



Financial Aid FAQs

Why does Saint George's grant financial aid?

Saint George's School has, since its founding in 1955, been committed to the proposition that it should be accessible and affordable to all families—a viable economic choice in the greater Spokane educational market. Financial aid is therefore made available to lessen the burden of tuition and related fees for families whose children have met the requirements for academic acceptance and have properly qualified for aid. Financial aid is also utilized to promote a diverse student and family population within the Saint George's community, one that helps prepare students for success by acclimating them to the diversity found in college life and beyond. Primary financial responsibility for tuition is born by each family. It is granted on the basis of demonstrated need rather than academic merit.

What types of financial assistance does the School offer? Does the School offer tuition payment plans or loan programs?

Saint George's offers need-based financial assistance. We do not at this time offer merit based scholarships. We do, however, offer a tuition reduction to full-time employees of Whitworth University. The School does offer several tuition payment plans to make paying tuition easier for families. There are no loan programs available.

How often do you grant financial aid?

The financial aid "season" is February through June of each year. Most of the funds set aside for financial aid are allocated by June 1. Occasionally funds remain available for those applying to the School in June, July and the first half of August. Financial aid is not available for those applying after August 15 for the school year beginning in September of that year. Before applying for aid in June, July or early August, contact the Admission Office to determine if any funds remain available.

Do I stand a chance considering my current income or assets?

There is no rule of thumb enabling us to answer this question. Financial situations vary so widely among families that we can only assess eligibility once the proper application has been made and results sent to us.

What is the School's policy regarding meeting full financial need?
Does the School require a minimum contribution from families, or can financial aid cover all school costs?

Every family, including employees, must pay something toward tuition. No one receives full financial need. The minimum amount a family is required to pay is generally 10 percent of total tuition for their child's tuition (or their children's combined tuition). In no cases does financial aid cover all school costs.

If my child receives financial aid for one year, what is the School's policy for granting aid in the following years?

All returning students whose families received financial aid in their first year at Saint George's School and who continue to demonstrate financial need will be allocated financial aid. Should a family's ability to contribute to the student's education increase, as reported by the School and Student Service for Financial Aid, the level of aid will be decreased proportionately. If the report shows a family's ability to pay has decreased, Saint George's School will, at a minimum, meet the previous year's grant amount and, budget permitting, increase the level of aid granted from the previous year. The School counts on families to be fully honest and straightforward in their search for aid, as dictated by our Values Statement. We count on the information provided to be comprehensive and accurate, and expect families whose financial situation improves to return unneeded financial aid.

What costs, beyond tuition, might families expect?

- Bus: \$440, \$735, \$1020
- Books for grades 6-12; \$100-\$500 per year dependant upon grade level, course level, and whether or not the book is new or used
- School Supplies – grades 3-12, \$20+ per child, per year, dependant on family's personal choices, care given to belongings and the student's age. Upper School students need a graphing calculator which costs \$80-\$150.
- Personal:
 - After School Care \$10 per day (can include After School Lessons)
 - Private Music Lessons \$20/half-hour
 - After School Lessons for Lower School students, i.e. Art, Chess, Spanish \$10 per day
 - Friday Lunches \$12-15 per month for Lower and Middle School students
 - Logo wear varies
 - Optional Outdoor, College Search, Washington D.C. or Foreign travel opportunities \$150-\$3500 [These are offered at various times of the year and/or bi-annually for optimal planning.]
 - Personal food/entertainment: food, dances, sporting event tickets, etc.

What is the application deadline for financial aid consideration?

The date that applications must have been completed with the School and Student Service for Financial Aid to be considered in the first allocation of financial aid is March 15. Results of applications are sent to the School and evaluated in early May for granting later in the month.

Are the Admission and Financial Aid processes at Saint George's School combined or independent of one another?

Admission and Financial Aid are independent of one another at Saint George's School. Applicant families are accepted for admission on a financial "need-blind" basis. Applying for financial aid will not affect an applicant's chances for admission. Once accepted for admission, those families who have properly applied for financial aid and met the deadlines for submission of materials to the Admission's Office will have their documentation analyzed for consideration of aid grants by the Financial Aid Committee. Some financial aid applicants will not qualify for financial aid. Although it may be difficult for an applicant to receive an admission acceptance letter along with a letter denying financial aid, it is our strong belief that we cannot presume a family will not be able to find another way to afford and attend Saint George's School. We further believe that denying admission to a student because of a shortfall in Saint George's School's financial aid budget would imply a connection between the admission and financial aid processes that does not exist. Students earn acceptance to Saint George's School by demonstrating a strong likelihood of success in light of the School's mission statement while financial aid decisions are made based solely on a family's financial need and Saint George's School's ability to support that need.

Do I need to submit an income tax return or other forms to the School?

Yes. A copy of your most recent signed income tax return, Form W-2's, and a recent paycheck stub from all natural parents should be submitted to the Financial Aid and Admission Assistant by March 1. You may submit an estimated tax return to meet the deadline, however, you will also need to submit a copy of the final return when it is completed. These documents, along with the Report of Family Contribution that is generated from your application to the School and Student Service for Financial Aid, will be reviewed by the Chief Financial Officer prior to making a grant of financial aid.

How are my financial status and my ability to pay evaluated if I am separated or divorced?

Financial aid at Saint George's School is determined by a family's ability to meet educational expenses. It is based on need, not on a willingness or unwillingness to pay. It is the position of Saint George's School that divorced or separated parents retain the obligation to contribute to the education of their children. Some divorce settlements stipulate the exact amount each parent must contribute toward educational costs or which parent is responsible for educational expenses. Saint George's School will evaluate each situation on a case by case basis. Divorced or separated parents may be asked to provide the School with a copy of their court approved Parenting Plan.

The Financial Aid Committee will make a grant only after considering the financial resources of both parents, unless one parent is uninvolved in the child's life and has been for some time. If this is the case, the family must provide us with a statement to this effect from a lawyer, member of the clergy, School official, or other third party who is aware of the situation in a professional capacity.

If either parent remarries, the financial information of the stepparent must be included on the Parents Financial Statement (PFS). We will take into consideration individual relationships and financial agreements as well as obligations of the parent and

stepparent to their other children as we process this financial information. If a stepparent refuses to provide financial information, we may add a lump sum to the family's non-taxable income under the guise of a housing/living expenses allowance.

Each parent and his or her spouse must complete the full application process, though only one parent need file a Parents' Financial Statement (PFS) with SSS; the other parent may send the completed PFS directly to Saint George's School: Attention Financial Aid and Admission Assistant.

Are there additional forms that I need to fill out if I own a business of farm?

Yes. A Balance Sheet and Income Statement and the federal tax returns for the business from the most recent fiscal year should be submitted to Saint George's along with your personal tax documents.

If my family situation seems unique, or has not been addressed in these FAQs, whom should I contact to discuss it?

Contact Stuart Mermel, Chief Financial Officer, email: stuart.mermel@sgs.org, or call (509) 466-1636 x321.

What do you need from me for my file to be complete?

To be considered for a grant of financial aid you are required to have a completed financial aid file. The preparation of one's financial aid file begins in February of each year. For those seeking a renewal of aid from a previous year, formal application must again be made and tax information must be delivered to the Financial Aid and Admission Assistant in order to complete the applicant's file. The completed file consists of:

- The Report of Family Contribution from the School and Student Service for Financial Aid (see next question for how to apply)
- Personal and/or business tax returns with all supporting schedules where appropriate (copies) from the previous tax year, copy of a most recent pay stub and copies of W-2's from all employers. These should be sent directly to the Financial Aid and Admission Assistant. If you filed for an extension, a copy of that filing will be required and will serve until October 15th, at which time we will expect copies of tax forms to be filed with us.
- If you believe that special or unusual circumstances should be brought to our attention, in addition to noting that on your application you may provide that information in writing to the Chief Financial Officer for your file. It will be held in strict confidence to be shared only with members of the Financial Aid Committee.

What exactly is the process?

1. Go online at <http://sss.nais.org>.
2. Complete the application as soon as possible, preferably by March 1 or earlier. Please give complete and accurate information. So that your report will be sent to

Saint George's in a timely manner, you will need to enter the proper school code for Saint George's. You will be prompted to look up that code; however, to save time our school code is 6472. If PFS applications are submitted late or with incomplete information, families may get only a fraction or none of the assistance for which they may be eligible.

3. Submit the **completed form and payment**. SSS will send an electronic report to Saint George's School for review. We strongly recommend you order a personal copy of this report for your records at no additional charge. You will be prompted to choose this option in the Student Application Information section after choosing and submitting the school to whom SSS should send its report.
4. As mentioned above, send to the Financial Aid and Admission Assistant a copy of your most recent signed federal tax return (Form 1040) with all supporting schedules, a recent pay stub, and W-2 form (s). Final decisions by the Saint George's School Financial Aid Committee will be based on this tax data and the SSS report. Your grant will be contingent upon receipt of the most recent tax year's data (or an estimate used as the basis of an extension). Your grant may change according to changes in your financial situation. Please inform the Chief Financial Officer, in writing, of any additional circumstances that should be taken into consideration when reviewing your financial aid application.
5. If you receive income from a trade, business, or farm, please submit a Balance Sheet and an Income Statement, or alternatively the Business/Farm Statement which is available for download from the SSS website. These forms should be submitted along with your tax and W-2 information and all supporting attachments to the Saint George's School Financial Aid and Admission Assistant.

When does the School decide whether or not I will receive aid?

Once the preponderance of Reports of Family Contribution has arrived and applicant files completed, a process is begun to make the best decisions possible regarding financial assistance. Recipients are notified in May and have an opportunity to appeal the decision. The decision may be a grant of money (your tuition is then reduced by that amount) or it may be a letter informing you that you do not qualify and are ineligible to receive financial aid.

IMPORTANT: For families enrolled the previous year to receive a grant of financial aid, all tuition payments must be up to date or arrangements must have been made with the Business Office. On August 1, any financial aid being held for families failing to complete the previous year's tuition payments will be forfeited.

How do the School and Student Service for Financial Aid arrive at their estimate for how much I could contribute toward tuition?

The following is paraphrased from the letter sent to applicants who have paid the additional fee for results to be sent to them.

The Estimate of Parental Contribution supplied to Saint George's School by the SSS is based on a formula developed by a standing committee of experienced financial aid officers. It measures what is possible, not necessarily comfortable, for a family to contribute toward educational expenses. Schools assume that parents, to the extent

that they are able, will bear the primary responsibility for financing their children's education.

Explanation of the Calculation

Using the figures you provide on the Parents' Financial Statement (the application form), SSS estimates an amount you can contribute to the education of your children. The Estimated Family Contribution is derived from the SSS need-analysis system, which is a computation process involving a review of your previous year's income and net worth, and the application of various allowances for necessary expenditures.

Computation of Total Income, Allowances, and Effective Income

First SSS adds all of your income, both taxable and non-taxable, to calculate a total income. Customary expenses are then subtracted for federal income tax, social security taxes, state taxes and unusual medical expenses. Your self-reported figure for unusual expenses is also subtracted. The result is an Effective Income.

Computation of Parent's Assets to Be Considered

SSS then adds all of the assets you reported and subtracts the debts owed on these assets. The calculation results in Total Assets. The amount of your indebtedness is subtracted from the Total Assets to determine your Net Worth. Only a portion of your Net Worth is used to determine your estimated contribution.

Computation of Estimated Parental Contribution

After adding together your Effective Income and assets portion, SSS then subtracts an allowance that reflects basic expenses incurred by a family the size of yours living modestly. SSS next determines the Estimated Parental Contribution. If you have more than one child enrolled in full time childcare or tuition-charging preschools, schools or colleges, the Estimated Parental Contribution is divided by this number of children.

When granting aid, do you go in any priority order?

Yes we do. Applicants receiving first consideration are employees. Saint George's School, like many other independent schools, offers a benefit to its employees who are enrolling a child. This benefit is called tuition remission and, like need-based financial aid, is a reduction of tuition charged. Employees may also, in addition to automatic tuition remission, apply and qualify for need-based financial aid.

Second priority goes to returning families, especially those who have previously received financial aid. A current family that has not received aid in the past and who's financial situation leads to application for aid is also in this second tier.

Third priority goes to our new families.

Please note that we customarily do not grant aid for kindergarten children, unless a kindergarten child has a sibling already enrolled in Saint George's.

How do you make financial aid grant decisions?

1. We begin with a pool of funds set aside from the School's operating budget for financial aid. Saint George's commitment to financial aid results in approximately 15% of the operating budget* earmarked for aid. The Financial Aid Committee's decisions are guided by the directive to remain within budget while equitably serving as many applicants as possible.
*This amount has been increased to 20% for the 2010-11 school year.
2. We then evaluate data provided to Saint George's by the School and Student Service for Financial Aid (SSS) in its Report of Family Contribution, data that is the result of the application that families make. Among the data generated is an Estimate of Parental Contribution, an amount of money that SSS estimates a family could contribute to their child's education at an Independent School like Saint George's. This estimate is derived through a complex analysis of income and assets that is applied uniformly to all families.
3. We then enter the estimate into a spreadsheet that compares it to a particular child's grade level tuition plus other data, such as previous year financial aid grants. From the base tuition, to which we add the mandatory non-rider bus fee, we subtract the Estimate of Parental Contribution. The remainder is technically the family's "need" per student.
4. Next we evaluate this "need" with other unusual or unique information that the family has shared with us. On the occasion that we can make a case for altering the Report of Parental Contribution, we may then prepare an updated Estimate using this extra information. We are guided not to alter the Report due solely to discretionary lifestyle choices, including how the family handles its cash flow and personal budgeting.
5. The Committee then meets and reviews applicants' need and other data to make their decision. After hours of deliberation, with one eye on the circumstances of each family and one on the bottom line of the financial aid budget, a decision is reached. Letters then flow to the families. It is not uncommon for a few to appeal the Committee's decision.

Who do I call if I still have questions?

Questions regarding the PFS form or to confirm receipt of information, please contact: Muffy Sackville-West, Financial Aid & Admission Assistant, at (509) 466-1636 x325, or email her at muffy.sackville-west@sgs.org.

Specific questions regarding your grant, reporting special circumstances, your taxes or completed forms, please contact CFO, Stuart Mermel, at stuart.mermel@sgs.org or (509)466.1636 x321.