

Policy 03-101 — School Fees and Fee Waivers

I. Board Policy

Utah Military Academy (“UMA”) adopts this School Fees and Fee Waivers Policy to comply with applicable Utah law, Utah State Board of Education rules, and federal privacy requirements. UMA’s Board of Directors is responsible for approving all school fees, fee schedules, spending plans, and fee waiver policies as required by law. The Board delegates day-to-day administration of this policy to UMA administration, subject to annual Board review and approval.

UMA shall ensure that no student is denied the opportunity to participate in a class, course, activity, program, co-curricular activity, extracurricular activity, or school-sponsored opportunity because of the student’s or family’s inability to pay a fee.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear, fair, confidential, and legally compliant procedures for:

1. Setting and approving school fees;
2. Notifying parents and students of fees and fee waiver rights;
3. Determining eligibility for fee waivers;
4. Processing fee waiver applications and appeals;
5. Protecting student and family privacy;
6. Ensuring that students are not stigmatized, identified, or denied participation due to inability to pay; and
7. Ensuring that school fees and fee revenues are properly approved, tracked, budgeted, and spent for the purposes for which they are charged.

III. Definitions

For purposes of this policy:

Fee means any charge, deposit, rental, or other mandatory payment, however designated, whether in the form of money, goods, or services, that is required as a condition of participation in a school-sponsored or school-supported class, activity, course, program, co-curricular activity, or extracurricular activity.

Waiver means the release from the requirement to pay a fee.

Fee Waiver means a full waiver of a fee for an eligible student in accordance with Utah law and this policy.

Non-Waivable Charge means a charge that is not subject to waiver under applicable law or rule, such as a charge for lost, damaged, or destroyed school property, when allowed by law.

Provision in Lieu of Fee Payment means an alternative voluntarily selected by a student or parent to satisfy a fee obligation, such as service in lieu of a fee or an installment payment plan. UMA may offer such alternatives, but may not require them in lieu of a fee waiver.

Service in Lieu of Fee means voluntary service performed by a student in place of paying a fee, if allowed by UMA and only if the service complies with state and federal law. Service in lieu may not be required as a condition of receiving a fee waiver.

Student Supplies means items that are the personal property of a student, are commonly purchased and used by persons outside of school activities, and have a high probability of use outside UMA-sponsored activities. Examples may include pencils, paper, notebooks, binders, basic school supplies, personal clothing items, and similar personal or consumable items retained by the student.

Optional Project means a project chosen and retained by a student in a class where projects are part of the curriculum, when a meaningful and productive project using UMA-provided materials is otherwise available.

Textbook means a book, workbook, digital material, or similar instructional material required for participation in a course, subject to Utah law governing textbook fees.

Parent means a parent, legal guardian, or individual legally authorized to act on behalf of the student.

IV. Fee Approval and Fee Schedule

UMA may not charge or assess any fee unless the fee:

1. Has been reviewed and approved by the UMA Board of Directors;
2. Is included on the approved fee schedule;
3. Is equal to or less than the maximum fee amount approved by the Board;
4. Is connected to a school-sponsored or school-supported class, activity, course, program, co-curricular activity, or extracurricular activity; and
5. Is subject to waiver unless specifically identified as a non-waivable charge under applicable law.

The UMA Board shall approve the fee schedule and fee waiver policy at least annually in a properly noticed public Board meeting. UMA shall provide opportunities for public

review and input before adoption of the annual fee schedule as required by Utah law and State Board rule.

UMA shall publish the approved fee schedule and fee waiver policy on its website and provide written notice to parents and students before fees are due. The notice shall be written in language that is easily understandable and shall be included with registration materials or otherwise provided to families in a timely manner.

V. General Fee Standards

UMA shall comply with the following standards:

1. No student may be denied participation in a class, course, activity, co-curricular activity, extracurricular activity, or school-sponsored program because of inability to pay a fee.
2. All fees are subject to waiver unless specifically identified as non-waivable under applicable law.
3. UMA may not withhold grades, class schedules, transcripts, diplomas, or official student records because of unpaid school fees.
4. UMA may pursue reasonable collection methods for unpaid fees, but collection efforts may not deny a student access to school, class participation, grades, records, or activities in violation of law.
5. UMA may not use a fee waiver status to treat a student differently from other students.
6. UMA shall maintain fee revenue and expenditure records in accordance with applicable accounting standards and Board-approved spend plans.
7. UMA shall establish spending plans for fee revenue that identify the anticipated uses of each fee and promote transparency for students, parents, employees, and the Board.

VI. Middle and Secondary Fees

UMA shall comply with Utah law regarding fees by grade level.

For middle grades, UMA shall not charge fees for activities, supplies, or materials that are part of the regular school day, except as allowed by law. Donations may be requested only if they are clearly voluntary and participation is not conditioned on payment or donation.

For secondary grades, UMA may charge Board-approved fees for allowable courses, activities, programs, co-curricular activities, and extracurricular activities, subject to the fee waiver requirements of this policy and Utah law.

Beginning with any applicable school-year requirement under Utah law, UMA shall ensure that students have access to at least one option for each graduation requirement that does not require payment or the waiver of a fee, unless an exception applies under state law.

VII. Fee Waiver Eligibility

UMA shall grant a fee waiver to a student when UMA receives verification that the student meets one or more of the following eligibility categories:

1. The student is eligible based on family or household income, using income levels established annually by the Utah State Board of Education or the State Superintendent. These income levels shall align with free lunch eligibility levels or other state-published school fee waiver income standards.
2. The student receives Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
3. The student's family receives Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Family Employment Program, or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.
4. The student is in foster care.
5. The student is in state custody or state care.
6. The student qualifies for McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act protections.
7. The student does not meet one of the categories above but, because of extenuating circumstances, the student or family is not reasonably capable of paying the fee. Extenuating circumstances may include, but are not limited to, loss of employment, substantial medical expenses, family emergency, death in the family, natural disaster, housing instability, or other significant financial hardship.

UMA shall not subject families to unreasonable demands for requalification. UMA may grant retroactive fee waivers when eligibility existed before the fee waiver application date.

VIII. Verification of Eligibility

UMA shall verify fee-waiver eligibility in accordance with Utah law and State Board rule.

Acceptable verification may include, as applicable:

1. Income verification using the state-published fee waiver income levels;
2. Documentation or an eligibility determination showing TANF, Family Employment Program, or SNAP participation;
3. A benefit verification letter from the Social Security Administration for SSI;
4. Foster care, state custody, or state care documentation from an authorized agency or caseworker;
5. Verification from UMA's McKinney-Vento liaison for students who qualify under McKinney-Vento; or
6. Other documentation sufficient to verify extenuating circumstances.

UMA shall not retain copies of financial documents submitted to verify fee waiver eligibility. UMA may record that verification was received, the type of eligibility category verified, the date of verification, and the decision made. Copies of income documents, benefit documents, or other financial records shall be returned to the parent or securely destroyed after eligibility is verified, unless retention is specifically required by law.

IX. Confidentiality and FERPA Compliance

UMA shall administer the fee waiver process in a confidential manner that complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Utah law, and State Board rule.

UMA shall ensure that:

1. Fee waiver applications are handled only by authorized personnel with a legitimate educational or administrative need to know.
2. Students receiving fee waivers are not identified to other students, parents, volunteers, staff members, or employees who do not need the information to perform their assigned duties.
3. The fee waiver process avoids stigma, embarrassment, undue attention, visible indicators, or unreasonable burdens on students and families.
4. Fee waiver documents and eligibility records are stored securely.
5. Financial documentation is not retained after eligibility verification, except for the limited record of verification and decision.
6. Fee waiver status is not included on publicly visible lists, rosters, class lists, team lists, payment reports, or documents accessible to individuals without a legitimate need to know.

X. Procedures for Applying for a Fee Waiver

UMA shall provide fee waiver application forms and instructions in registration materials, on the school website, and upon request.

The process for obtaining a fee waiver shall be simple, understandable, and accessible:

1. A parent may request a fee waiver form from the school office, registrar, business office, administrator, or designated fee waiver contact.
2. A parent shall submit the completed fee waiver application and appropriate verification to the designated UMA fee waiver administrator.
3. UMA shall review the application fairly, objectively, confidentially, and without delay.
4. UMA shall notify the parent in writing of the decision using the standard written decision and appeal form approved or accepted for school fee waiver use.
5. If approved, UMA shall waive all applicable fees for which the student is eligible.
6. If denied, UMA shall provide the reason for denial and explain the right to appeal.

Students shall not be used to collect fees, deliver fee waiver applications, gather financial documentation, communicate fee waiver decisions, or assist in the fee waiver approval or denial process.

XI. Written Decision and Appeal Form

UMA shall provide every fee-waiver applicant with a standard written decision and an appeal form. The form shall state whether the application is approved or denied.

If a fee waiver is denied, the written decision shall include:

1. The reason for denial;
2. A clear explanation of the parent's right to appeal;
3. The deadline and procedure for submitting an appeal;
4. The name or title of the person or office to whom the appeal should be submitted;
5. A statement that the requirement to pay the fee is suspended during the appeal process; and
6. A statement that the student may continue to participate during the appeal process.

XII. Appeal Process

A parent may appeal UMA's denial of a fee waiver.

Appeals shall be handled as follows:

1. The parent shall submit the appeal to the designated school administrator or the administrator's designee.
2. The appeal may include additional information or documentation.
3. UMA shall review the appeal in a timely, fair, objective, and confidential manner.
4. UMA shall issue a written appeal decision.
5. If the appeal is denied, the parent may request review by the UMA Board of Directors or the Board's designee, consistent with UMA procedures.

During any period in which a fee waiver application is under review, or during any appeal of a fee waiver denial, UMA shall suspend the requirement that the student or family pay the fee. The student shall not be excluded from participation while the fee waiver request or appeal is pending.

XIII. Participation Protections

UMA shall ensure that no student is denied the opportunity to participate in any class, course, school-sponsored activity, co-curricular activity, extracurricular activity, team, club, field trip, or program because of inability to pay a fee.

A student may not be:

1. Removed from a class or activity because a fee waiver application is pending;
2. Denied participation because of unpaid fees while eligibility is being reviewed;
3. Identified as a fee waiver recipient;
4. Required to perform service in lieu of a fee waiver;
5. Required to enter an installment plan instead of receiving a fee waiver;
6. Penalized academically because of unpaid fees;
7. Denied grades, transcripts, schedules, or diplomas because of unpaid fees; or
8. Treated differently from students who paid the fee.

XIV. Service in Lieu of Fees and Installment Plans

UMA may offer service in lieu of fees or installment payment plans as voluntary alternatives. UMA may not require a student or parent to accept service in lieu or an installment plan instead of a fee waiver when the student qualifies for a waiver.

If UMA offers service in lieu of a fee:

1. The service must be voluntary;
2. The service must be appropriate to the student's age, maturity, and physical condition;
3. The service must not demean, stigmatize, or create an unreasonable burden for the student or family;
4. The service must comply with state and federal law, including labor laws;
5. The service must be credited at a rate at least equal to the applicable minimum wage for each hour of service;
6. The student performing service may not be treated differently from students who pay a fee; and
7. UMA shall maintain appropriate records of service credit.

If UMA offers an installment plan:

1. The installment plan must be voluntary;
2. The installment plan may not be required in lieu of a fee waiver;
3. The plan must be reasonable and not impose an undue burden on the family; and
4. The student may not be denied participation because the family requested or is participating in an installment plan.

XV. Donations, Fundraising, and Optional Purchases

UMA may solicit donations or contributions only if the request clearly states that the donation is voluntary and that a student's participation, grade, credit, or access to an activity is not conditioned on making the donation.

A donation becomes a fee if payment is required as a condition of participation.

Optional purchases, such as yearbooks, spirit wear, personal clothing items, optional memorabilia, or similar items not required for participation in a class or activity, are not considered school fees for purposes of waiver requirements unless the item is required for participation.

Fundraising may be offered in accordance with UMA policy and Utah law. Individual fundraising opportunities may be offered to help students offset costs, but participation in fundraising may not be required as a condition of participation in a school-sponsored class or activity when a fee waiver is applicable.

XVI. Textbooks and Instructional Materials

UMA shall comply with Utah law regarding textbook and instructional material fees.

UMA may not charge textbook fees except where allowed by law. If a textbook or instructional material fee is allowed by law, the fee is subject to waiver for eligible students.

XVII. Lost or Damaged Property

UMA may charge a student for lost, damaged, or destroyed school property when allowed by law. Such charges are non-waivable if classified as non-waivable under applicable law. UMA may pursue reasonable collection methods for such charges but may not exclude a student from school, deny grades, withhold transcripts, deny a diploma, or deny records required for enrollment or placement in another school in violation of law.

XVIII. Records, Accounting, and Spend Plans

UMA shall maintain records sufficient to document:

1. Board-approved fee schedules;
2. Fee spend plans;
3. Fee revenues and expenditures;
4. Fee waiver applications received;
5. Fee waiver decisions;
6. Fee waiver appeals;
7. The number and total value of fee waivers granted;
8. Service in lieu records, if applicable; and
9. Required school fee reports.

UMA shall follow applicable accounting standards and maintain fee revenue and expenditure records in accordance with Utah law, State Board rule, and UMA fiscal policies.

XIX. Staff Training

UMA shall provide annual training to administrators, finance staff, registrars, teachers, coaches, advisors, and other employees whose duties involve school fees, fee collection, fee schedules, fee waivers, fundraising, spend plans, or student participation.

Training shall include:

1. Approved fee schedules;

2. Fee waiver eligibility;
3. Fee waiver application and appeal procedures;
4. Confidentiality and FERPA requirements;
5. Prohibition on stigmatizing or identifying fee waiver students;
6. Prohibition on students collecting fees or assisting with fee waiver processing;
7. Proper handling of donations and fundraising;
8. Use of spend plans and activity-level fee accounting; and
9. Requirements for suspending payment obligations during fee waiver review and appeal.

XX. Annual Review

The UMA Board of Directors shall annually review this School Fees and Fee Waivers Policy and the approved fee schedule. UMA administration shall recommend updates as necessary to comply with changes in Utah law, State Board rule, federal law, or UMA operational needs.

XXI. Administrative Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee is responsible for implementing this policy, ensuring staff training, maintaining required records, protecting confidentiality, and ensuring that UMA's fee and fee-waiver practices comply with Utah law, State Board rules, and federal privacy requirements.