

BCSS Fee Increase and Fee Structure Change for 2023-2024 School Year

Prior to the FAQ section, please see the details of the Brant Christian School 2023/2024 fee structure and fee amounts below:

Registration Fee at Time of Registration (per family)	Comments
(a) \$100.00 for returning families (b) \$150.00 for new families	Cost for staff to review and interview new applications which requires additional time. Cost of reviewing yearly registrations, maintaining records for existing families.

Alternative Program Fee	Comments
\$1260 per student (<u>deposit of \$500.00 of this Alternative Program Fee per student due June 1, 2023</u>).	Please refer to the explanation of "Alternative Program Fee" in the Q & A section below.

Alternative Program Fee Max (4 or more children)
\$5,040

Busing (unchanged from the year before)	Comments
(i) \$2,038 for first child (ii) \$1,545 for second child (iii) \$344 for third child and every child thereafter	Fee required to operate the busing service.

Family Busing Max (4 or more children)
\$4,271

Here are some fee scenarios to consider based on number of children registering and number of children busing per family:

Family Registration Scenario	Children that are <u>not</u> Busing			Children that <u>are</u> Busing					
	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children	4 Children	5 Children	6 Children
Alternative Program Fee	\$1,260	\$2,520	\$3,780	\$1,260	\$2,520	\$3,780	\$5,040	\$5,040	\$5,040
Busing	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,038	\$3,583	\$3,927	\$4,271	\$4,271	\$4,271
TOTAL	\$1,260	\$2,520	\$3,780	\$3,295.22	\$6,103	\$7,707	\$9,311	\$9,311	\$9,311

BCSS Fee Increase and Fee Structure Change Questions and Answers (Q & A)

This handout has been created to help answer common questions you may have about changes in the fee structure and the fee amounts for the 2023/2024 BCS school year.

1) Why is there a change in the fee structure?

- a. As the Brant Christian School and Society continue to expand, the fee structure requires changes to meet operational needs.
- b. The Board is working on a plan to be implemented in the 2023/2024 school year to move from separate fees to one combined fee called an “**Alternative Program Fee**,” (more about this later in this section), for each individual student attending Brant Christian School.

2) What is changing?

- a. The Society fee, Christian Education fee and a portion of the busing will be combined into the one fee called the **Alternative Program Fee**.
- b. The amount of this fee for 2023/2024 is \$1260 per student.
- c. Each student is required to pay the Alternative Program Fee to attend Brant Christian school.
- d. All busing families are required to pay to use the bus.

3) What is staying the same?

- a. For the 2023/2024 school year, the busing fee will remain the same.
 - i. 1st child riding the bus is \$2038.
 - ii. 2nd child riding the bus is \$1545.
 - iii. 3rd child riding the bus, and every child after, is \$344.
- b. A portion of the busing expense is included in the Alternative Program Fee. (Currently, approximately 2/3 of families attending Brant have children that bus to school).

4) Why is the Society Fee and Christian Education Fee changing to an Alternative Program Fee?

- a. To comply with the school governing bodies, including the Palliser School Division, as an Alternative School within the division, we have been asked to revise the name of our fees/tuition collected to “**Alternative Program Fee**.”¹ For more information on Alternative Education Programs in the province, including what types of fees can be collected under the title of “Alternative Education Program,” visit the Government of Alberta fee website here:

<https://www.alberta.ca/alternative-education-programs.aspx#jumplinks-1>

5) Why an increase in cost?

- a. Busing fees have increased significantly, and operational costs have also increased and Brant Christian School requires busing to operate.
- b. Building a contingency fund to help run and maintain our current building is essential. An example would be a need to replace the existing aging roof on the main school building, other building maintenance, etc.

6) What is covered by the Alternative Program Fee?

- a. The cost to operate the Brant Christian School Society and Christian Education materials.
- b. \$100,000 of the overall busing costs

7) Was this the only fee increase model/scenario that the Board considered? Were there other possible alternatives that were looked at?

No, this finalized fee model/scenario was not the only one that the Board considered. The Board looked at six different detailed and thoughtful Fee Scenarios that were put together. In the end the Board voted for the one that did not leave a (significant in some cases) operating cost shortfall, but instead covered all of the operating costs for the 2023/2024 school year, and left a small contingency fund to cover potential costs such as building maintenance that may arise.

8) How do this new fee structure and the fee increases for the 2023/2024 BCS school year compare to other per student costs at other Christian schools in the area?

a. Calgary Christian School (within the same School Division, Palliser, as Brant)

Kindergarten	Grade 1-3	Grade 4 - 6	Grade 7-8	Grade 9 -11	Grade 12
\$1,980	\$2,830	\$3,245	\$3,890	\$4,195	\$4,300
Other Fees	-Application Fee (non-refundable) - \$250 -One Calgary Society for Christian Education Annual Membership fee is included, additional membership - \$40				

Family Maximum
\$12,500 Family Maximum for students registered in Grades 1 - 12

<https://www.calgarychristianschool.com/download/13649>

b. Heritage Christian Academy (within the same School Division, Palliser, as Brant)

Kindergarten	Beyond Kindergarten (1 Student)	Beyond Kindergarten (2 Students)
\$1,700.00	\$4,010	\$6,855
Other Fees	Refundable Capital Bond - 1 Student = \$3,000 Family Max (2 or more students) = \$6,000. The Capital Bond is used to help maintain facilities and help with future Capital Projects.	

Family Maximum
\$8,500

<https://www.hcacalgary.com/apply-now/fees-finances>

c. Menno Simons Christian School (within the same School Division, Palliser, as Brant)

(ECS) Kindergarten	Grade 1 to Grade 9
\$1450.00 per child	\$3185.00 per child
Other Fees	A a one time Capital Donation (tax receipt issued) of \$1500 once a family has been accepted to MSCS.

Family Maximum
\$7,960.00 per family

<https://mennosimonschristianschool.ca/admissions/programfees>

d. **Trinity Christian School** (within the same School Division, Palliser, as Brant)

Kindergarten Per Student	Grades 1 through 9 (First Child)	Grades 1 through 9 (Second Child)	Grades 1 through 9 (Third Child)
\$2,007	\$5,169	\$3899	\$1,393
Additional Fees	-Annual Society Fee - \$150 -Junior High Premium (Per Student) \$379		

Family Rate Max (3 or more children)
\$10,461

<https://www.tcskids.com/admissions/program-fees>

e. **Bearspaw Christian School, Calgary** (*please note this is an independent Christian School)

Tuition	Kindergarten	Elementary (GR 1-4)	Middle School (GR 5-9)	Senior High (GR 10 – 12)
	\$3,000	\$7,350	\$7,350	\$8,350
Additional Fees	\$300	\$400	\$400	\$400 \$300 Graduation Fee (GR 12 only)
Other Fees	The school collects a \$5,000 Capital Fee as part of its admissions process. The fee is divided into a \$2,500 Refundable Bond and a \$2,500 non refundable Capital Fee. This money is used to assist BCS with the capital costs associated with buildings and facilities.			

Family Tuition Maximum (does not include Additional Fees)		
3 students: \$18,200	4 students: \$19,250	5 students: \$20,300

<https://bearspawschool.com/admissions/tuition-fees/>

9) What can I do if I can't afford the new fees?

- a. Families who are unable to afford the increase in cost are encouraged to apply to the Patricia Webber Bus Fund to offset busing transportation costs for students of families who qualify. Please contact Catherine Massey at: catherine.massey@pallisersd.ab.ca for information
 - o The Board reviews applications privately.
 - o Each application is reviewed case by case.
 - o Apply early, as limited funds are available.

10) Does the Board have any additional plans in place to try and offset operating costs and increase revenues?

- a. The Board is looking at cost saving measures and possible fuel grants in hopes to offset the cost to families. This information will be passed onto society members if/when it is available.
- b. The Board plans to explore other possible grants or funding sources that would align with Brant Christian School's Mission and Vision and that would not put the Society in a position to compromise its commitment to Christian education based on the Bible. These will be made available if/when they are confirmed.
- c. The Board is considering reaching out to other Christian schools in the region and the province that have track records of successful fundraising campaigns to see what we can learn from and/or adopt from them. This could take the form of expanding the number of events that the Fundraising Committee is involved with.

11) Can I pay these fees in instalments?

- a. Yes. Families who need to pay by instalments to offset the increased financial burden may set up a monthly payment plan for either the remaining balance of the Alternative Program Fee, (after the initial \$500.00 deposit per child due by June 1, 2023), or the Busing Fee, or both. These monthly payments would need to either be by credit card, or by pre authorized debit through a bank account. These withdrawals would start September 1, 2023 and finish June 1, 2024.
- b. Alternatively, a second payment option would be to pay in instalments so that the remaining balance of the Alternative Program Fee, (after the initial \$500.00 deposit, per child due by June 1, 2023), or the Busing Fee, or both, are completely paid by August 31, 2023.

**Families who are financially able are asked to pay the remaining balance of the Alternative Program Fee, (after the initial \$500.00 deposit per child due by June 1, 2023), and Busing Fee in one lump sum payment (or larger instalments) by August 31, 2023.

12) What are the benefits of this change?

- a. Safety for students is a priority. It is safer for students to use bus transportation to school than driving the highway daily. We want to encourage bus ridership to everyone for whom the bus is available.
- b. Building a strong contingency fund for emergency needs of the building.
- c. Preparing for future transition as our school grows.

Other considerations

- a. If you would like, and feel led to do so, please consider donating to the Patricia Webber fund to offset transportation costs for low-income families who qualify.
- b. School Fees at Brant have not seen significant increases for a number of years. Again, based on increased operational costs detailed above, the need for a significant fee increase has arisen.
- c. If you have time and are willing, please consider volunteering through the new Parent Engagement Group (PEG) in areas such as additional future fundraising events that could be used to raise more revenue to offset increasing operational costs.
- d. Please pray. We know that, even in these more difficult financial times, the Lord still owns the cattle on a thousand hills (Psalm 50:10), and He has promised to supply every need of His people through His riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).

Thank you very much for your time and attention as we consider these challenging matters. As fellow parents of Brant Christian School, we are here to support you as we navigate through these challenging times.

Respectfully,
The Brant Christian School Society Board.

Endnote

¹ You will see this language used by other Alternative Schools within our school division. For example, on Menno Simons' web site, it is stated, "Menno Simons Christian School (MSCS) is an alternative school within the Palliser Regional School Board. MSCS charges **Alternative Program Fees** that supports the Christian emphasis and programming of the school as well as all aspects related to the building. **Alternative Program Fees** are determined on a yearly basis and finalized at the beginning of January each year." (Bolded for emphasis). Sourced from, "Program Fees: Alternative Program Fees," in *Menno Simons Christian School*, <https://mennosimonschristianschool.ca/admissions/programfees> (sourced March 9, 2023).¹