This is not in the proposed budget for the current year because there is currently not enough revenue to support it. For the initial year, the district would utilize funding accumulated on the balance sheet for curricular initiatives to supply this funding, though once the final current year revenues are determined, it may not be necessary to utilize the balance sheet funding. Next year, if necessary, the Board could designate a part of any revenue increase through the 4% rather to support this initiative.

This will result in an increase in dollars available for some schools - especially our schools in less wealthy areas of the county that tend to charge lower supply fees - and a small decrease in the dollars available at other schools. I believe that by standardizing supplies, buying in bulk, and receiving funding for all students regardless of free/reduced status, schools will be able to offset most, if not all the amount that will be foregone in some locations. Also, there will be a savings in the amount of time our teachers now spend to prepare the lists, collect and sort the materials, and store them until ready to use. The bottom line is that we have one school system in Bullitt County. It should not be a system of "haves" and "have nots" to the extent that it can be prevented, and it can be prevented if the Board wishes to do so.

At the high school level, they are reporting no mandatory fees, aside from the the \$35 Chromebook fee and class fees for non-consumables in a variety of classes. This analysis does not address the exorbitant and constantly rising cost for extracurricular participation, which I suspect is partially driven by one-upmanship and making sure we are "keeping up with the Joneses" (or even being the Joneses) in these areas. This deserves some attention and fact-finding, but the Board may run into stiff resistance in that area. I am assured that all our coaches will go out of their way to waive fees or get Booster support so that players who do not have the means can still participate if they have the skills. I think the Board should make it clear that this is what you want in order to avoid further regulation of their boosters fundraising and travel. No child should be kept from an activity because their parents cannot or choose not to pay for it.

I understand that this is a large departure from the normal way we have done things, but I do believe the time has come to address this inequity. You have the funding and the means to sustain the funding that will lift the burden of school supplies and fees from the families that send us their children for a public education. I urge you to approve this proposal and direct the fee schedules be amended to reflect this proposal.

School Fees / Cost Survey-Report

Scroll down for
Middle and High

Elementary	Brooks	Cedar Grove	Crossroads	Freedom	Lebanon Jct	Maryville	Mt. Washington	Nichols	Old Mill	Overdale	Pleasant Grove	Roby	Shepherds ville
Approximate Average Base Supply List Cost	\$35.00	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$30.00	\$34.00	\$30.00	\$55.00	\$50.00	Primary=\$30, Inter=\$50	\$30.00	\$50.00	\$40.00	\$30-\$40
Approximate Average "wish list" cost	\$15.00	\$50.00	\$25.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$15.00	\$30.00	\$25.00	\$15.00	\$10.00	\$20.00	\$10.00	\$10-\$15
Agenda Fees	\$0.00	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00 for first one, \$5.00 for replacement	\$5.00	\$20 - includes agenda, in-school field trips, instructional consumable materials, and class shirt	\$0.00	\$0.00
School Fees	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5.00	\$20.00	\$0.00	\$15.00	\$20.00	\$0.00	\$30.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Technology Fee	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$35.00 for students that have signed parent agreements to take Chromebooks home.	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Class Fees	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Appox # of kids	\$470.00				440	315		\$135.00	464		625 students		553 students
Archery	\$40.00 (16-17)	\$40 + \$150 for tourneys	\$10 plus entry fees for tournaments.	\$25.00	\$20.00	First year we will have a team, unsure of fees	Just started last year, may have fee this year (about 30 students)	\$50.00	\$50 for spirit pack plus \$10 fee; estimated as this is first year. Parents responsible for tournament fees.	\$35.00	\$10 + entry fees for tournaments	40.00/ 20 students	\$25 & most cannot pay, so team is looking into a booster club to help pay for the fees and equipment required
Appox # of kids	\$15.00		\$25.00		20	Hasn't started yet, unsure		\$13.00	25 to 30		25-30		25-30 archery students
Robotics	\$0.00		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00			\$0.00	\$10.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		
Appox # of kids	\$12.00		\$10.00			20		\$0.00	10		\$0.00		10 students
Chess	\$0.00		\$10 plus any tournament fees	\$0.00	\$0.00	Depends on how many tournaments the child plays in. I think they are about \$10 per tournament.	\$10/tournament abou t 6-7 students	\$10.00	\$10.00. Parents responsible for any tournament fees.	If child participates in a tournament, they pay the fee.\$10.00 (9 students)	Tournament fees if child wants to compete	\$0.00	\$0: pay for team shirt and each tournament they enter
Appox # of kids	\$8.00		20		0	15		\$13.00	20		\$30.00		11
Academic Team	\$8.00	\$13.00	\$15.00	\$0.00	\$6.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$15.00	\$10.00 to \$50.00 depending on if shirts are donated.	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Appox # of kids	\$15.00				15	10		\$10.00	20 students		15-20		
Track	\$20.00 (16-17)	\$40.00	\$0.00	\$10.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	Just started last year, may have fee this year	\$10.00	\$40 spirit pack, snacks	\$0.00	\$10.00	15.00/25 students	\$0: first year for team and working to fundraise and gather donations
Appox # of kids			25		0	0		\$35.00	20-30 students		120 students		30 students
Average Club Fee	\$20.00				0	\$0.00		\$0.00					\$0.00
Appx. Number					0			\$0.00					
Beta	\$25.00	\$15 + \$10 shirt + \$25 field trip			\$25.00	N/A		\$0.00		\$0.00			

Appox # of kids				10	0		\$0.00					
Volleyball				\$0.00	N/A		\$0.00		\$0.00		15.00/25 students	
Appox # of kids				0	0		\$0.00					
PAC	\$0.00			\$0.00	N/A		\$0.00				\$0.00	
Appx. Number	\$30.00			0	0		\$0.00					
Cross Country	\$40 + \$30 uniforms			\$0.00	N/A		\$0.00	Wellness Club--\$10 for healthy snacks	\$0.00			
Appox # of kids				0	0		\$0.00	40				
Honor Choir	\$20 KMEA/Shirt			\$0.00	N/A		\$0.00		\$0.00			
Appox # of kids				0	0		\$0.00					
Choir	\$6 shirts			\$0.00	N/A		\$0.00		\$0.00			
Appox # of kids				0	0		\$0.00					
Chess	\$9 shirts/\$5 match			\$0.00	Depends on how many tournaments the child plays in. I think they are about \$10 per tournament.			\$10 plus parents pay any tournament fees		If child participates in a tournament, they pay the fee.\$10.00 (9 students)		
Appox # of kids	\$8.00			0	15			15				
Other (specify) - type over		Band \$10		\$0.00	N/A		Track \$10 / shirt	Band \$10				
Appox # of kids		30		0	0		35	40				

Middle	Berheim	Bullitt Lick	Eastside	Hebron	Mt. Washington	Zoneton
Approximate Average Base Supply List Cost	35	45	\$90	45	50	50
Approximate Average "wish list" cost	10	10		10	20	20
Agenda Fees	0	0	0	0	0	10
School Fees	15 covers ART/Tech Media/pltw/science/stem	\$20.00 school fee	\$20 School Fee and \$10 STEM Lab Fee	\$5 6th grade Science fee	25	0
Technology Fee	0- unless you are counting Chromebooks then \$35.00	\$35.00 Chromebook	\$35 Chromebook	\$35 Chromebook fee	0	35
Class Fees	0	0		0	20	0
Archery	85	\$100.00	0	100	85	100
Appox # of kids	60	50	48	40	48	50
Robotics	25	0	approx \$25	0	0	0
Appox # of kids	20	20	20-40	10	10	5
Chess	\$17 Reg Fees \$5 toumey fees	\$5.00 toumey fees	\$5 toumey fees	between \$4-8 each toumey fees	Toumey fees 4-8	10
Appox # of kids	10	15	approx 10	approx 12	5	10
Academic Team	10 T-shirt	\$10.00 Tshirt	\$15-30 optional t-shirt/hoodie	\$10 T-shirt	0	20
Appox # of kids	10	10	approx 30	30	25	10
Track	\$30 reg/tshirt	\$25.00 shorts and shirt	\$50 track fee	\$15 T-shirt	15	20
Appox # of kids	approx. 30-40	60	approx 45	35	60	20
Cross Country	40 (CGES)	0	0	0	0	0
Appox # of kids	5	0	0	0	0	0

Average Club Fee		\$10.00 DIY	\$10 Advanced Art Club	Student Y/Kuna \$250	KYA 240.00	0
						450 (all students participate in a club twice a month)
Appox # of kids		10-20	25	10	20	
Girls Basketball	\$125.00 optional Apparel	\$200.00 optional apparel and shoes	\$200 optional apparel	\$150 optional apparel & shoes	0	125
Appox # of kids	18	16	21	15	24	18
Boys Basketball	approx \$200 (optional)	\$200.00 optional apparel	approx \$180 optional apparel	approx \$ 200 optional apparel and shoes	0	200
Appox # of kids	24	20-25	30-33	30	30	30
Baseball	100	50	0		0	0
Appox # of kids	13	20-25	0		0	0
Volleyball	\$35 optional	\$50 shorts and shirt	\$35 optional	\$40 jersey pullover	0	161 new players, 123 returning players
Appox # of kids	24	25	30-35	28	30	26
Drama Club	0	0	\$20 optional t-shirt	0	0	0
Appox # of kids	0	approx 25	approx 65	approx 25	30	15
Cheerleading		\$25.00-35.00 bodywear and bow	\$90 warm-up suit and \$40 backpack - optional	\$275 uniform, shoes, bows, backpack, practice uniform	0	350
Appox # of kids		9	31	15	24	17
Dance Team	0	\$125.00 dance costume	approx \$100	approx \$200	0	0
Appox # of kids	0	16	14	6	0	0
Jr. Beta Club	\$10 returning members/\$30 for new \$18 membership/tshirt	0	\$15 one time membership fee- JBC	0	\$5-20	10
Appx. Number	30-40				30-40	15

High	Central	East	North
Approximate Average Base Supply List Cost	0	0	
Approximate Average "wish list" cost	0	0	
Agenda Fees	0	0	0
School Fees	Board Proposed Fee List	0	0
Technology Fee	\$35	35	35 Chromebooks ??
Class Fees	Board Proposed Fee List	25	15
Archery	\$60+\$25	100	100
Appox # of kids	57		30
Robotics	\$10		
Appox # of kids	14		
Chess	\$120	0	
Appox # of kids	6	30	



PROPOSED FEE/MEMBERSHIP SCHEDULE

*Not to exceed maximum amount listed

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

CATEGORY	PROPOSED FEE	CATEGORY	PROPOSED FEE
STUDENT AGENDA/PLANNER	\$0 to \$5	FIELD TRIP FEE/CHARGES	\$0 to \$100
INSTRUCTIONAL CONSUMABLE TEXTS/WORKBOOKS	\$0 to \$20	ACCESS 24 TECHNOLOGY / CHROMEBOOK FEE	\$0 to \$35
SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES (MAY INCLUDE, BUT NOT BE LIMITED TO: WEEKLY READER, SOCIAL STUDIES/SCIENCE WEEKLY, SCHOLASTIC NEWS, WRITING PORTFOLIOS	\$0 to \$10		
HEADPHONES	\$0 to \$5		
RECORDERS (FOR MUSIC)	\$0 to \$5		
EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/CLUB MEMBERSHIP FEES/SUPPLIES	\$0 to \$10 per activity/club		
TRI-FOLD BOARDS FOR PROJECTS	\$0 to \$5		
SPIRIT PACK FOR SPORTS ACTIVITIES	\$0 to \$50		
BAND	\$0 to \$20		

Updated 08/2016



PROPOSED FEE/MEMBERSHIP SCHEDULE

*Not to exceed maximum amount listed

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

CATEGORY	PROPOSED FEE	CATEGORY	PROPOSED FEE
STUDENT AGENDA/PLANNER	\$0 to \$10	FIELD TRIP FEE/CHARGES	\$0 to \$100
ADVANCED ART CONSUMABLES	\$0 to \$20	STEM Lab Fee	\$0 to \$15
LOCKERS	\$0 to \$5	ACCESS 24 TECHNOLOGY / CHROMEBOOK FEE	\$0 to \$35
CONSUMABLE SUPPLIES	\$0 to \$10		
TECHNOLOGY FEES	\$0 to \$20		
ADVANCED SCIENCE CONSUMABLES	\$0 to \$20		
SPIRIT PACK FOR SPORTS ACTIVITIES	\$0 to \$200		
ACCELERATED CURRICULUM MATERIALS	\$0 to \$20		
BAND	\$0 to \$20		
EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/CLUB MEMBERSHIP FEES/SUPPLIES	\$0 to \$50		

Updated 08/2016