

To: Dr. Charles Johns
Board of Education

From: Dr. R.J. Gravel

Date: Monday, July 12, 2021

Re: Adjusted Registration and Instructional Materials Fee

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Education adjust the registration and instructional materials fee for the 2021-22 school year from \$300.00 to \$225.00.

Background

On Monday, March 15, 2021, the Board of Education approved the implementation of a registration and instructional materials fee for the 2021-22 school year in the amount of \$300. This amount included all instructional materials required for the school year, offering greater simplicity for our families while reducing the cost of instructional materials over time. The single fee was broken down as follows:

Table 1
Original Registration and Instructional Materials Fee Breakdown

	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Total for (4) Years
Registration Fee	\$25.50	\$25.50	\$25.50	\$25.50	\$102.00
Instructional Materials	\$274.50	\$274.50	\$274.50	\$274.50	\$1,098.00
<i>Total per Student</i>	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$1,200.00

Since the approval of this fee, the administration has communicated this change through the weekly e-mail update, a feature story on each school’s homepage, multiple social media posts, and all communications regarding the student enrollment verification process completed by each parent. (As of Wednesday, July 7, 2021, over 78% of the school district’s anticipated students have been confirmed for the 2021-22 school year.) In response to these communications, we have received feedback from families expressing concern regarding the cost of this new fee. Throughout our conversations with parents, we have emphasized that we would work diligently to consider options that would reduce the fee over time.

I am pleased to share with both the Board of Education and our families that after coordinating the purchase of all materials necessary for the 2021-22 school year, the actual expense of materials is lower than initially anticipated. Some reasons for this change include:

- The 2021-22 textbook and learning material adoptions had not yet been finalized when the fee was initially presented. However, after reviewing the adoptions, several high enrollment courses

selected lower-cost materials, resulting in a lower cost to acquire the inventory needed for students.

- Through a comprehensive bidding process, the school district was able to secure significant volume purchasing discounts from multiple vendors, including Amazon. These discounts offered an additional savings of 3-4% across most purchases of non-returnable materials such as novels.
- A significant number of families participated in this year’s textbook buy-back program. As a result, the school district built its inventory at a lower cost than initially anticipated.

In addition to the savings mentioned above, we recommend that the physical education (PE) uniform and heartrate monitor strap expenses be removed from the fee and sold as stand-alone items. This recommendation is made in direct response to parent feedback that many of their families have gym uniforms and supplies passed down from older siblings and that they would prefer not to pay for a material they already have in their possession. For families that do need to purchase the supplies, they will be able to do so at cost from the bookstore:

- PE Shirt and Shorts, \$11.00
- Heart Rate Monitor Strap, \$12.50

Considering the reduction in materials expense for the 2021-22 school year and removing PE materials from the fee, we recommend the registration and instructional materials fee be reduced from \$300.00 to \$225.00. Table 2 that follows illustrates the impact of these changes:

Table 2
Adjusted Registration and Instructional Materials Fee Breakdown

	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Total for (4) Years
Registration Fee	\$25.50	\$25.50	\$25.50	\$25.50	\$102.00
Instructional Materials	\$199.50	\$199.50	\$199.50	\$199.50	\$798.00
Total per Student	\$225.00 <i>previously \$300.00</i>	\$225.00 <i>previously \$300.00</i>	\$225.00 <i>previously \$300.00</i>	\$225.00 <i>previously \$300.00</i>	\$900.00 <i>previously \$1,200.00</i>

This adjustment proposed will result in a cost savings of \$75.00 per student for the 2021-22 school year. Our team also remains committed to pursuing other cost-saving measures to further reduce the cost of the registration and instructional materials fees in future years. When the fee was presented in the spring, this fee is not intended to serve as an additional revenue source for the school district; we will solely utilize the fee to support the purchase and distribution of instructional materials for students.

I have also included a comparable summary of student fees for area high school districts for reference purposes. Table 3 illustrates the annual fees charged by area high school districts, and Table 4 illustrates the total require fees for Glenbrook students.

Table 3
Student Fees for Area High School Districts

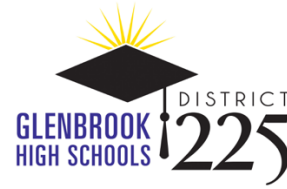
	Registration and Instructional Materials	Technology/ Device	Total
District 125 (Stevenson)	\$305	\$75	\$380
District 202 (Evanston)	\$275	\$65	\$340
District 203 (New Trier)	\$486*		\$486*
District 207 (Maine)	\$295	\$75	\$370
District 209 (Niles)	\$350	\$100	\$450
District 211 (Schaumburg)	\$170		\$170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

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

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

Table 4
Adjusted Required Student Fees for the 2021-22 School Year

	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Total for (4) Years
Registration Fee	\$25.50	\$25.50	\$25.50	\$25.50	\$102.00
Instructional Materials	\$199.50	\$199.50	\$199.50	\$199.50	\$798.00
Chromebook Fee	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00		\$300.00
Total per Student	\$325.00	\$325.00	\$325.00	\$225.00	\$1,200.00



To: Dr. Charles Johns
Board of Education

From: Dr. R.J. Gravel

HISTORICAL MEMO

Date: Monday, March 15, 2021

Re: Registration and Instructional Materials Fee

Recommendation

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

Background

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

Table 1
General Fees and Average Cost of Instructional Materials

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

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

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

Registration and Instructional Materials Fee Proposal
Page 2

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Registration and Instructional Materials Fee Proposal
Page 3

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

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

What is changing?

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

What is included and what is not included?

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

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

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

Who owns the materials?

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

Can I still purchase my own materials?

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

Registration and Instructional Materials Fee Proposal

Page 4

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

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

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

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