

AP Exam Overhaul Impact Late Fees and Cancellation Fees

College Board (CB) Late fee and Cancellation fee changes create multiple potential impacts across your AP Exam administration.

Potential Issues

Financial Liability - School: Even with diligent registration tracking, a change in late fees can have cascading effects on schools. First, schools can incur late fees based on student action/inaction. With the new CB enrollment system, students can enroll for an AP Exam at any time, including after the November 15th deadline, causing the school to incur a late fee. Schools can also inadvertently incur cancellation fees if they leave the CB system set to the default, which would automatically order exams upon student enrollment.

Since students are required to register by the early fall deadline this year, the new CB enrollment process' cancellation fee often increases schools' financial liability as student cancellations are more likely due to a longer period to change their intent to take the exam. For example, if a student discovers in the spring, after fee deadlines, that their university of choice will not accept certain AP credits.

Late Fee Confusion/Implementation: CB states that second semester only classes do NOT receive a late fee starting Nov 16 and therefore requires schools to figure out how to assess late fees to some sections of exams/courses and not others.

Best Practices and Recommendations

- **Collect Payments Prior to Ordering Exams** – Schools should collect at least \$40.00/exam (preferably all exam related fees) from every exam taking student prior to the CB deadline. Collecting the \$40 minimum will cover the school's liability for any cancellations after the initial order deadline.
- **Change Exam Decision Indicator to “Advanced Setting” in CB System** – If your school does not require all students in AP classes to take the exam, you will want to [change the Exam Decision Indicator to Advanced](#). The default setting will automatically order an exam for every student that enrolls in the CB system, which obligates the school financially for the exam and any associated fees. If the exams are optional (even if most enrolled students will take the exam) you will want to use the Advanced Setting so that students will be required to indicate their intention to take the exam rather than ordering exams for all by default.
- **Use Reduced Late Fees Prior to the CB Mandated Late Fee** – A best practice is to start with a \$10.00/exam late fee at least two weeks prior to the CB late fee and a second late fee of \$20.00/exam at least one week prior to the CB late fee. The use of smaller late fees motivates families to register in a timely manner, thus avoiding the more costly CB mandated late fee. Earlier registration also gives coordinators/teachers time to review the registration for accuracy and to confirm student intent before placing their order.

- **Clearly Communicate the Refund Policy at the Time of Registration** – Since the school will be assessed a \$40.00/exam cancellation fee by CB after Nov 15, it is imperative that families understand they will not receive a full refund on cancellations after Nov 15.
- **Determine Low-Income Student Cancellation Policy**– Numerous districts and states subsidize the exam fee for qualified low-income students. Often these students pay less than the \$40.00/exam cancellation fee, resulting in a school financial liability for any difference between the student payment and CB fee if a low-income student cancels after Nov 15.
- **Configure Payment System to Automatically Assess Late Fees While Exempting Second Semester Only Classes** – CB has created a process where some students are assessed a late fee and others not based on their course type. It is important that your payment system can assess late fees to the first semester only or full year courses while not assessing a late fee to second semester only classes. Schools also need the ability to waive the late fee for late registrations for students who transfer into the school after the deadline.

Total Registration (TR) Help

TR has created several tools to remove the issues presented with the CB late fee and cancellation fee:

- **Families Agree to Your Refund Policy Before Finalizing Registration and Payment**
- **Configure Multiple Late Fees** – TR schools can set up a tiered late fee structure and the system will automatically apply the correct late fee according to the student’s registration date and class type.
- **Partial Payments** – Schools can allow families to make partial payments within the TR system. A minimum payment, e.g. \$40.00/exam, can be required to limit school’s liability for the CB Cancellation Fee
- **Second Semester Only Courses Can be Exempt from Late Fees**
- **TR’s Payment Processing Can Handle Partial Refunds** – TR will process partial refunds based on the school’s configured refund policy. Coordinators can even override their refund policy if required by extenuating circumstances.

Total Registration has simplified the exam registration, financial tracking, payment collection, communication and organization processes for more than 1350 schools over the past 12 years. Schools registered more than half million students for over a million AP exams in 2019 using Total Registration.

You can learn more, request pricing and sign up for a guided demo at AP.TotalRegistration.net