



2024-2025 Program Fee Adjustments: Commitment to Quality and Growth

Dear Ford Sayre Families,

As we gear up for the exciting 2024-2025 season, we want to share some important news regarding adjustments to our program fees. We recognize that fee changes can raise questions, and we want to be transparent about the reasons behind these decisions.

Commitment to Our Mission

The mission of Ford Sayre Ski Club is to foster a lifelong love of skiing and outdoor activities through providing high-quality, affordable programs for young athletes. We place a strong emphasis on community, sportsmanship, and personal development while offering training in Alpine, Nordic, Jumping and Ski Mo (ski mountaineering).

Our focus extends beyond just developing skiing skills; we aim to instill core values such as teamwork, leadership, and respect for the environment in all our participants. Over the years, we have seen our athletes grow not just as skiers but as well-rounded individuals who embody these values in their daily lives. From friendships formed on the slopes to skills that translate into personal achievements, our community plays a pivotal role in the development of our young athletes. As we navigate the challenges of growth and sustainability, ensuring that this mission is upheld remains our top priority.

Financial Challenges and the Need for Change

This past year has posed significant financial challenges for our club. For the 2023-2024 season (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024) there was a **net loss of \$50,720**, a situation largely driven by escalating operational costs, including travel expenses, equipment maintenance, and an investment in staff.

In the 2023/2024 season, we made a significant change by adding a full-time, year-round coach with impressive credentials. In her first year, her focus was primarily on Ford Sayre Academy in a direct coaching role. However, in the upcoming season, we will have more ski coaching resources, allowing her to spend more time across all programs. Her expertise will benefit not only our athletes but also our existing coaching staff, bringing greater value to our community.

We are also a few years ahead with this coaching model on our Nordic side, which has resulted in more participation, additional training opportunities outside of the core ski season, and extra events for athletes and families. This has led to increased success in athletes qualifying for higher-level competitions and driven greater satisfaction within the program. These are the same goals we aim to achieve by expanding this coaching structure on the Alpine side. While it represents a significant financial commitment for the Club, we believe the long-term value will be clear.

To address these challenges and maintain our commitment to quality, we undertook a comprehensive analysis of our financial health and the necessity of fee adjustments.

Key Findings:

- **Cost Comparisons:** We benchmarked our program fees against several peer organizations in our region. Despite the proposed increases, we found that Ford Sayre remains significantly more affordable than other clubs competing for young athletes' participation. For instance, many clubs in our region charge fees that are **40% or more higher**, and this analysis was crucial in guiding our decision-making process.
- **Third-Party Validation:** To ensure that our fee increases were justified and necessary, we engaged a reputable third-party organization to assess our financial situation. Its analysis confirmed that the proposed adjustments are essential for the long-term health and sustainability of our program, allowing us to continue to serve our athletes effectively.

Investing in Our Future

The fee adjustments will enable us to invest in critical areas such as:

- **Enhanced Training Opportunities:** We aim to provide our athletes with more specialized training sessions and access to experienced coaches who can offer personalized attention.
- **Updated Equipment and Facilities:** Ensuring our athletes have access to the latest equipment and safe, well-maintained facilities is crucial for their development and safety.
- **Expanded Programming:** We plan to introduce new initiatives that cater to varying skill levels and interests, ensuring that every athlete finds a place in our community.
- **Commitment to Experienced Coaches and Staff:** We recognize that the success of our athletes is directly tied to the quality of coaching and leadership they receive. To this end, we are dedicated to hiring experienced coaches and directors who are passionate about skiing and outdoor activities. This transition will allow us to provide a more consistent and structured training environment, giving our athletes a clear pathway for development.

This commitment to a staff-led organization is essential not only for the immediate needs of our athletes but also for the long-term sustainability and growth of the Ford Sayre Ski Club. We believe this shift will enhance the overall experience for our athletes and strengthen our community.

Fundraising and Scholarship Opportunities

Parallel to these changes, Ford Sayre is working to improve our fundraising efforts with the goal of increasing revenue to bring value to our programs and help control costs moving forward. We are also bolstering our scholarship capacity to ensure that skiing remains accessible to all athletes, regardless of financial situation. Through the generosity of alumni, donors, and friends of the organization, we offer scholarships that provide partial or complete exemption from program fees based on need. To learn more about our scholarships, [please click here](#).

Building Community and Support

At Ford Sayre, we pride ourselves on fostering a supportive and inclusive community. The relationships built among athletes, coaches, and families are foundational to our success. We encourage all families to engage actively, whether through volunteering, attending events, or providing feedback. Together, we can create an environment where every athlete feels valued and supported.

We appreciate your understanding and support as we implement these necessary changes. For any questions or feedback regarding these adjustments, please reach out. Thank you for being a valued part of the Ford Sayre community!

Sincerely,
Ford Sayre Ski Club