

## TUITION ASSISTANCE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. **Need-based assistance vs. merit scholarships:**

Tuition Assistance at St. James' is *completely need-based*. There are no merit or athletic scholarships. Tuition Assistance awards during the 2009-2010 academic year ranged from 5% to 90% of tuition and fees.

### 2. **How does the school determine financial need?**

St. James' uses **FAST**, an outside agency, to help the Tuition Assistance Committee determine a Tuition Assistance award. The **FAST** report, which we hold confidential, gives an accurate picture of a family's finances. Family size, assets, and indebtedness are considered when determining need.

In evaluating the amount of assistance needed to meet tuition costs, the Tuition Assistance Committee takes into account the family's other children (ages, schools they attend), additional dependents, all sources of income, assets, priority of spending, debts, and expenses.

When a parent does not work, the school will assign an annual income of \$20,000 to the non-working parent.

### 3. **How do I apply?**

Download all forms and instructions from the school's website, [www.sjsla.org](http://www.sjsla.org). Complete an online **FAST** application and **submit 2009 tax returns, W-2s and 1099s directly to FAST**. See Checklist for complete instructions.

### 4. **What is the deadline for application?**

Complete the online **FAST** application. Please include copies of 2009 tax returns all supporting schedules, 2009 W-2s and 1099s directly to **FAST** no later than Thursday, February 11, 2010. See Checklist for complete instructions.

A file is complete when the Business Office receives a **FAST report**. Please assume all requirements apply to you. If you feel you cannot meet the expectations outlined here, we encourage you to call and discuss your situation.

We will consider requests submitted after these dates only if funds are still available.

### 5. **Does applying for Tuition Assistance reduce chances of admission?**

No. Tuition Assistance is not a factor in the admissions decision. While St. James' is committed to serving all qualified students in our community, we have a limited amount of assistance available.

### 6. **Do I need to reapply for tuition assistance each year?**

Yes, as long as your financial need continues, as demonstrated by annual Tuition Assistance applications, the school will continue to meet it. Adjustments will be made for tuition increases and changes in your family's financial situation.

Renewal grants have priority. Then, consideration is given to those seeking assistance for the first time.

Renewal of the assistance is based on continued financial need. New forms and tax returns must be submitted each year. All Tuition Assistance awards are contingent upon payment in full of the prior year's account.

**7. What if parents are divorced or separated?**

We consider that both parents have an obligation to contribute to their children's educational expenses. We take into account the assets and income of both natural parents. If either parent has remarried, we will consider the income of the stepparent, keeping in mind the obligation of that stepparent to his or her natural children. If either parent lives in a household with another adult, we may consider the assets and income of that person, depending upon circumstances. St. James' requires both natural parents and their current spouses to fill out and submit a "linked" **FAST** application, tax forms, W-2s, and 1099s.

In the case of one parent having no contact with the family, the custodial parent should submit third-party verification explaining the situation from a clergy person, school administrator, or other individual with knowledge of the situation.

**8. Are there exceptions to the above policy?**

Requests to consider extenuating circumstances (such as a missing parent or one who has not provided support and has not been in contact with the family for at least two years) should be explained and submitted in writing to the Business Office. The school will not be bound by the assertion of one parent that he or she is not responsible for educational expenses, even in the case of divorce and remarriage. If **FAST** and tax forms are not submitted by both parents, then the file is considered incomplete and will not be brought to the Tuition Assistance Committee until it is complete.

**9. What if I have children at other tuition-charging schools?**

Other tuitions you pay for students in Kindergarten through Grade 12 are considered. To receive Tuition Assistance from St. James', you must apply for Tuition Assistance at all schools your children attend. You should note that college tuition money is regarded as an investment rather than an educational expense in that it pays for itself in higher income levels. Both parents and students frequently take out federally subsidized loans in addition to the direct assistance that is available at the college level.