

School Fee Waiver Amendments

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Douglas R. Welton

Senate Sponsor: Heidi Balderree

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill amends provisions related to school fee waivers.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- defines terms;
- makes technical changes; ~~and~~ **→ [requires a local education agency to waive the fee for one**

~~school~~

~~trip per academic year~~

~~for each student;] ←~~

- limits the number of fee waivers a student may receive;
- requires local education agencies to establish a cap on fee waivers; and
- allows a student to request a fee waiver for a second trip.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

This bill provides a special effective date.

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:

53G-7-504, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 497

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **53G-7-504** is amended to read:

53G-7-504 . Waiver of fees -- Appeal of decision.

(1) As used in this section:

- (a) "Action plan" means a written agreement between a principal and a student that outlines specific, reasonable steps the student will take to contribute to the school or community in exchange for a fee waiver for a second school trip.

(b) ~~“Trip” means a school sponsored travel activity~~ **“Trip” means a school sponsored travel activity** ~~of two or~~

more nights ~~that~~

~~requires a student to pay a fee~~

~~for participation in the activity.~~

“Trip” does not include a travel activity of two or more nights related to an in state activity sponsored by an association, as that term is defined in 53G-7-801. ~~“Trip”~~

~~[(1)] (2)(a)~~ Subject to the provisions of this part, if an LEA or a school within an LEA charges one or more fees, the LEA shall grant a waiver to a student if charging the fee would deny the student the opportunity to fully participate or complete a requirement because of an inability to pay the fee.

(b) An LEA governing board shall:

(i) adopt policies for granting a waiver;

~~“(ii) waive the fee for one school trip per academic year for each student;”~~

~~“(iii) (ii) limit waivers to no more than two trips per student per year;~~

~~“(iv) (iii) adopt policies for a dollar amount cap on total fee waivers;~~

and

~~“(ii) (v) (iv) in accordance with Section 53G-7-505, give notice of~~

waiver eligibility and

policies.

(3) A student ~~who qualifies for a fee waiver~~ **who qualifies for a fee waiver** ~~may request a waiver for the fee of a second trip if the student:~~

(a) ~~meets with the principal or an individual the principal assigns; and~~

(b) ~~develops an action plan with the principal that includes school-related contributions, including:~~

~~(i) performing custodial work;~~

~~(ii) participating in school-related service programs; or~~

~~(iii) completing other contributions that the principal, or an individual the principal assigns, approves.~~

(4) The action plan described in Subsection (3)(b) shall:

(a) ~~match a student's abilities and availability;~~

(b) ~~consider a student's individual circumstances;~~

(c) ~~specify the type and duration of the contribution to the school or community; and~~

(d) avoid interference with a student's academic or personal responsibilities.

(5) Nothing in this section prohibits a:

(a) school from offering additional trips each school year to a student who receives a second fee waiver under Subsection (3); or

(b) student from participating in additional trips each school year after receiving a second fee waiver under Subsection (3).

[(2)] (6)(a) An LEA that charges a fee under this part may provide a variety of alternatives for a student or family to satisfy a fee requirement, including allowing a student to provide:

(i) tutorial assistance to other students;

(ii) assistance before or after school to teachers and other school personnel on school related matters; and

(iii) general community or home service.

(b) Each LEA governing board may add to the list of alternatives provided by the state board, subject to approval by the state board.

[(3)] (7) With regard to a student who is in the custody of the Division of Child and Family Services who is also eligible under Title IV-E of the federal Social Security Act, an LEA governing board shall require fee waivers or alternatives in accordance with this section.

[(4)] (8) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the state board shall make rules:

(a) requiring a parent of a student applying for a fee waiver to provide documentation and certification to the school verifying:

(i) the student's eligibility to receive the waiver; and

(ii) if applicable, that the student has complied with alternatives for satisfying the fee requirements under Subsection [(2)] (6) to the fullest extent reasonably possible according to the individual circumstances of the student and the LEA; and

(b) specifying the acceptable forms of documentation for the requirement under Subsection [(4)(a)] (8)(a), which shall include verification based on income tax returns or current pay stubs.

[(5)] (9) Notwithstanding the requirements under Subsection [(4)] (8), an LEA is not required to keep documentation on file after the verification is completed.

[(6)] (10) If a school denies a student or parent request for a fee waiver, the school shall provide the student or parent:

(a) the school's written decision to deny a waiver; and

89 (b) the procedure to appeal in accordance with LEA policy.

90 Section 2. **Effective Date.**

91 This bill takes effect on July 1, 2025.