



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

5 February 2010

# **Parents Can Claim School Fees Refund**

Family First NZ is reminding and possibly informing parents that when they complete their IRD Tax Returns for the financial year ended 31 March 2010, they are entitled to claim back 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of their school fees.

“Amidst the debate on whether school fees are compulsory or not, many parents aren’t aware that school donations qualify for the Donations Rebate,” says National Director Bob McCoskrie. “This rebate which now has no cap means that parents can get a refund of a third of the school donation. This may be welcome news to families struggling with beginning-of-year expenses.”

The IRD rules state that the following payments qualify for the Donation Rebate

- Donation payments to state schools (including integrated schools), schools approved as charities for tax purposes, school boards of trustees or parent-teacher associations. These payments must be donations, not just a payment of school fees.
- state-funded schools for payment of fees, as long as these go to the school's general fund.

Payments that don’t qualify are

- payments for classes where there is a take-home component, such as woodwork
- where attendance or participation of the activity is voluntary
- transport to or from a school activity, such as a camp or food at the camp
- tertiary or tuition fees.

Mr McCoskrie says that although schools and parents can be confused over the terminology of ‘fees’ and ‘donations’, parents should claim for any general purpose school payments they have made, irrespective of how the school labels them.

He says the IRD should put out guidelines into each school so that parents are aware of this Rebate, and are clear as to which payments qualify and which don’t.

Parents will need a Rebate Claim Form (IR 526) which will either be sent to them or can be obtained from [www.ird.govt.nz](http://www.ird.govt.nz) or by phoning 0800 257 773.

**ENDS**

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*For More Information and Media Interviews, contact Family First:*

**Bob McCoskrie - NATIONAL DIRECTOR**

**Mob. 027 55 555 42**