

2010-2011 St. Joseph's School New Financial Assistance Policy

It is important to remember the operation of St. Joseph's Catholic School is tuition based; therefore, parental financial obligations are crucial to not only the smooth operation of the school, but also to its viability. Although the tuition at St. Joseph's School continues to be an excellent value as compared to the tuition in other Catholic and private schools, I realize that it does in fact put a serious strain on many budgets. I also strongly believe that our tuition payments are an investment in your child's education and religious formation.

In the past, St. Joseph's Parish has had a subsidy program to make Catholic education available to children whose families were not able to pay the full cost of tuition. With annual losses of up to \$80,000 a year this process simply cannot continue. Therefore, we have reworked our tuition assistance program to include a limited amount of financial funding to offer to qualified students whose families demonstrate a documented financial need. To demonstrate this financial need any family who would like financial aid will be required to go through an evaluation process. This process will begin early in the year so as to allow families and the school to plan appropriately for the following school year and it starts with the filing of the Private School Aid Service (PSAS) application. This form will qualify a family for financial assistance and may be obtained from the school office. This form is the starting point for any financial aid and no aid can be awarded without filing the PSAS.

For the 2010-2011 school year we will utilize this year's (2009-10) PSAS forms. Any family that filed a PSAS form for this school will not need to file one for the next school year (a savings of \$21). These families must simply respond in writing. A form

will be sent home Friday, January 8, 2010, stating that they would like financial assistance for the 2010-2011 school year. Other families who wish to apply for financial assistance and who have not completed a PSAS form will need to contact the school office and complete the PSAS by January 22, 2010. All recommendations for financial aid will be reviewed confidentially by the pastor with assistance provided by the principal and the St. Joseph's Financial Aid Committee. After the review and evaluation is completed, a letter of notification will then be sent to each family by February 26th.

Please note that the PSAS application form will be in PDF format for the 2010-2011 school year. This will be an interactive PDF document. It can be saved to your computer, and applicants can type the required information directly into the form, and then print and submit it. If you do not have access to a computer or you prefer to complete the application with a hard copy, you may still obtain one from the school office.

Tuition assistance starting for the 2010-2011 school year will be given based on need and availability of funds. It is important that each family bear as much of the full cost of educating their child(ren) as possible. This application process is not intended to intimidate, rather, it ensures that the amount of aid given to each family is objective and that as many needy students as possible receive help.

Following you will see a list of possible FAQ's (frequently asked questions) which will hopefully answer most questions you may have regarding the new 2010-2011 St. Joseph's School Financial Assistance/Tuition Assistance Policy. This includes eligibility requirements for applicants. If this information does not answer all of your questions, please contact the school office at 815-943-6933.

Financial Aid FAQs

What is financial aid?

Financial aid is a decrease of tuition costs, formulated on the basis of need.

Who can apply?

Anyone who demonstrates support for our school and/or Parish and provides support for their need for assistance may apply for financial aid. Awards can range up to half of the student(s) tuition. All awards are based on a limited amount of funds available for tuition assistance, and on the individual financial and personal circumstances of those supporting families that apply. Families that are not current St. Joseph's School supporters *may* apply, but will only be awarded assistance if funds remain *after* priority is given to supporting families.

How do I apply?

A form will be sent home to all current families that receive financial aid on Friday, January 8, 2010. You must state in writing on the form that you wish to apply for financial aid for the next school. This form must be returned to the school office by Friday, January 22, 2010. For all new families or those families that have not filed a PSAS form, a PSAS form must be picked up from the school office anytime after January 4th and must be completed and filed with PSAS by Friday, January 22.

Eligibility requirements:

1. All grades Kg through 8th grade are eligible.
2. Complete and mail PSAS (Private School Aid Services) packet and make certain packet includes all required documentation supporting the demonstrated need for financial assistance. Completed packets must be post marked **by Friday, January 22** (except for those who filed their PSAS packets for this school year). The cost to apply is **\$21.00** and must be sent in with your application. *Incomplete applications and/or applications received after the deadline may not be considered.*
3. Parents are responsible for making their own copies of documentation required. Copy services cannot be provided by the St. Joseph's School Office.

If I apply, is financial assistance guaranteed?

NO. Even if the cost to apply is paid, there is **NO** guarantee that you will be awarded financial assistance. The three main reasons are: the awards are based on each and every applicant's demonstrated urgency, priority to school/parish supporters and need for tuition assistance, and financial assistance funds are very limited.

Who decides if our family will be granted aid?

The St. Joseph's School Financial Assistance Committee, the Pastor and the Principal will consider all eligible and complete applications.

How are the financial decisions made?

Financial aid is awarded based on a family's demonstrated need and urgency for financial aid as well as past efforts to support the school and Parish. Every effort is made to assist those families applying.

If we are offered aid, can we expect approximately the same level of aid in future years?

Not necessarily. Because financial aid decisions will be reviewed each year, families receiving aid must, each year, re-apply, completing a financial aid packet and submitting the required documentation demonstrating a need for continued assistance in the next school year.

What factors can influence our child(ren) being awarded financial aid?

Awarding of financial aid can be influenced by the following: the required information and forms not submitted in a timely manner, missing information or forms, the amount of funds budgeted for financial aid, the level of need among all families applying for aid in a given year, and significant delinquencies in tuition payments.

What if I have more than one child attending St. Joseph's school?

One set of forms is sufficient, even if your children are attending different grades at St. Joseph's.

If aid is offered, what happens if I am late making tuition payments?

Families on financial assistance are subject to review throughout the school year. Families receiving assistance should not exceed 60 days of past due tuition. Exceeding 60 days is considered serious delinquency and is subject to the school's non-payment policy, which includes possible late fees and ineligibility for financial aid application in subsequent school years.

For more information, you can contact the St. Joseph's School Office at (815)943-6933.