



ORANGE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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Public Information

Summary of Orange County Public Schools' Activity Program, Activity Fee Plan and Frequently Asked Questions

The Orange County Public Schools' activity program is a self supporting program with annual expenses of over \$160,000 (personnel salaries and stipends not included). The expenses consist of:

- VHSL Fees, insurance, and other fees;
- Transportation;
- Officials, referees, and umpires;
- Basic athletic equipment and supplies;
- Field maintenance;
- Medical supplies; and
- Regional and State tournaments.

Even though gate receipts and student activity fees provide much of the income for the activity program, there is still a need for fundraising to completely fund the activity budget. To assist with these needs, each program is required to raise 10 percent of its previous year's expenses before the program begins its season. This money is assigned to the general activity fund and is used for the operation of all activities. To further assist with these needs, the Director of Student Activities is currently developing a comprehensive fundraising program that consists of the following:

Orange County Public Schools Activity Boosters' Club is an organization composed of and directed by parents to provide financial and other support for middle and high school non-fine arts activities. The money raised by this organization is used to support the general operating fund of the middle and high school activity programs and is used for transportation costs, basic equipment and supplies, officials, regional and state tournaments, etc. Sponsors and coaches of individual programs may request money from this organization for the special needs of their activity. For example, the members of the golf team may need rain gear or members of the cross country team may need warm-up suits. Before the request is made to the Boosters' Club, the coach or sponsor must insure that 75 percent of its activity roster parents be current members of the Boosters' Club.

Orange County Public Schools Fine Arts Boosters' Club is an organization composed of and directed by parents to provide financial and other support for middle and high school fine arts activities. The money raised by this organization is used to support the general operating fund of the middle and high school fine arts programs and is used for transportation costs, basic equipment and supplies, etc.

Fundraising organized by the Director of Student Activities – In addition to the fundraising activities of the two booster organizations, the director of student activities will organize general fundraising activities that will benefit the entire activity department. A golf tournament held earlier this summer was an example of this type of fundraising. The money raised from the golf tournament was used for Virginia High School League dues and for student insurance.

Fundraising by the individual teams and programs – Each individual team or program may also raise money to supplement the allocations that is received from other sources. For example, a coach or sponsor may want to raise money to purchase shoes for the members of the team or practice gear for each team member. Of the money raised by the activity, 80 percent is used for the activity and 20 percent is assigned to the general activity fund.

Activity Fee Plan and Frequently Asked Questions

Why has the School Board implemented an activity fee structure for the 2010 – 11 school year?

- Due to a substantial budget deficit, the School Board approved the implementation of an activity fee plan in order to minimize budget cuts to instruction.
- Background information related to activity fees:
 - In January, the Superintendent's proposed budget recommended that all activities be completely self supportive.
 - During a School Board budget work session, the School Board reached consensus on implementing an activity fee structure that would offset the cost of activity programs previously supported by the School Board's budget.
 - The Superintendent charged the principal of the high school and the athletic director with the task of working with a focus group, which included middle school principals, middle school athletic directors, fine arts staff, parents, and community members in developing a plan of action for implementing a self supportive activity program including the activity fee structure.
 - The School Board approved the FY11 budget at the May School Board meeting which included an activity fee plan.

What are the activity fees for next year?

- The activity fee for middle school students is \$50.00 per activity.
- The activity fee for high school students is \$100.00 per activity.
- Students that qualify for economically disadvantaged status or demonstrate financial need may apply for a scholarship to waive the activity fee.

What activities are required to pay an activity fee?

- Any activity that requires financial support for equipment, transportation, etc. shall be required to collect an activity fee.

Schools have traditionally conducted fundraisers in order to cover activity expenses not covered by the School Board's budget. Will this practice continue?

- Yes, schools will continue current fundraising activities (booster fundraising, general activity fundraising, individual team fundraisers, etc.), as well as explore other fundraising options.
- Schools also will continue to use gate receipts to offset the cost for game expenses (officials, uniforms, fees, equipment, etc.) as well as other activity expenses not fully covered by the activity fee. Public purchases of tickets for events remains one of the most efficient and predictable methods of financing school activities. The public is strongly encouraged to attend as many school events as possible.

Will the activity fee be used to pay for stipends?

- No, the School Board is paying the stipends for sponsors/coaches. It is important to note, however, that stipends for coaches and sponsors were substantially reduced as part the budget reduction process. Despite these reductions, almost all Orange County high school and middle school coaches and sponsors have maintained their roles and responsibilities to their respective programs. We are very proud of the commitment demonstrated by these fine professionals and we encourage all patrons to support them in every way we can.

When will activity fees be collected?

- Activity fees will be collected at the beginning of each season, a week after final cuts.

Will students be allowed to participate if they don't pay their fee?

- Students will be allowed to practice, but will not be allowed to participate in scrimmages/games until the activity fee is paid.

Will payment of the activity fee guarantee playing time?

- No, there is no relationship between activity fee and a guarantee of student playing time. The decision for playing time for an athlete is completely at the discretion of the head coach and his/her staff.

How will the collected fees be used and for what expenses?

- The activity fees collected at each school will be deposited into a separate account at that school and used for the cost of transportation, equipment/supplies, fees, and regional and state tournaments.

How will the activity fee process be communicated to parents?

- The activity fee process is currently posted on the division website for parent reference.
- Letters will be distributed to parents of middle school and high school athletes prior to each sports season.
- The principal and the director of student activities will conduct activity fee informational meetings at the beginning of each activity's season.
- Parents will be provided the opportunity to pay activity fee following these meetings.

Anyone with questions or concerns about the Orange County Public Schools' Activity Program, fundraising and/or activity fee plan should contact Gene Kotulka, Director of Student Services at 661-4550 ext. 1658