



FINANCIAL HARDSHIP POLICY

RATIONALE

Northcote High School endeavours to ensure that every student has access to quality educational programs regardless of financial circumstance. Students are not treated differently, denied access to the standard curriculum programs, refused instruction or disadvantaged on the basis of payments not being made for educational items, services or voluntary financial contributions.

AIM

To provide information, support and opportunities for students of families experiencing financial hardship to participate in the standard teaching and learning programs as well as the extra curriculum programs offered at Northcote high School.

Extra curriculum programs are deemed to be Extra Curricular Program and Activities and are provided in addition to the standard curriculum program which are offered to all students. They are provided on a user-pays basis and if parents/guardians choose to access them for students, they will be required to pay for them.

IMPLEMENTAION

The way Northcote High School assists families to allow their child to participate in these programs is to:

- Apply for a Camps, Sports and Excursion Fund (CSEF) grant
- Providing Instalment plans
- Highlighting Centrelink services
- Direct families to organisations such as Good Shepherd who provide interest free loans to low income families
- Directing families to various wellbeing and DHHS Grants
- Highlighting the range of government benefits and payments which are available to help families with the costs of raising children
- To allocate funds for hardship provision within the budget allocation
- Access to Thrive for support with essential items, uniforms and books
- Support with purchasing books and uniform through the State School's Relief program
- Application for a student scholarships

GUIDELINES

Families who experience financial hardship are encouraged to make an appointment with the Business Manager or Head of Student Services where the nature of the financial hardship, options, and strategies can be discussed.

- All information shared will be confidential
- The family and Business Manager/Head of Student Services will come to an agreed decision regarding the hardship request
- The School may partially or fully waiver fees if the family is experiencing financial hardship due to circumstances such as homelessness, death, long term illness of the main income earner, one or no income or domestic violence orders, etc.



- Supporting documents such as doctor or hospital letters, domestic violence orders, Centrelink statement for pension or allowance and current payslips may be requested for the consideration of waived fees

Protection of Locally Raised and DET Funds

- Northcote High School is obligated to protect the funds of the School. Therefore, we may be required to use the information families have provided to us to prevent and detect fraud.
- In fulfilling the protection obligations of families, we will treat all information with due care, and will only disclose information in accordance with the School's and Department of Education and Training guidelines and policy.

EVALUATION

Policy to be reviewed annually under the guidance of the Finance Committee and ratified by School Council. All policies are evaluated in line with DET guidelines and policies.

Policy reviewed 20 February 2023.