

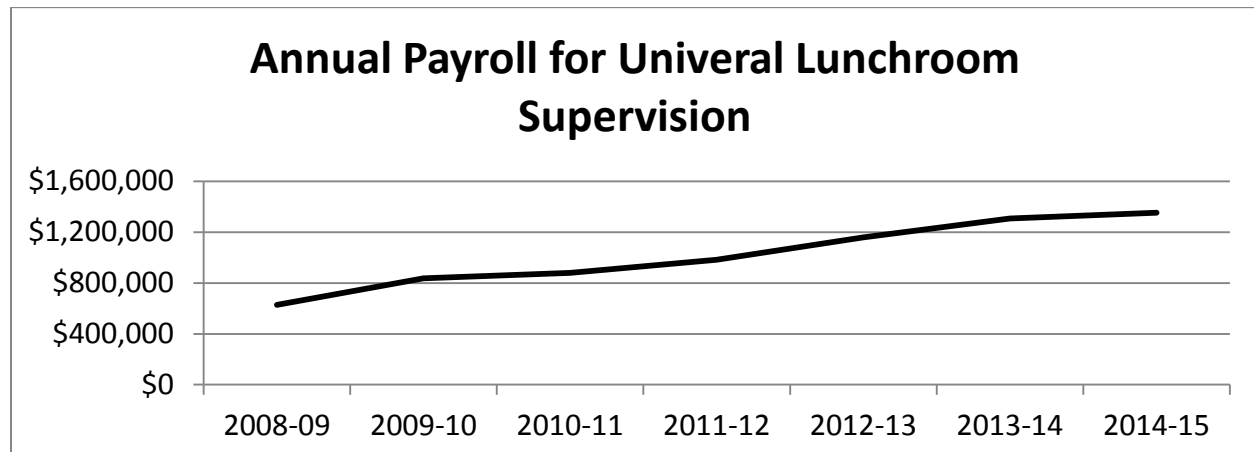
Review of the Universal Lunch Room Supervision Program and Implementation Plan for the 2016-17 School Year

December 2015

Background

In 2007-2008, Regina Public Schools conducted a review of its elementary lunch hour offerings. In February, 2008, the Board of Trustees received the Review with recommendations. Free universal lunch hour supervision, for all Grade 1 to 8 elementary students, was approved by the Board of Trustees with full implementation in the fall of 2008.

Over the last six years, anecdotally schools have reported a substantial increased workload associated with organizing and maintaining the free lunch hour supervision program. Additionally, schools have reported an increase of pressure on school staffs. Finally, the associated costs with funding a free universal elementary lunch hour supervision program have increased, as shown in the graph below.



There has been a significant cost increase associated with the provision of universal free lunch room supervision for Grades 1 to 8 students since the implementation of the universal lunch room program. As a result, the division's administration remains concerned about ongoing budgetary pressures for 2015-16 and beyond. In order to maintain supports for students at an appropriate level, other areas of expenditures will require review, including the provision of universal lunch room supervision. In fact, the 2015-16 budget was balanced, in part, by a \$300,000 reserve allocation to offset noon hour supervision costs. This signaled that changes would be contemplated effective 2016-17.

A review of the universal lunch room supervision program was conducted from September to October 2015. As well, the division provided multiple avenues for stakeholder feedback, including:

1. Collection of data through a survey website (such as www.surveymonkey.com). A total of 629 individuals provided feedback.
2. Discussions at school SCC meetings.
3. A division-wide meeting held on October 26, 2015, where 62 SCC members, along with principals, division office administration and Trustees, met to brainstorm solutions.

Summary of Feedback through Consultations

Feedback was received from a number of stakeholder groups, including parents and members of school staffs. While there was a wide range of perspectives in the feedback received, a number of re-occurring themes emerged, which is summarized below.

- Continue to provide lunch room supervision in its current state as parents appreciate the convenience
- About 75% of the survey respondents indicated they would be willing to pay \$1.00 per day for supervision
- SCC members indicated they feel they do not have the capacity to take over programs (previous to 2008, some school-parent associations oversaw the programs)
- A user fee per day per student was seen a significant burden for school administration and secretaries
 - Suggestion from a number of participants: charge a “one-time” registration fee at the beginning of the school year
- Equity was brought up on several fronts
 - Concern regarding ability to pay for low income families
 - Families with multiple children in school
 - Some, but not all, suggested parents with students receiving transportation should also pay
- Potential efficiencies, including:
 - Grouping students in larger groups, especially older students
 - Reducing the lunch hour from 60 minutes to 45 minutes
 - Reducing the lunch room time from 45 minutes to 30 minutes (currently students are in lunch for 45 minutes, then outside for recess for 15 minutes)
 - Using older students (Grade 7 and 8, high school or university) to monitor younger students
 - Using parent volunteers
- Local fundraising to help pay for supervision
- At the division-wide meeting on October 26, 2015, there was frustration in that the division is not being funded for current enrolments, thereby forcing the division to look at cuts like the lunch room supervision program

Transported Students and *The Education Act, 1995*

Section 157 of *The Education Act, 1995* provides direction to school divisions regarding the transportation of students. If a student lives more than four kilometres away from a school, then the division is required to transport the student and to supervise the student at noon hour. Under four kilometres, it is the parent's responsibility to transport their student.

Regina Public Schools currently provides transportation to students based upon the following distances:

- Kindergarten and Grade 1 – 600 metres and beyond; and
- Grades 2 to 8 – 1.2 km and beyond.

Beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, the distance for Grade 1 students will be 1.2 km.

Based upon this information, there are three groups of students to consider when determining a solution for changes to the Universal Lunch Room Supervision program.

1. Students transported by the division who live more than 4 km from school (the division cannot charge for lunch room supervision). This accounts for approximately 500 students.
2. Students transported by the division who live less than 4 km from school (the division could choose to have these parents pay a fee for lunch room supervision). This accounts for approximately 5,260 students.
3. Students who are not transported to school. This accounts for approximately 8,000 students.

In a conversation with a member of the SSBA legal services department, the following information was provided. If the division was to charge for lunch room supervision for students the division transports, but live less than 4 km from school (group #2 above), then the division would have to insist parents pay for lunch room supervision if they accept transportation services.

Based upon this information and feedback from parents, it has been determined to not charge for noon hour supervision any students who are transported by the division.

Implementation Plan

1. Parents of all Grade 1 to 8 students staying at noon who are not transported by the division will be required to pay a registration fee at the beginning of the school year.
2. The school division will work with each school to find efficiencies by grouping older students (Grades 6 to 8).
3. A fee structure is identified below. This is the same as charging approximately \$0.55 per day. The division's administration estimates approximately 5,700 students who are not transported will access the program.

	Students	Fee/year	Total
Grade 1 to 8	5,700		
Full-time	5,000	\$ 100.00	\$ 500,000.00
Part-time	700	\$ 50.00	\$ 35,000.00

TOTAL	\$ 535,000.00
75% pay	\$ 401,250.00
60% pay	\$ 321,000.00
50% pay	\$ 267,500.00

4. Fees will be paid one time through the school office. Receipt of payment of noon-hour supervision fees would be provided to parents. Parents will be encouraged to pay in full at the beginning of the school year. But to support families who may have limited resources, the division has the option of splitting the payments, half in September and half in February.
5. If a family moves from one school to another within the division, the fee is transferable.
6. A process will be developed where families can apply for an exemption or a reduced rate where financial need is demonstrated.
7. The maximum paid by one family to supervise all their children will be capped at \$200.
8. A communication plan will be developed, with messages for SCCs and for parents of next year's Grades 1 to 8 students.