


**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804**

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

September 18, 2025

TO: The Honorable Ken Kuraya
Chairperson, Finance and Infrastructure Committee

FROM: Keith T. Hayashi
Superintendent 

SUBJECT: Action on the maximum allowable co-curricular student activity fees

1. RECOMMENDATION

The Hawai'i State Department of Education (Department) is recommending that the Hawai'i State Board of Education (BOE) take action to approve the increase of maximum allowable student activities for student association fees, school club dues, and class dues for intermediate/middle and high school students. It should be noted that the maximum allowable current fees for student activities have not increased since 1998, and some unchanged since 1994. The current and recommended maximum allowable amounts are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Student Activity Fees (Maximum Allowable), Current and Recommended for BOE Action

Fee Type	Current Maximum Allowable (since 1998)	Recommended Maximum Allowable Beginning with School Year 2026-27
Student Association Fees	\$10	\$20
School Club Dues (per club)	\$10	\$20

Class Dues for Grades 6-8	\$5	\$15
Class Dues for Grades 9-12	\$8	\$18

The Hawai'i Administrative Rules §8-32-2 authorizes BOE to determine the maximum allowable charges for class dues, student association fees, and school club dues.

2. RECOMMENDED EFFECTIVE DATE

The Department recommends that the increase of the maximum allowable fees take effect for the school year 2026-27.

3. RECOMMENDED COMPLIANCE DATE

Not applicable.

4. DISCUSSION

On January 16, 2025, the Department requested BOE Finance and Infrastructure Committee's (FIC) approval to increase maximum allowable student activity fees for student association fees, school club dues, and class dues for intermediate/middle and high school students, as part of the agenda for "*Fees for Student Activities, Summer School, School Meals, and Bus Transportation.*"

The Hawai'i Administrative Rules § 8-32-2 authorizes BOE to determine the maximum allowable charges for class dues, student association fees, and school club dues.

§8-32-2 Fees and charges for co-curricular activities. Fees and charges for co-curricular activities. Schools may assess and collect special fees and charges from pupils for co-curricular activities. The maximum allowable charges for class dues (middle/intermediate and high schools), student association fees, and school club dues shall be established by BOE. A school principal may establish fees and charges at amounts which are lower than the maximum amounts allowable under this section. [Eff 8/23/84; am and comp 9/1/95; am and comp 9/28/02] (Auth: HRS §302A-[1130]1112) (Imp: HRS §302A-[1112]1130)

The FIC did not have enough votes to move this request forward to the General Business Meeting for BOE consideration. The Department was asked to provide additional information.

On January 16, 2025, Other Student Fees (Other Fees) were also presented to provide context (Table 2) that a student might pay for the school year. Any increase in the maximum allowable charges of Other Fees falls under the authority of the Superintendent. These fees are shown in Table 2 below, and again, to provide context.

§8-32-5 Other fees. The superintendent shall determine the maximum allowable charge for athletic books, yearbook, newspapers, and caps and gowns. [Eff 8/23/84; am and comp 9/1/95; am and comp 9/28/02] (Auth: HRS §§302A-1112, 302A-1130) (Imp: HRS §302A-1130)

Table 2. Other Fees (Maximum Allowable), Current and Recommended for Superintendent Approval (No BOE Action Required)

Fee Type	Current Maximum Allowable (since 2011)	Recommended Maximum Allowable Beginning with School Year 2026-27
Athletic Books (card)	\$25	\$35
Yearbook	\$50	\$75
Caps and Gowns (basic)	\$25	\$125
Newspapers	\$10	\$15

*Note: The Caps and Gowns fee is not the same as a graduation fee which some schools assess. A graduation fee may cover costs with related ceremony expenses such as venue rental, transportation, rental of chairs, sound equipment, and security.

The Superintendent did not increase the maximum allowable Other Fees while the request to the maximum allowable fees for student activities under the BOE authority has been pending.

There may be fees that students pay to outside vendors. For example, some high schools direct students to purchase their caps and gowns directly from vendors. The maximum allowable fees do not apply to private vendors.

School principals contributed to the proposal by providing input on fee adjustments and describing current practices for supporting students in need of financial assistance. The Department acknowledges that higher fees may create financial

hardships for some families and could limit students' ability to participate in multiple clubs that collect dues.

Principals and student activities coordinators reported that systems are already in place to assist students experiencing financial challenges. Over the past several years, schools have provided students who struggle to pay activity fees with discreet assistance through teachers, counselors, and administrators. These supports are provided without drawing attention to individual students and while maintaining confidentiality.

Examples of assistance include support from parent-teacher organizations, work-to-earn opportunities, scholarships, staff contributions, and referrals to external agencies. In addition, students identified as experiencing unstable housing under the McKinney-Vento Act automatically receive financial assistance for fees.

When high school principals were surveyed, they confirmed that no student had been prevented from participating in a graduation ceremony due to an inability to pay student activity fees.

a. Conditions leading to the recommendation:

The maximum allowable amount for the student activity fees has not kept up with inflation, and the current cost of goods, services, and other expenses makes it challenging to continue student activities.

The Department previously requested to increase the maximum allowable student activity fees on January 16, 2025 to the FIC. The FIC did not have enough votes to move this request forward to the General Business Meeting for BOE consideration. The Department was asked to provide additional information.

The Department gathered further information as requested on why the increase in the maximum allowable amount is needed, and what the fees are used for.

Middle/Intermediate and High School Student Activities Coordinators

The proposed increase in the maximum allowable student association fee is necessary to sustain student programs. With rising costs across the Department, this adjustment will help reduce reliance on multiple fundraising efforts and minimize the need to seek external funding sources. Currently, many school groups compete for the same limited community resources, often approaching the same individuals and local businesses for support.

At the current rate of \$10, the fee averages just one dollar per student per month over the school year. Even with the proposed increase to \$20, the cost equates

to only two dollars per month - a modest contribution that will provide meaningful support for student activities.

Clubs are driven by student interests and may vary from year to year. Club dues help cover a wide range of expenses, including contest entry fees, national membership dues, conference fees, guest speakers, transportation for events or field trips, social activities, club T-shirts, promotional materials, and general supplies. Funds are also used for refreshments, recognition, awards, and other club-related activities. While some clubs focus primarily on community service, even those without a service-based mission often incorporate school or community service components. Many clubs conduct their own fundraising efforts, and not all clubs charge dues.

Class dues are primarily dedicated to grade-level activities, similar in purpose to student association dues but focused on class-specific events. These funds help offset costs for functions such as prom, decorations, photo booths, DJs, field days, luau celebrations, and other bonding activities throughout the school year.

For students who are unable to afford these fees, schools provide financial assistance through waivers, payment plans, work-to-earn opportunities, or support from community organizations. These measures ensure that no student is excluded from participating in school activities due to financial hardship.

Athletic Directors and Principals (not for BOE Decision)

A recent statewide poll of high school athletic directors and principals was conducted to gather feedback on the proposed increase to the Athletic Activity Ticket (card). The most commonly cited reason for the increase was inflation, followed by the expansion of sports offerings. Other factors included growth in the number of student-athletes and rising costs for uniforms, security, referees, athletic program staff, and coaches.

Schools reported that funds generated from the Athletic Activity Ticket are primarily used for equipment purchases, minor facility repairs, and transportation. Some schools also apply these funds toward expenses such as coaches, referees, security, uniforms, and participation in playoff games and state tournaments. While one school indicated no immediate need for an increase, administrators acknowledged that raising the maximum allowable fee provides flexibility, as schools may still choose to charge less than the maximum. Additional feedback included recommendations to raise the fee beyond the proposed \$35 to help offset growing costs for security, food, pre-season travel, and facility rentals. One school emphasized the need for additional funds, stating that its athletic program is “barely making ends meet.”

The proposed increase remains modest and provides significant value. The Athletic Activity Ticket encourages students to attend athletic events, support their peers, and foster school spirit and pride. All proceeds go directly to the school's athletic program and may be allocated based on site-specific needs.

In comparison to individual ticket purchases, \$8 to \$10 for football games and \$4 to \$9 for other athletic events, plus a \$1 service fee per ticket, the Athletic Activity Ticket offers considerable savings. For example, on O'ahu, the \$35 card would cover the cost of attending four football games and provide access to all other paid events. The card grants admission to 73 of the 119 paid athletic events on O'ahu, bringing the per-event cost down to approximately 48 cents for students who attend every game. Comparable savings are available on other islands, with per-event costs of approximately 31 cents on Hawai'i Island, 37 cents on Kaua'i, and 30 cents on Maui.

The table below illustrates potential savings for students who attend all events or even a portion of the scheduled athletic activities.

Table 3: Savings per event scenarios

Island	Number of Events (All)	Number of Paid Events	Cost per event if attended everything for \$35 ticket	Cost per event if attended one-fourth of the events
O'ahu	119	73	48 cents	\$1.92
Hawai'i	122	114	31 cents	\$1.24
Kaua'i	124	94	37 cents	\$1.48
Maui	116	116	30 cents	\$1.20

b. Previous action of the BOE and Committee(s) on the same or similar matter:

Previous action was requested by the FIC on January 16, 2025. The last review of fees by the BOE was in 2011, and the maximum allowable amount was not increased.

According to Department records dating back to 1994, the maximum allowable amount for class dues has not increased, while student association and school club dues saw only a minimal adjustment in 1998. Since then, no further increases have been made to the maximum allowable amounts. It is important to note that these represent maximum limits; principals have the discretion to waive fees or charge less than the maximum as appropriate.

Table 4: Maximum allowable charges for student activities

Maximum allowable charges for student activities					
	1994	1998	2000	2004	2011
Student Association Fees	\$6	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10
School Club Dues (per club)	\$5	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10
Class Dues for Grades 6-8	\$5 (gr 7-8)	\$5 (gr 7-8)	\$5 (gr 6-8)	\$5 (gr 6-8)	\$5 (gr 6-8)
Class Dues for Grades 9-12	\$8	\$8	\$8	\$8	\$8
Maximum allowable charges for other items					
Activity Ticket (Card)	\$10	\$25	\$25	\$25	\$25
Yearbook	\$20	\$40	\$40	\$50	\$50
Newspaper	\$5	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10
Caps and Gowns	\$15	\$17	\$25	\$25	\$25

c. Other policies affected:

Board Policy 303-10 FEE FOR SERVICE is not affected, nor are there other policies affected. The maximum allowable amounts for Other Fees may increase with the authority of the Superintendent.

d. Arguments in support of the recommendation:

School activities are an essential part of fostering a well-rounded educational experience. They provide students with valuable opportunities to develop leadership skills, build camaraderie, strengthen school spirit, and cultivate a sense of belonging.

The proposed fee increase responds to rising costs of goods and services.

Revenue from these fees supports a wide range of school-wide events, including student leadership initiatives, spirit activities, cultural celebrations, club operations, recognition and awards, competition expenses, and class bonding activities.

The maximum allowable amounts for these fees have not been adjusted since 1998 and in some cases, since 1994. Inflation alone warrants reconsideration of these limits, and even with the proposed adjustments, some stakeholders believe the amounts remain insufficient.

To ensure equity, schools provide financial assistance through waivers, payment plans, work-to-earn programs, or partnerships with community organizations. These measures safeguard against any student being excluded from school activities due to financial hardship. Additionally, it should be noted that not all schools charge the maximum allowable amount for student association, club, or class dues.

The proposed increases represent recommended maximum limits; individual schools retain the discretion to charge less than the maximum.

e. Arguments against the recommendation:

Some may argue that the cost is too high and that some students may not be able to afford the fees. Another argument may be that students might be limited with choices to participate if clubs have fees.

f. Other agencies or departments of the State of Hawai'i involved in the action:

Not applicable.

g. Possible reaction of the public, professional organizations, unions, DOE staff and/or others to the recommendations:

A possible reaction might be to support the increase in the maximum allowable co-curricular fees. Proponents might argue that the maximum amount hasn't increased in decades, activities are difficult to maintain with the current maximum allowable fee, and inflation alone justifies a raise. Others, however, might react with opposition, concerned about students' ability to afford any increase.

h. Educational implications:

An increase in student activity fees has the potential to strengthen the overall quality of educational experiences by providing schools with the resources

necessary to sustain and enhance co-curricular programs. With additional funding, student leaders, advisors, and activity coordinators will be better positioned to organize a broader range of events that foster leadership, teamwork, and student engagement. These opportunities play a vital role in building a positive school climate and sense of connectedness, both of which are strongly linked to student motivation, attendance, and achievement. Ensuring sufficient budgets for security, transportation, equipment, and daily operational costs allows schools to continue offering meaningful and inclusive learning experiences beyond the classroom.

It is important to note that these represent maximum allowable amounts. Many schools either charge less than the maximum or do not assess student activity fees at all.

i. Personnel implications:

Not applicable.

j. Facilities implications:

Increased revenue from fees may help offset costs associated with the use of facilities for student events, such as security, equipment, and facilities upkeep, thereby supporting safer and more sustainable operations.

k. Financial implications:

An increase in the maximum allowable student activity fees will allow student leaders, advisors, and Student Activities Coordinators to better plan student activities that benefit the student body.

5. OTHER SUPPLEMENTARY RECOMMENDATIONS

None.

6. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

The Department recommends Board approval to increase the maximum allowable amount for Student Activity Fees beginning with SY 2026-27, as follows:

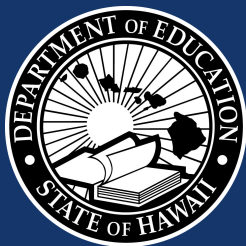
Student Association Fees	\$20
School Club Dues (per Club)	\$20
Class Dues for Grades 6-8	\$15
Class Dues for Grades 9-12	\$18

The Honorable Ken Kuraya
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Thank you for your consideration.

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Attachment: Presentation Slides

- c: Deputy Superintendents
 - Office of Facilities and Operations
 - Office of Strategy, Innovation and Performance
 - Office of Curriculum and Instructional Design



HAWAII STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Curriculum and Instructional Design

**Action on the maximum allowable
co-curricular student activity fees**

Hawaii'i State Board of Education
Finance and Infrastructure Committee
September 18, 2025

Dr. Teri Ushijima, *Assistant Superintendent*
Office of Curriculum and Instructional Design



Student Activity Fees

Under [Hawai'i Administrative Rules \(HAR\) Chapter 32-2](#), “Fees and charges for co-curricular activities. Schools may assess and collect special fees and charges from pupils for co-curricular activities. The maximum allowable charges for class dues (middle/intermediate and high schools), student association fees, and school club dues shall be established by the board of education.”

In order to maintain these opportunities for students in the years to come, the Department is proposing an increase to the maximum allowable charge for the co-curricular activities under HAR Chapter 32-2 for the 2026-27 school year for Board approval.

Further, [HAR Chapter 32-5](#) in regards to *other fees*, “The superintendent shall determine the maximum allowable charge for athletic books, yearbooks, newspapers, and caps and gowns.”



Request to Increase the Maximum Allowable Co-Curricular Student Activity Fees*

	Current Rate As of School Year 2025-26	Proposed Rate Starting School Year 2026-27
Student association fees	\$10.00	\$20.00
School club dues (per club)	\$10.00	\$20.00
Class dues for Grades 6-8	\$5.00	\$15.00
Class dues for Grades 9-12	\$8.00	\$18.00

*Adjustments to co-curricular activity fees require Hawai'i State Board of Education (BOE) approval.



Other Fees*

	Current Rate As of School Year 2025-26	Proposed Starting School Year 2026-27
Athletic book (Activity ticket)	\$25.00	\$35.00
Yearbook	\$50.00	\$75.00
Caps and gowns (basic)	\$25.00	\$125.00
Newspaper	\$10.00	\$15.00

*Adjustments to other fees require Superintendent's approval. No BOE action is required.



Co-Curricular Maximum Student Activity Fees Over Time

	1994	1998	2000	2004	2011
Student Association Fees	\$6.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00
School Club Dues (per club)	\$5.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00
Class Dues for Grades 6-8	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00
Class Dues for Grades 9-12	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$8.00



Other Fees Over Time

	1994	1998	2000	2004	2011
Athletic book (Activity ticket)	\$10.00	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$25.00
Yearbook	\$20.00	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$50.00	\$50.00
Caps and gowns (basic)	\$15.00	\$17.00	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$25.00
Newspaper	\$5.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00



Student Fee Implementation

MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE

Per the HAR, the fees are the maximum allowable to pass on to families.

A school principal may also establish a fee which is lower than the current student fee.

STUDENT COST

Middle level students will pay a maximum of \$35 and high school students \$38 for student association and class dues.

Students may pay up to a maximum of \$20 per club dues for club activities/costs.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Principals have reported various ways of assisting students who are unable to pay their fees.

Not all schools are charging the maximum allowable for student fees.



Action Item Requested

Request Board action to increase the maximum minimal fees for
Co-Curricular Student Activities

Student association fees	\$20.00
School club dues	\$20.00
Class dues for Grades 6-8	\$15.00
Class dues for Grades 9-12	\$18.00

Mahalo for the consideration.