

Student Fees for 2024-2025 School Year

Table 1. Annual Required Fees Schedule (Per Student)

Fee Category	Grades K to 8	Grades 9 to 12
Annual Student Fee (paid before August 8th, 2024)	\$250	\$300
Annual Student Fee (paid after August 8th, 2024)	\$275	\$325

*The **purpose** of the fee is to recover part of the cost of instructional materials, supplies, and consumables.*

Not included in fees	AP test fees, AP books, field trips, yearbook, computer device, bus fees, optional locker rental, student parking fees, BASE, Enrichment fees, CHSAA fees, and other individual costs.
Payments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See pay schedule above. • STEM purchases instructional materials over the summer for our August start date. • Payment plans are available. Please contact STEM's business office.
Fee waivers	STEM waives fees for students who qualify for free or reduced lunch programs. For qualified families as determined by US government guidelines, the application process is totally anonymous and DCSD processes the applications. Simply click the correct tab on STEM's website launch page. All required fees automatically zero out in Infinite Campus so no STEM staff member determines if a student participates in an assisted lunch program.
Refund policy	<p>Transfers prior to July 15, 2024 – 100% refund</p> <p>Transfers from July 16, 2024, to August 31, 2024 – 90% refund</p> <p>Transfers post August 31, 2024 – No Refund</p>
Graduation fee	Graduating seniors have a required \$75 fee to cover the graduation venue expenses- waived for students who qualify for free or reduced federal lunch programs.
Additional Fees	Students may be assessed fines or other penalties in accordance with applicable laws for lost, damaged, or defaced books, materials, or equipment.

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding STEM Student Fees

1. **Why does STEM need to charge fees if it is a tuition-free public school?** Colorado has one of the lowest state per pupil base funding levels in the United States. To provide quality programming, schools may charge parents fees to support extra programs important to their mission and objectives. Our families expect more and the fees help us meet instructional expectations.
2. **Does the Douglas County School District charge STEM fees for specific services?** Yes. See Table 2 below. Our required fees to DCSD represent about 5 percent of STEM's total budget. Approximately \$940,000 is paid to DCSD at \$683.00 per pupil. Student fees offset these charges.

Table 2. STEM Expenses for District Services

Douglas County School District Service Fees		Annual Cost/Student
a	Infinite Campus software, emergency management plus district support staff, gmail <i>STEM licenses and deploys Canvas as our Learning Management System (LMS) to provide students and their families with one system for all class assignments. DCSD requires Infinite Campus for our data warehouse. We pay for both systems.</i>	\$78.26
b	CDE testing fee	\$23.75
c	Special education services fee paid for every enrolled student at STEM. <i>STEM pays for its own special education staff in addition to this fee, which offsets DCSD costs at neighborhood schools. 1375 students=\$728,750 paid to DCSD</i>	\$530.00
d	Gifted Education Support English Language Development Support	8.95 \$163.84/ELD student
e	Intra-district mail and treasurer fee	\$17.22
f	Health Oversight/Crisis Team Support	\$6.03
g	Other required and optional purchased services to DCSD	\$18.30
h	DCSD art show and spelling bee	Varies
Paid by STEM per student to Douglas County School District Central Office		\$682.51 per enrolled student

3. **Are there budgeted items for student activities?** Yes. Please see Table 3 for examples.

Table 3. STEM Student Activities and Supplies Budget Line Items

a	Classroom instructional materials – per department	\$7,000-\$40,000
b	Classroom supplies – per teacher as coordinated through the dept. chair	\$200
c	Student government programs – elementary and middle school (grades 2 to 8)	\$1,000

d	Student government programs – high school (grades 9 to 12)	\$3,000
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4. **How are STEM's school finances and purchases monitored?**
 - a. A finance committee with STEM board members and parents provide oversight and guidance on all budget items.
 - b. All school purchases must go through an approval process.
 - c. Every expense is part of our independent audit which is available on STEM's website.
5. **Are there differences between how public tax dollars are allocated for charter and neighborhood schools?** Yes.
Unlike neighborhood schools, charter schools must pay for their building, regular maintenance and all utilities. This is about 17 percent of our total budget. Salaries use the largest portion of state funds allocated annually to STEM.
6. **Does STEM charge for Kindergarten tuition?** Colorado Governor Jared Polis signed [House Bill 19-1262](#) into law providing state funding for full-day kindergarten across the state. This means that free, full-day Kindergarten* will be offered at STEM School Highlands Ranch. *testing may be needed to assess.
7. **What additional fees does STEM incur?** BASE- before and after school care for grades K-through age 12 provided through BASE located in the elementary program.