



Worried about paying for school fees and field trips?

Tennessee law says all our children have a right to a free public education. This means public schools have to make sure all students have the school supplies they need. This law applies to every class a student takes for a grade or credit. It also applies to field trips and other activities during school hours.

School Supplies

The school must make sure every child has the school supplies they need for class. The school can ask you to help out if you can.

If the family doesn't get the supplies for class, the school must do it. This is true no matter how much money or how little money the family has. The school should do it in a way that doesn't make the child feel bad.

What school supplies does the law cover? It includes supplies like:

- Books and workbooks
- Paper and notebooks
- Calculators, compasses and rulers
- Pencils, pens, map colors, crayons
- Gym clothes, if the class is for credit
- Band instruments, if the class is for credit

Field Trips and other activities

By law, schools **cannot** leave students behind because they didn't pay for a field trip. Schools cannot make students pay for field trips or activities that happen during school hours. It doesn't matter what the field trip is or where



the class goes. What about an overnight trip? Or, what if the field trip or activity is before or after school? If the trip is for a credit or grade, students **never** have to pay. This is true even if the trip happens overnight or before or after school.

Is this for students in every grade?

Yes, it is for public preschool, elementary, middle and high school.

Does your child get free or reduced price school lunch?

Then you also **don't** have to pay for summer school or graduation fees. Graduation fees are things like money for a cap and gown.

What you DO have to pay for:

- Fees for activities outside the regular school day, unless your child **must** do them to get credit or a grade
- Fines for turning library books in late
- Fines for losing or tearing up textbooks
- Fines for illegal parking at school



What if the school won't:

Give your child school supplies or Let your child go on a field trip?

Show this paper to the principal or superintendent. If that doesn't work, call Legal Aid about free legal help.

1-800-262-6817

