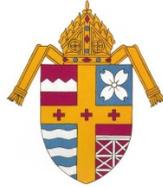


# Diocese of Knoxville Catholic Schools



## *Catholic School Tuition Assistance FAQ's*

*We believe families who want to provide a Catholic school education for their children should have the opportunity. So together, we will find a way to make this dream a reality. No Catholic child is turned away for inability to pay. The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Knoxville offer tuition assistance through a financial application process.*

### **What IS Tuition Assistance?**

Tuition Assistance is regionally designated funds established solely to provide additional financial support to offset the cost of Catholic school tuition. Through the admission process, it is awarded to Catholic families who wish to enroll their children in Catholic schools, but may not have the financial resources to do so. It is supplemental to the standard parish subsidy provided to all registered Catholic families in good standing with their parish.

### **Who Can Apply?**

Any Catholic family who is registered in a parish in the Diocese of Knoxville or any new Catholic family moving to the area and seeking to register with a parish in the diocese. Non-Catholic families are not eligible through the regional Tuition Assistance funds, but may check with their individual school for available assistance directly from the school.

### **Do I Need an Application for Each Child?**

No, one application will cover all children applying from a single family.

### **How is Financial Need Determined?**

FACTS Management collects all necessary family data, analyzes it, and provides the necessary information through a secure web-based interface. At that time the Diocese of Knoxville Tuition Evaluators in either Knoxville or Chattanooga, will contact all applicants by phone to arrange a face-to-face interview following pandemic protocol as established by the Diocese of Knoxville. The face-to-face interview is reserved for first time applicants, requests by a returning family, or as the evaluator discerns a need. Normally, returning families will receive a phone call interview after the first initial year.

## **What is the purpose of the interview?**

The FACTS Management system provides a baseline evaluation of financial need. The purpose of the interview is to seek additional information or clarification from the family to determine if there are any additional considerations, such as medical or changes in family circumstances.

## **What Is the Financial Application Process?**

During the application process, the online financial application becomes active in late October. **Exact** dates for each application period (starting and ending) will be announced prior to the application process beginning. Applicants should pay careful attention to specific deadlines and submit **all requested documents prior to that date**. The only applications accepted after the announced deadline date will be families who are applying to Catholic schools for the first time by moving into the area, changing school systems, or families who have extenuating or changes in circumstances that meet criteria upon review.

## **Is There an Application Fee?**

Yes, the 2021-2022 non-refundable application fee set by FACTS is \$35.00.

## **What Documentation Will I Need to Provide?**

- All pages of the previous year Income Tax Return. If applying for 2022-23, the applicant will need the 2020 return.
- W2 from all employers. If your wages are not reported on form W2, applicants will need Form 1099 from all income sources. If the applicant does not receive a W2 or Form 1099, the applicant must submit a letter signed by his/her employer stating how often he/she is paid, how often he/she works (if paid hourly and the rate per hour), or salary per pay period.
- A ***Parish Affiliation/Stewardship*** form signed by your parish priest. The signed form is to be returned to your Catholic school(s) and to the Tuition Evaluators' office. These forms will be available in English and Spanish on the school website.
- Proof of current income for all employed, contributing family members for one month prior to application. This should be a pay stub, a letter from your employer, or a bank statement showing deposits.
  - If paid weekly– submit 4 pay stubs, one for each week.
  - If paid every two weeks – submit 3 pay stubs.
  - If paid twice a month or monthly – submit 2 pay stubs.
  - If you use a letter from your employer, submit 1 letter.
  - If using a bank statement, please submit 2 monthly statements.

## **When Do I Apply?**

As soon as the admissions/financial application is available online, you may apply. Please do not delay and complete it as soon as possible.

**Do I Apply Every Year?**

Yes, because circumstances can change from year-to-year, a new application is required for each new school year.

**How Is the Information I Provide Used?**

In order to make an informed recommendation regarding a fair tuition rate, FACTS and your tuition assistance evaluator use it confidentially. Your pastor has the final approval in tuition amounts awarded.

**Is The Process Confidential?**

Yes. You will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement at your first interview.

**How Much Money Is Awarded?**

There is only a certain amount of funding to be awarded each year and it varies according to the number of applicants, the need of each applicant, and the amount that can be distributed from the regional tuition assistance funds. An application for support does not guarantee an award. Amount awarded is based on need.

**Where Does the Money for Tuition Assistance Come from?**

Regional tuition assistance funds by the pastors in the Knoxville and Chattanooga areas. The Knoxville-area pastors created the Knoxville Regional Catholic Schools Operating Fund (KRCOSOF) in 2003 and in 2010 the Chattanooga-deanery pastors established the Chattanooga Deanery Catholic Schools Operating Fund (CDCSOF). The two schools in the Tri-Cities, St. Dominic Catholic School and St. Mary's Johnson City, do not have a regional fund, but draw tuition assistance revenue from the diocesan Catholic Education Trust Fund and their own parishes.

We are blessed greatly to have parishes who support and contribute a percentage of their offertory to these regional funds. Along with providing the standard parish subsidy for each Catholic child in a Catholic school, the monetary gifts provide additional financial assistance to our Catholic families who might not otherwise be able to afford the standard Catholic school tuition rate. Additional sources of revenue to the regional funds come from the Catholic Education Trust Fund, a grant awarded by the St. Mary's Legacy Foundation, profit from the Diocesan Catholic Schools' Raffle Sales, online giving to the Catholic Schools' office tuition assistance fund, and the Second Collection for Catholic Schools held in August throughout the diocese. A Board of Trustees with wide representation from across East Tennessee governs the Catholic Education Trust Fund. The Board has oversight over any distributions from the Catholic Education Trust Fund.

The Catholic Schools' Office is very grateful to the faithful of East Tennessee for their tithing, the foundations who provide generous grants, and all of the individuals that

support our fundraising efforts by purchasing Raffle tickets or making a donation during the Second Collection. In order to continue to make the dream of Catholic school education a reality, we are always looking for new sources of revenue for tuition assistance.

### **When Will We Find Out If We Have Received Tuition Assistance?**

You will receive a letter from your parish with award information in mid-March prior to the school year for which you applied.

### **Is Tuition Assistance Available for Pre-School Programs?**

No, the tuition assistance awards from these regional funds are designated for students in Grades K – 12 only. However, individual pastors of schools with pre-schools may provide need-based assistance from the parish for preschool program support.

### **What If I have Questions Regarding the Application?**

For questions regarding the FACTS application, call 866-441-4637. Help is available in both English and Spanish. For questions regarding the application process, please call Linda Crawford at 865-862-5734 or 865-584-3307 or in Chattanooga, please call Mary Anne Poinatte at 423-624-4618, extension 1014 or Chris Curtis at 423-624-4618, extension 1026. You may leave a message in English or Spanish. Our Spanish translator will return your call.

*In closing, it is our earnest intention to never let finances be the barrier to deny a Catholic family a Catholic School education. Help us develop scholars, leaders, and saints in our Catholic Schools by supporting our efforts to provide Catholic School tuition support to families. If you are interested in making a donation, go to [dioknox.org/Catholicschools](http://dioknox.org/Catholicschools).*