

A FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS ON: SCHOOL FEES

South Carolina public schools can charge fees for things that add to your child's education. Many of these fees are charged at the beginning of the year when students enroll. Some fees may also come up during the school year for field trips and additional activities. Fees are usually more expensive for students in high school than in lower grades. Below are some things to keep in mind when thinking about paying for your child's school fees:

- ◇ If you qualify for reduced lunch, the school must lower your fees. You may want to talk to school officials about this before the school year even begins to make sure they have been reduced.
- ◇ If you qualify for free lunch, you do not have to pay **any** school fees when you enroll your child. You also should not have to pay for any additional programs or activities, like field trips.



- ◇ No school can refuse to enroll your child or promote your child because you can't pay fees.
- ◇ School supply lists can be considered school fees. If you cannot provide your child and his or her class with the supplies on the list, talk to your child's teacher and school officials.

Schools typically charge fees for:

- ◇ Field Trips
- ◇ Textbooks
- ◇ Workbooks
- ◇ Club Memberships
- ◇ School Supplies
- ◇ Advanced/Specialized Classes (Driver's Ed; Gifted and Talented Programs)



This is not all the information you need to know if you have questions about school fee laws in our state. You may want to talk to a lawyer about your individual situation. If you don't have a lawyer, the South Carolina Bar Lawyer Referral Service can give you the name of a lawyer who is willing to meet with you and advise you at a lower rate. For the name of a lawyer in your area, go to the Lawyer Referral Service Online at www.sctbar.org/public/Irs/default.asp or call (800) 868-2284 (statewide) or (803) 799-7100 in Richland and Lexington counties. If you have a very low income, your local legal services office may be able to help you. To get in touch with them, call the Legal Assistance Telephone Intake Service for a referral at 744-9430 in Columbia or toll-free, (888) 346-5592 from other places in the state.

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This brochure was developed and published by the South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center. Funding was provided by the South Carolina Bar Foundation's Interest on Lawyer Trust Accounts (IOLTA) program.

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