



## Office of Catholic Schools

### **Tuition Assistance and Tuition Reduction Opportunities**

Making a high-quality Catholic Education affordable is important to us. Therefore, we have allocated additional funding to tuition assistance, and a different initial criteria will be used to expedite the process (**see questions 3 & 4**). Below you will find answers to frequently asked questions, and information on how to apply for aid. While the information relates primarily to tuition aid awards, please know that there are many other tuition reduction opportunities. The following are very effective ways to reduce your tuition:

- Numerous schools have SCRIP programs, which offer rebates for purchases made on a variety of gift cards. These rebates can be used to reduce your tuition.
- Some schools offer various ways to reduce tuition through fundraisers.
- By referring a family that enrolls, you can earn a \$500 tuition reduction. Please see Referral Flyer for details.

#### **1. Who should apply for financial assistance?**

We encourage all families who are unsure of their ability to pay the full tuition to apply for tuition assistance. Awards are based on financial need.

#### **2. How much will I receive?**

Using objective criteria, FACTS provides a calculated need for families, and then, the applications are ranked according to need within each school. Awards for families who qualify will mostly range between \$500-\$2,500.

#### **3. When is the application due? When will I be notified of my award?**

Applications are due no later than April 15, 2022. If your application is submitted and complete by April 15, 2022, you will be notified via e-mail of your award on or before May 31, 2022.

#### **4. How do I fill out the FACTS Grant & Aid application?**

The FACTS Grant & Aid applications can be found at: <http://www.dioceseofscranton.org/catholicschools>

To simplify the process, this year, we will make an early award determination based on the following information:

- 2020 Tax Return
- 2021 W-2
- Copies of supporting documentation for income sources such as Social Security, child support, welfare, etc.
- Copies of a recent utility bill (gas, water, electric)
- Expenses such as rent/mortgage payments, vehicle payments and insurance, daycare/elder care, health insurance/out-of-pocket medical, charitable contributions, college tuition, credit card payments, student loans, and other debt, as well as assets such as 529 plans, retirement plans, stocks/bonds/CDs.
- To finalize the award you will need to submit your 2021 tax return no later than October 15, 2022. Failure to submit your 2021 tax return may result in either a change or cancellation of initial determination award letter.

#### **5. Are there any other opportunities to make tuition more affordable?**

Yes, if you do not initially receive an award, please call your School Principal to inquire if additional tuition assistance is available or the availability of any other tuition reduction programs.

#### **6. What is FACTS?**

FACTS is a third party service that handles all aspects of tuition management and the financial aid application and verification process.

#### **7. How is the Diocese of Scranton Scholarship Foundation funded?**

The primary funding sources which the *Diocese of Scranton Scholarship Foundation* utilizes in offering tuition assistance to families:

- The EITC and OSTC programs are funded by local businesses that make a donation to the *Diocese of Scranton Scholarship Foundation* through a tax credit program offered by the state of Pennsylvania.
- The *Academic Angel* program allows individuals to donate directly to the Scholarship Foundation.

- The *Bishop J. Carroll McCormick Endowment Fund* is a diocesan fund specifically for Catholic school tuition assistance.
- Other endowed and annual financial assistance funds made possible by the generosity of donors for the purpose of making Catholic education affordable.

The *Diocese of Scranton Scholarship Foundation* utilizes the FACTS Grant & Aid application in offering tuition assistance through these programs.

**8. Who do I call or email if I have questions on filling out the application? Or, who do I call if I have a life status change, job situation change, and/or other change that impacts the financial information submitted?**

Questions regarding the FACTS Grant & Aid application should be directed to 866-441-4637, or please contact your representative in the Catholic Schools' Business Office:

**Alicia Busch (570) 558-4344 – Ext. 1093**

- Good Shepherd Academy
- Holy Redeemer High School
- Holy Cross High School
- St. Nicholas/St. Mary School

**Tara Adams (570) 558-4343 – Ext. 1143**

- La Salle Academy
- Notre Dame Jr/Sr High School
- St. John Neumann Elementary School
- St. Mary of Mount Carmel School
- Notre Dame Elementary School
- Our Lady of Peace School
- St. John Neumann Jr/Sr High School

**Katie Henry (570) 558-4341 – Ext. 1141**

- All Saints Academy
- Holy Family Academy
- St. Jude School
- Holy Rosary School
- St. Clare/St. Paul School
- Wyoming Area Catholic School

**Dianne Longo (570) 207-2251**

- Epiphany School
- St. Agnes School

**9. What are the EITC and OSTC programs?**

The EITC program is the Educational Improvement Tax Credit program. The OSTC program is the Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit program. Both programs are offered by the Department of Community and Economic Development and the state of Pennsylvania. They allow local businesses to apply to receive a tax credit for donations made to organizations such as the *Diocese of Scranton Scholarship Foundation* for tuition assistance. More information on both programs can be found on our website at: <http://www.dioceseofscranton.org/catholicschools>

**10. How do I know if I qualify for tuition assistance through the EITC and the OSTC program?**

An eligible student is a school age student, including an eligible student with a disability, who is a resident of Pennsylvania, enrolled in a school located in the Diocese of Scranton and who is a member of a household with an 2021 annual household income not to exceed \$96,676 except that an additional income allowance of \$17,017 is permitted for the student and for each other dependent (as defined by the IRS) living within the same household. If you live within the boundaries of an underperforming school as determined by the Department of Education, you may also be eligible to receive financial assistance through the OSTC program. FACTS will determine your eligibility based on the information submitted in the FACTS Grant & Aid application.

**11. Is there more than one application?**

No. The *Diocese of Scranton Scholarship Foundation* only has ONE financial aid application, the FACTS Grant & Aid application, which covers tuition assistance from the EITC and the OSTC programs.

**12. What happens if I apply after April 15<sup>th</sup>?**

Applications are accepted after April 15<sup>th</sup>, but if you are submitting an application after this date or your application is incomplete, please be aware if eligible for tuition assistance, you may receive a reduced award or no award, as the amount of tuition assistance available is limited.