

Agenda Item:	V E: Information/Discussion Item
Date:	June 8, 2023
To:	Magnolia Educational & Research Foundation dba Magnolia Public Schools (“MPS”) Board of Directors (the “Board”)
From:	Alfredo Rubalcava, CEO & Superintendent
Staff Lead(s):	Erdinc Acar, Chief Academic Officer William Gray, Director of Educational Services
RE:	Approving Expansion of College Application Fee Policy

Action Proposed:

I recommend that the Board approve the expanded College Application Fee Policy for use by all Magnolia Public Schools campuses.

Purpose:

To expand the College Application Fee Policy to allow Magnolia Public School campuses to pay for up to five college applications instead of the current three.

Background:

In order to support college applications for our lower-income students, the Magnolia Public Schools Governing Board adopted the College Application Fee policy to pay for college application fees for its seniors. As a starting point, the College Application Fee policy was written to pay for up to three applications for current seniors to apply to the University of California and the California State University systems.

During the 2022-23 school year, its first year of implementation, the College Application Fee policy was used by twenty-eight seniors across five Magnolia Public Schools campuses to submit sixty college applications that they would not have otherwise been able to submit. Once the application deadlines had passed, College Counselors communicated their feedback regarding this new policy with the Director of Educational Services. The consensus was that the three applications to the University of California and/or the California State University systems were appreciated, but that five applications to any college would be better for students so that students could have more options. The Director of Student Services then presented this expansion to the Principals of Magnolia Public Schools at their monthly meeting and they approved this proposal from a budgetary standpoint.

Analysis:

The expansion of this policy to allow schools to pay for more college applications for current seniors will allow students to have more options when it comes to their post-secondary options by allowing them to submit applications to more universities.

Impact:

The expansion of this policy to allow schools to pay for more college applications for current seniors will allow students to have more options when it comes to their post-secondary options by allowing them to submit applications to more universities.

Budget Implications:

The budgetary impact is estimated to be up to \$25,000 spread across all high school campuses if every senior that is eligible for this policy takes advantage of this opportunity.

Exhibits:

- Current College Application Fee Policy with Highlighted Suggested Changes (Page 3)
- Proposed Revised College Application Fee Policy for Adoption (Page 5)

MAGNOLIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS COLLEGE APPLICATION FEE POLICY

Magnolia Public Schools (“MPS”) provides a college-preparatory educational program emphasizing science, technology, engineering, arts and math in a safe environment that cultivates respect for self and others. MPS believes that a student’s application for and acceptance into a variety of four-year college programs is the capstone of the MPS educational program. Thus, the Board of Directors of MPS hereby declares that students’ college applications are an essential component of the MPS educational program and, as such, any fees associated with such applications, as deemed necessary by MPS, must be paid by MPS. However, MPS also recognizes its responsibilities as a fiduciary of the public purse and, as such, must put in place safeguards to ensure public funds are not spent to benefit solely private interests. As such, reimbursement of college application fees, in the manner dictated by this Policy, shall not be considered a gift of public funds in violation of Section 6 of Article 16 of the California State Constitution.

Eligibility:

- Student Need: All high school seniors that are currently enrolled at a Magnolia Science Academy campus are eligible to receive up to ~~\$240~~ \$350 reimbursement for up to ~~3~~ 5 application fee instances to university/college (“college”) campuses. ~~within the California State University or University of California systems (“CSU”, “UC”)~~
- Note: Students whose family Adjusted Gross Income makes them eligible for existing fee waivers provided by the CSU and UC system shall not be eligible for reimbursement ~~for applications to these university systems~~ as their application fees are already waived for up to 4 CSU and 4 UC campuses, per extant CSU & UC policy. MPS College Counselors shall support these students in receiving these ~~and other~~ fee waivers ~~prior to utilizing this policy.~~
- GPA: Students shall have earned the Minimum Cumulative GPA and credits required to demonstrate eligibility to apply to the ~~colleges to which they are applying. CSU or UC system, as outlined by those respective systems.~~
- Deadlines: The student and guardian(s) are responsible for submitting college applications and paying associated fees by the deadlines outlined by the ~~respective colleges. CSU and UC systems.~~
- Documentation: The student and guardian(s) are responsible for obtaining the evidence required for verification of application fees paid on the “College Application Fee Reimbursement Form” in order to receive reimbursement.
 - Principals shall determine the documentation that is necessary for reimbursement in line with any applicable MPS fiscal policies. Documentation will need to include: evidence of application confirmation(s) and copies of detailed payment receipt will be required (ex: credit card receipt, check images from bank statements, etc)

Procedures:

- Readiness: The student must be on track to graduate from MPS and have demonstrated eligibility to apply to the ~~CSU/UC campuses~~ colleges of their choosing.
- Applications: The student shall follow the instructions of their College Counselor to ensure the accuracy of their applications. Guardians shall pay for the application fees via ~~CSU/UC the colleges’ outlined~~ procedures by the deadlines outlined by those institutions. Reimbursement shall only be issued after the student applies for admission and fees are paid. ~~If feasible, Magnolia Public Schools may pay for the application fees directly per fiscal procedures.~~
- Amount of Reimbursement:
 - Students and guardians that are eligible may apply for reimbursement for up to ~~\$240~~ \$350 to cover the costs of ~~three five college CSU or UC~~ applications.
 - Principals shall make the determination of the amount to be reimbursed based upon site availability of funds.
- Source of Funds: Principals shall make the determination as to the source of funds used for reimbursement. Possible funding sources include: ESSA funds, LCFF Funds, Title Funds, One-time grants, Gifts, Donations, etc.

Signatures and Dates:

Student	Date	Parent/Guardian/Caregiver	Date
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Date _____

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 - **Note:** Students whose family Adjusted Gross Income makes them eligible for existing fee waivers provided by the CSU and UC system shall not be eligible for reimbursement for applications to these university systems as their application fees are already waived for up to 4 CSU and 4 UC campuses, per extant CSU & UC policy. MPS College Counselors shall support these students in receiving these and other fee waivers prior to utilizing this policy.
- **GPA:** Students shall have earned the Minimum Cumulative GPA and credits required to demonstrate eligibility to apply to the colleges to which they are applying.
- **Deadlines:** The student and guardian(s) are responsible for submitting college applications and paying associated fees by the deadlines outlined by the respective colleges.
- **Documentation:** The student and guardian(s) are responsible for obtaining the evidence required for verification of application fees paid on the “College Application Fee Reimbursement Form” in order to receive reimbursement.
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- **Amount of Reimbursement:**
 - Students and guardians that are eligible may apply for reimbursement for up to-\$350 to cover the costs of five college applications.
 - Principals shall make the determination of the amount to be reimbursed based upon site availability of funds.
- **Source of Funds:** Principals shall make the determination as to the source of funds used for reimbursement. Possible funding sources include: ESSA funds, LCFF Funds, Title Funds, One-time grants, Gifts, Donations, etc.

Signatures and Dates:

I have read and I understand the terms of this policy and agree to all provisions set forth.

Student

Date

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver

Date

MAGNOLIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
College Application Fee Reimbursement Form

Student Information:

Last Name: _____ First Name/MI: _____

Grade: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Cumulative GPA: _____

Application Number 1 Information:

College Name: _____ Date Applied: _____

Evidence of Application Attached? Circle: Yes No Verification Signature: _____

Application Number 2 Information:

College Name: _____ Date Applied: _____

Evidence of Application Attached? Circle: Yes No Verification Signature: _____

Application Number 3 Information:

College Name: _____ Date Applied: _____

Evidence of Application Attached? Circle: Yes No Verification Signature: _____

Notes: _____

Signatures:

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Signature

Date

Principal Approval:

Amount to be reimbursed: _____

Notes, including name and address of check recipient: _____

Principal Signature

Date