



## **ST. MARY SCHOOL SYSTEM TUITION ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES**

St. Mary School System is committed to keeping tuition affordable and offering financial assistance to ensure all families can choose an excellent Catholic education for their children. St. Mary allocates donor funds through our Fr. Lew White Assistance, Family Award Assistance, and grant funding for Catholic and non-Catholic families with financial need.

### **Objectives:**

- Ensure the school remains financially robust to responsibly and continuously serve its parishes and community.
- Ensure families with limited income have access to Catholic education.

### **To ensure these objectives, the following principles will be followed:**

- Tuition assistance is available for St. Mary students and is awarded, as funds are available, to those families with demonstrated need.
- Awards will not be finalized for families with delinquent accounts until their tuition account is current.
- All families must contribute financially toward their children's education.
- Pre-K children are not eligible for tuition assistance.
- Emergency tuition assistance is available to families that experience crises such as sudden job loss, emergencies due to illness or death, natural disasters, etc.

### **Tuition Assistance Process**

All tuition assistance is given based on demonstrated need. To provide impartiality and fairness to our families, need is assessed by a third-party provider, FACTS Grant and Aid Assessment. Only families who complete the FACTS evaluation process are eligible for tuition assistance.

All applications are strictly confidential. Only *completed* applications are reviewed by a Tuition Assistance Committee. The committee is comprised of local community members who are not current families or employees of the school. Family names and identifying information will be removed from the applications so the committee can review them strictly for financial need. The school system Director and Finance Manager oversee the committee and will consider special circumstances provided by families for final determinations.

Applicants are asked to submit their applications with all documentation by the deadline set each year. Award determinations are announced by the end of April. Since the bulk of assistance is awarded by May, submitting a late or incomplete application, as well as delinquent accounts, will unfavorably affect the likelihood and/or amount of an award.

The committee will only consider families whose financials have been verified by FACTS. FACTS will require copies of financial documents to verify an application. This includes the previous year's tax return and current W2. Families should work directly with FACTS to provide information in a timely fashion.

### **Who May Apply**

- Any current K-12 St. Mary family
- Any new K-12 family that has applied for admission to St. Mary.

### **Amount of Assistance Awarded**

St. Mary School System is fortunate to offer assistance to families in need through the donations of alumni, community members, parishioners, and organizations that value Catholic education and the St. Mary School System. We are grateful for their continued support of our students. However, these funds are limited, and we have an increasing request for assistance from St. Mary families. Tuition assistance award allocations are based on need as calculated by FACTS, additional financial clarifications provided by the family, and tuition assistance fund availability.

### **Documents Needed**

We will accept current or prior year tax returns so everyone can complete their application by the deadline. Current year's W2s are required. All families in need, both Catholic and non-Catholic, are encouraged to apply.

### **Emergency Tuition Assistance**

Emergency tuition assistance may be awarded to families that experience unexpected hardship during a school year. Emergency tuition assistance subsidies can be applied for at any time. Please contact the school system director with questions about this.

### **Final Confirmation of Tuition Assistance Award**

Tuition Assistance amounts will be communicated to families by email. Families must be current on their tuition account to receive Tuition Assistance for the upcoming school year.

### **Tuition Assistance Questions**

Questions regarding the tuition assistance process should email [tammie.horbovetz@smss.org](mailto:tammie.horbovetz@smss.org) or St Mary School Director [monica.hayden@smss.org](mailto:monica.hayden@smss.org)