

SKY SECONDARY SCHOOL

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SECTION School Administration	POLICY NAME School Fees Refund Policy	POLICY NUMBER 322
DATE CREATED November 2, 2023	DATE REVISED September 1, 2024	DATE IMPLEMENTED September 3, 2024

RATIONALE

SKY Secondary School is an independent secondary school specializing in offering a BC Graduation Program to international and local students. By applying to study at SKY Secondary School, the student begins the process of registering at the school to complete their school education. By accepting the student, the school starts meeting a commitment to assist the student in completing the BC Graduation program. A policy must be in place to ensure that the student and the school are financially protected if either party cannot meet its commitment. This School Fees Refund Policy is designed to protect the student and the school.

This policy will be made available to families before any fees are paid and published online or made available on request.

POLICY

A student is considered to have entered into a contract with the school when the student's application for admission has been accepted, and the school writes a formal Letter of Acceptance. To be considered for a refund, a student must submit a written notice of withdrawal signed by the student and the student's parent/guardian. School fee refunds will be issued to the parents or guardians as appropriate.

Students who have been issued an official letter of acceptance by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) in the form of an Official Letter of Acceptance, Temporary Resident Visa Letter, or Re-entry Letter that is given on the understanding that the student is attending SKY Secondary School are not eligible for a 100% tuition refund even if the original school acceptance letter is returned to the school.

Application/Registration Fees and the other optional Fees are not refundable.

Tuition Fee refunds will be based on the following procedures.

1. First year of operation:

If the school fails to maintain its Group 4 Classification from the Ministry of Education, it will reimburse 100% of paid tuition if the student has not yet begun classes for the semester. If the student has attended classes and the school is not certified by the Ministry of Education as a Group 4 school, the student shall also be reimbursed 100% of their tuition as the school cannot issue credits for completed studies.

The Ministry of Education expects new schools with Interim Certification to have access - without recourse to the irrevocable Bond/Letter of Credit - to enough cash on hand to provide full fee refunds if the school fails to open, fails to receive certification after the initial external evaluation inspection, or otherwise closes during its first year of operation.

2. First and Subsequent years of operation:

- a. If a student in their first year of study is denied a Study Permit authorization from the IRCC, the school will refund the student 100% of the tuition if the following three criteria have been met:
 - i. The student applied for a Study Permit authorization from the IRCC within 10 days of receiving the official letter of acceptance from the school.
 - ii. Official documentation of the visa refusal is provided to the school.
- b. If a student in their first year of study gives notice in writing by registered mail or in person to the school of their intention to withdraw 30 days before the first day of class, the school will retain 30% of the tuition fee and refund the balance.
- c. If a student in their first year of study gives notice in writing by registered mail or in person to the school of their intention to withdraw under 30 days before the first day of class, the school will retain 50% of the tuition fee and refund the balance.
- d. If a returning student withdraws from their subsequent school year, the school will retain 50% of the tuition fee and refund the balance if notice is given prior to May 30th (September intake) or October 31st (January intake). No refunds will be provided after these dates.
- e. If a returning student's study permit extension and/or re-entry visa is not approved by the IRCC, the school will retain 50% of the tuition fee and refund the balance.
- f. If a student gives notice in writing by registered mail or in person to the school of their intention to withdraw from their studies after the first day of class, no refund will be provided.
- g. If a student is dismissed at any time during their studies, no refund will be provided.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. The student and their family are responsible for applying for a Study Permit within 10 days of receiving the acceptance letter from the school.

2. The school is the first point of contact for refunds. All refunds are the responsibility of the school Authority per this policy.
3. The school will maintain sufficient funds on hand to make refunds available to students upon the unexpected closure of the school.
4. The Independent Schools Act does not provide the Inspector of Independent Schools or the Ministry of Education with a role in routine refunds.
5. If the school closes and the school does not provide refunds, the student and their family may apply to the Ministry of Education for a prorated refund under the Independent School Regulation and Bonding Act provisions. These refund amounts will be paid from the school's Bond that is posted with the Ministry of Education for this purpose.
6. Ministry of Education administration of a Group 4 independent school bond for the purpose of providing partial refunds can be a lengthy process, taking up to 40 months, and parents should not rely on partial refunds derived from this Bond for any payment required before this time. (e.g., Parents should not rely on the partial refund coming from the Bond to pay fees at another school).

IMPORTANT NOTES:

The Inspector of Independent Schools expects all Group 4 schools, including start-up schools with interim Group 4 certification to have access – without recourse to the Group 4 Independent School Bond – to enough cash-on-hand to provide fee refunds in full in the event that the school fails to open or re-open, fails to receive initial or ongoing certification after an inspection, or otherwise closes. Ministry of Education and Child Care's administration of a Group 4 independent school bond for the purpose of providing partial refunds can be a lengthy process as it is completed very carefully and within legislatively established timelines. Former students and their parents / guardians are advised that claims will not be assessed until the end of the limitation period (two to three years after the date of school closure) in order to provide equity of access to refunds from the bond to all potential claimants. The timeline for the Ministry's claim review and refund administration process will depend on a variety of factors, including the number and complexity of the claims. Refunds will not be available until a minimum of 2.5 years beyond the date of the school closure, but could take significantly longer. Parents should not rely on prorated refunds derived from this bond for any payment required before the payout of bond monies (e.g. parents should not rely on the partial refund coming from the bond to pay fees at another school).

SKY Secondary School commits to having enough cash on hand for refunds if it fails the inspection or otherwise loses its certification in the first year of operation.