



STUDENT FEES

POLICY STATEMENT

Ross Valley Charter (RVC) operates a free public charter school, and no student enrolled in RVC shall be required to pay a student fee for participation in a RVC educational activity unless specifically authorized by law.

DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy, “educational activity” means any activity offered by Ross Valley Charter School that constitutes an integral fundamental part of a student’s education, including, but not limited to, curricular and extracurricular activities. “Educational activity” does *not* include: (a) transportation (bus) to and from school; (b) child care services for students whose parents cannot pick up their child immediately after school or who may require it before the school day begins, or during school breaks or holidays; (c) school lunch program; (d) after school enrichment programs that are offered on a fee basis.

For purposes of this policy, “student fee” means a fee, deposit, or other charge imposed on students, or a student’s parents or guardians, in violation of Education Code Section 49011 and Section 5 of Article IX of the California Constitution, which require educational activities to be provided free of charge to all students without regard to their families’ ability or willingness to pay fees or request special waivers, as provided for in *Hartzell v. Connell* (1984) 35 Cal.3d 899. Pursuant to Education Code section 49010, prohibited student fees include: (a) fees charged as a condition for registering for school or classes, or as a condition for participation in a class or any extracurricular activity, regardless of whether the class or activity is elective or compulsory, or is for credit; (b) a security deposit, or other payment, that a student is required to make to obtain a lock, locker, book, class apparatus, musical instrument, uniform, or other materials or equipment; (c) purchase that a pupil is required to make to obtain materials, supplies, equipment, or uniforms associated with an educational activity.

SPECIFIC STUDENT FEE PROVISIONS

1. All supplies, materials, and equipment needed for students to participate in Ross Valley Charter School’s educational activities shall be provided to students by the school free of charge.
2. Ross Valley Charter School does not use a fee waiver policy to make any student fee permissible.
3. Ross Valley Charter School does not have a “two-tier” educational system. Students who purchase additional supplies not provided free-of-charge by Ross Valley Charter School, or students who make voluntary donations to Ross Valley Charter School’s programs and activities, are not provided a different educational program than students who do not.
4. Ross Valley Charter School does not offer privileges related to educational activities in exchange for money or donations of goods or services from a student, and Ross Valley Charter School does not remove privileges related to educational activities, or otherwise discriminate against any student who does not or will not provide money or donations of goods or services to the school.

5. Ross Valley Charter School may, from time to time, solicit from students and parents of students, voluntary donations of funds or property or voluntary participation in fundraising activities, and may provide prizes or other recognition for students and parents of students who voluntarily participate in such fundraising activities.
6. Ross Valley Charter School may offer transportation (e.g., bus) to and from school for students, at a fee that is approximately equal to the actual cost to Ross Valley Charter School of such transportation. Transportation (e.g., bus) to and from school is not an “educational activity.”
7. Ross Valley Charter School may offer child care services for students whose parents cannot pick up their child immediately after school or whose parents may require services before the school day begins, and Ross Valley Charter may charge a reasonable fee for such services. Childcare is not an “educational activity.”
8. Ross Valley Charter School may work with third party providers to offer after school enrichment programs for fees. These are not part of the educational program of the school.
9. All students attending Ross Valley Charter School participate in field trips that are part of the school’s curriculum (“Classroom Field Trips”), which are provided to all students by the school free of charge. Ross Valley Charter School may solicit voluntary donations of funds or services from students, parents of students or others to help fund Classroom Field Trips, but all students may participate regardless of student or parent donation. No student shall be denied the opportunity to participate in Classroom Field Trips due to cost.
10. Students attending Ross Valley Charter School may choose to participate in additional optional field trips offered by the school that are *not* part of the curriculum (“Non-Program Field Trips”). Non-Program Field Trips are not mandatory, are not part of the school’s curriculum. Ross Valley Charter School may charge students and parents of students a reasonable fee for attendance at Non-Program Field Trips. Such attendance is entirely voluntary, recreational and is not an “educational activity.”
11. Ross Valley Charter School may charge students a reasonable fee for the replacement of lost, damaged or unreturned school supplies, such as school ID cards or library late return fees.
12. Ross Valley Charter School may provide musical instruments and art supplies for music and art courses to students free of charge. At the end of the course, students may be provided the option to purchase a musical instrument or art supply at a discounted price in order to continue practice at home. Such continued practice after the end of a course is not an “educational activity.” If a student chooses an instrument that needs to be rented, the cost of rental will be a family responsibility. RVC will attempt to have some loaner instruments for this purpose and will request a donation from families that borrow them, but this will not be a requirement.
13. Prior to student participation in school sports, Ross Valley Charter School may require parents to provide proof of a sports physical exam (pre-participation physical examination) to determine whether it is safe for a student to participate in a sport.
14. Ross Valley Charter School offers sports programs and extracurricular activities to all students free of charge. Ross Valley Charter School may solicit voluntary donations of funds or services from students and parents of students to help fund sports programs and extracurricular activities, but all students are permitted to participate, and provided necessary supplies, regardless of student or parent donation.
15. Ross Valley Charter School may charge students and parents of students a reasonable fee for optional attendance as a spectator at school-sponsored dances, festivals, athletic events, plays or musicals, or other performances. Such attendance is entirely recreational and is not an “educational activity.”
16. Ross Valley Charter School may allow students to purchase optional items including school seals or patches, yearbooks, school pictures, logo clothing, or other items not required for a student’s education.
17. Students and parents of students will be provided a copy of this policy at the start of each school year as part of Ross Valley Charter School’s Parent-Student Handbook, and it is available on the school’s website.

18. Students, parents or guardians who believe they are being charged an impermissible student fee should contact the School Director, and all complaints will be addressed pursuant to Ross Valley Charter School's Uniform Complaint Policy. In the event any complaint is found to have merit, Ross Valley Charter School will reimburse all affected students, parents and guardians.

Adopted: May 8, 2017

Revised: September 10, 2020