STUDENT FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Shared Beliefs
The Board of School Directors has seven QCSD shared beliefs. These beliefs and perspective are critically important to list in this Administrative Regulation (AR) prior to outlining the purpose and responsibilities for financial obligations of students.

- We believe we are responsible for preparing all students for life after graduation.
- We believe in providing a safe and student-centered culture and environment in all of our schools.
- We believe everyone must act with civility, responsibility, and integrity.
- We believe in the responsible stewardship of community resources.
- We believe education is a collaboration between students, parents and families, staff, school board, and community.
- We believe in communicating effectively and transparently with all stakeholders.
- We believe in using data, reflection, and evaluation to drive continuous improvement.

Purpose
In the past, student financial obligations and collection practices were conducted at the building level. Generally speaking, student financial obligations were small with students paying their debt off prior to graduation. Board Policy 617 and AR 617 were specifically created as a result of the passing of PA Act 55 in 2017, the “Anti-Lunch Shaming Act,” and the subsequent exorbitant student debt that soared at all school building levels. It is the purpose of this AR to clearly delineate district, school, student and parent responsibilities when student debt occurs.

It is the intent of the Board that the implementation of Policy 617 be done in combination with its Shared Beliefs, along with understanding, compassion, and sensitivity to each individual student’s personal situation and/or family hardship. At no time will a consequence be awarded to a student that includes the denial or restriction of participation in any curricular course, or a curriculum related activity or event. At all times, students and parents will have due process rights in appealing student consequence decisions as a result of student debt.

District Responsibilities

Business Office
The Business Office will:

- track and monitor lunch debt and consolidated debt per student; records will be maintained by the district accounting department and in the student information system
- will track and monitor consolidated debt from all sources for a student, and will refer consolidated debt over $1,000 for debt collection pursuant to Policy 617 after consultation and approval of the superintendent; Business Office will periodically report to the school board on accounts referred for debt collection

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- will develop a single template letter for communications to parents about student debt; Business Office will send (via e-mail or first class mail) letters on a regular basis to notify parents of meal debt

- will maintain information on its website on free and reduced lunch and other community resources that may be able to help support families who are experiencing financial difficulty

**Technology Department**

The Technology Department will:

- will track and monitor technology-related student debt; records will be maintained in the student information system

- send letters (via e-mail or first class mail) on a regular basis to notify parents about technology debt

- if a student leaves the district via transfer, withdrawal, or graduation and there is an outstanding debt, the district will withhold records until the debt is paid, provided that due process is offered

**Principal Responsibilities**

The Principal will:

- track and monitor building-level student debt; records will be maintained in the student information system

- send letters (via e-mail or first class mail) on a regular basis to notify parents about building-level student debt, e.g. lost textbooks and library books, broken classroom equipment where negligence is involved, lost athletic equipment, etc.

When a student's debt is $100 or less, the principal has discretion on the imposition of student consequences.

To maintain consistency across buildings, where the consolidated debt for a student exceeds $100, the principal shall consult with the Business Office regarding the consideration of mitigating circumstances before implementing student consequences outlined in Board Policy 617.

If a student leaves the district via transfer, withdrawal, or graduation and there is an outstanding debt, principals will withhold records until the debt is paid, provided that due process is provided.

**Parent Expectations and Responsibilities**

Parents will receive a first notice allowing 30 days to pay and if not paid, then a second notice will be received prior to any student consequences being considered; this provides parents with at least 60 days to make payment or make payment arrangements with the business office prior to the imposition of any student consequences.

Consistent with past practices, all high school students must pay all financial obligations prior to being cleared to walk in graduation ceremonies or purchase prom tickets, regardless of the timing of the debt being incurred or the payment notices.

Parents may contact the Business Office to discuss payment terms whenever necessary.

Partial payments or contributions will be applied to the oldest debt first (first in, first out).

Parents who have students who qualify for free or reduced breakfast/lunch will be required to apply when meal debt is incurred.

**Student Expectations and Responsibilities**

- become excellent stewards of learning opportunities, experiences, and resources provided for curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities

- embellish the Board's Shared Beliefs about being prepared to become a responsible citizen after graduation

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Public Donations to Relieve Debt

- community members or organizations that want to donate money to pay student obligations can do so under the terms and conditions outlined in Policy 808

- partial payments or contributions will be applied to the oldest debt first (first in, first out)