



DUNN SCHOOL FINANCIAL AID POLICY

Updated August 17, 2009

MISSION OF DUNN SCHOOL

The Dunn School Community educates the whole student to his or her fullest potential in preparation for a life of learning and responsible leadership in society.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL AID PHILOSOPHY

Dunn School is committed to providing a quality education to qualified students who for financial reasons would otherwise be unable to attend the School. Dunn's financial aid program is designed to bridge the gap between what a family can contribute and what it actually costs to attend the School. Dunn School offers financial aid on the basis of documented financial need of the family and the availability of funds.

NEED BASED FINANCIAL AID

Financial Aid at Dunn School is awarded based on a family's demonstrated financial need. The purpose of our financial aid program is to remove financial barriers. Dunn School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of our financial aid program.

The issue of merit enters the financial aid process through the Admission process; only students accepted by the Admission Committee may be considered for financial aid awards. Applicants acceptable for admission and qualified for financial aid outnumber those whom we can afford to support. Although need is the first requirement for financial aid, the final selection of a new recipient is based on our evaluation of the student's overall performance in relation to the mission and needs of the school.

FINANCIAL AID PRIORITIES

While being consistent with the school's mission and the purpose of financial aid, the administration of financial aid awards will be guided by the following priorities:

1. Applications from current financial aid recipients who complete all renewal requirements on time.
2. New applications from currently enrolled students, not receiving financial aid, who complete all application materials on time.
3. New applications from candidates for enrollment accepted by the Office of Admission, who complete all application materials on time.
4. New and renewal applications completed after the specified deadlines, provided there are funds available. Amounts awarded to this final group may be reduced as our budget nears exhaustion.

ADMINISTRATION OF FINANCIAL AID

Within the Office of Admission, the Director of Financial Aid is responsible for:

- Accumulating and maintaining applications for financial aid and documentation related to the applications,
- Communicating with and assisting financial aid applicants, including final award notification letters,
- Recommending policy and procedures that support the financial aid program,
- Processing applications and computing a preliminary recommendation of applicant awards for the Financial Aid Committee,
- Maintaining records relating to financial aid awards,
- Producing and updating relevant admission and financial aid external publications (website, brochures, etc.),
- Providing the Development Office with information necessary to steward scholarship donors.

The Financial Aid Committee is responsible for review of financial aid award recommendations presented by the Director of Financial Aid and determining final awards. It is also responsible for adopting policy and procedural changes for the financial aid program. The Financial Aid Committee is composed of the following: Head of School, Associate Heads of School, Director of Financial Aid, Director of Admission, and Director of Business Operations. Other members as appointed by the Head of School may be included.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Dunn School will treat as confidential all financial information provided by families. Only those persons directly involved in the financial aid decision making process or in its administration will review this information. All financial aid awards are confidential agreements between the recipient family and the school. The identity of all students on financial aid will be held in confidence and restricted to the smallest number of persons possible.

FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY

Financial aid is available to students in all grades (6-12) at Dunn School.

EXPECTATIONS OF FINANCIAL AID RECIPIENTS

Recipients of financial aid are expected to meet the same standards of performance as other students; they are not subject to special standards or other requirements that would treat them unequally. The Financial Aid Committee expects recipients to be active students who maintain an academic record commensurate with their abilities and remain in good standing in all aspects of our community.

Normally, a family should expect that financial aid will continue throughout the student's enrollment. However, the Financial Aid Committee reserves the right to reduce or refuse financial aid renewal for a student who experiences academic or behavior difficulty resulting in a delay of re-invitation for the following academic year (i.e. Hesitation Letter). In addition, the Financial Aid Committee may withhold review of financial aid renewal if the family does not meet the contracted tuition payment deadlines. If tuition payment is not received prior to the required financial aid evaluation deadline the student's space at Dunn may be at risk and the subsequent financial aid award may be reduced or withdrawn.

REQUIREMENTS FOR DEMONSTRATION OF NEED

In applying for financial aid, families must submit the following:

- The Parents' Financial Statement (PFS) to SSS using the standard form (online or paper) for both custodial and non-custodial parents,
- Dunn School's Financial Aid Parent Questionnaire,
- Two years of Federal Tax Returns, including all schedules.

If the PFS is incomplete or appears to be non-representative of the family's financial situation, Dunn reserves the right to re-compute the submitted information, request additional documentation to clarify the areas in question, or deny financial assistance. *The family must state on the Parent Questionnaire and the PFS the dollar amount they are able to contribute to their child(ren)'s education.*

MEETING NEED

Dunn School, will make every effort, to the extent permitted by its budget, to meet demonstrated need through financial aid awards.

Families can expect that financial aid award levels will be consistent year-to-year as long as the financial need of the family remains the same, the application deadlines are met, and the financial aid resources of the school remain strong.

If the family's ability to contribute decreases, Dunn will make every effort to raise the annual level of aid awarded. Likewise, if a family's financial situation improves greatly, the annual grant will be adjusted to reflect the positive gain.

EVALUATING NEED

Dunn School follows the guidelines of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) Principles of Good Practice for Financial Aid Administration. Financial Aid decisions are based on a family's ability to finance their child's education based on the methodology of the School and Student Service for Financial Aid (SSS), a division of Educational Testing Service.

Within the limitations of its budget, and according to its own financial aid policies, Dunn uses the SSS recommendation as a guideline in determining individual awards.

Dunn School has adopted the following policies and computation guidelines:

Parental Obligation

Recognizing that each family bears the primary responsibility for financing a student's education costs, it is the position of Dunn School that biological/legal parents whether separated or divorced retain the obligation to contribute to the education of their children. Expectations are regardless of any legal agreements, including custody, pre-nuptial, alimony, or child support. In the case where a parent is "absent" or his/her parental rights have been terminated, the School must receive a statement to this effect from a lawyer, member of the clergy, school official or other third party for verification.

If a biological/legal parent has remarried, Dunn will require all paperwork, including tax documents, from both individuals, bearing in mind the obligations the other individual might have to his or her natural children.

All forms will be sent to the custodial parent, and the custodial parent should forward them to the non-custodial parent. If the non-custodial parent refuses to submit the necessary information to the Financial Aid Office, the application for aid may not be processed.

Unemployed or Under-employed Parents

When a parent does not work and there are no preschool aged children at home, Dunn School will impute an income for the non-working parent. The imputed income will be equal to the current year upper school day school tuition. If either parent returns to school and is not working, we will impute an income for that parent using the above stated standard.

An exception will be made if a parent is caring for a disabled or critically ill child, parent, or grandparent. Consideration will also be given for a parent that is homeschooling a child.

Multiple Tuition Charging Schools

If one or more child in a family attends a tuition-charging institution, Dunn requires that families apply for aid at each of the institutions their children attend. It is important to note that SSS computes the total funds available for education then divides that amount by the number of children attending tuition-charging schools. If one of the tuition charging schools has lower tuition, Dunn expects that the additional funds are available for Dunn tuition.

Student Assets

Savings, investments, or other assets in a student's name are considered available resources for use in funding a student's education at Dunn. When determining available resources, the students' assets will be equally distributed over their years at Dunn, plus four years of college/university.

Other Financial Resources

Any financial support that may be available beyond the parents' own income and assets must be reported on the PFS and Dunn Parent Questionnaire for consideration by the school. These include resources that might be expected from grandparents or other relatives, church funds, direct scholarship grants, etc. Identified funds will be included in the calculation of family contribution, decreasing the financial need of the student and therefore the amount of a Dunn financial aid award.

Business and or Farm

If either parent owns a business or farm, the business or farm should be listed as an asset on the PFS and the required schedules must be submitted with the Tax Return. Tax documents for partnerships and corporations are also required (Schedule K-1, Form 1065, Form 1120, or Form 1120S).

The Financial Aid Office reserves the right to request additional information, including but not limited to, cash flow statements, balance sheets, and any other information relevant to the business, if necessary to determine financial status.

Business losses and expenses that do not affect cash flow (such as depreciation and home office write-offs) may be disallowed when computing financial need.

Any adjustments in income as a result of these add-backs will be treated as non-taxable income.

AWARD APPEAL PROCESS

While the Financial Aid Committee will consider appeals, it must do so within the limitations of available funding.

Appeals to the Financial Aid Committee must be made prior to the submission of a signed enrollment contract. All appeals must be made in writing with a full explanation of any mitigating circumstances or information not addressed during the initial process. The Committee will review the appeal and notify families of the decision in writing.

PAYMENT PLANS

At the time of enrollment, new and returning families must submit a non-refundable deposit and choose one of the following tuition payment plan options:

1. Payment in full by August 1. The Tuition Refund Plan is optional with this plan.
2. Payment of 70 percent of net tuition by August 1, with the remaining 30 percent due by December 1. Deferral fee of \$1,400 for boarding and \$950 for day. Tuition Refund Plan is required with this plan.
3. Ten-month payment plan with Tuition Management Systems, a division of KeyBank N.A. There is a \$250 enrollment fee and 2% of the net tuition administration fee. The Tuition Refund Plan is required with this plan.

ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS

Presently, Dunn has one Endowed Scholarship for which a student should be named each year. Taking into consideration the criteria listed, a qualified student will be selected from the financial aid list. In the event demonstrated need exceeds the amount of the Scholarship, the remaining tuition balance will be supplemented from the general financial aid budget.

The Paul Overgaag Memorial Scholarship Fund

As an endowed fund, this permanent resource will provide a \$35,000 scholarship to a qualified boarding student on the following basis: 1) The student must meet the Admissions requirements of Dunn School, 2) The student should have demonstrated characteristics of either overcoming substantial challenges in his or her personal life, or having helped others to do so, 3) The student must demonstrate financial need.

NAIS Principles of Good Practice for Financial Aid Administration

Revised and approved by the NAIS board in 2003.

Recognizing that each family bears the primary responsibility for financing a student's education costs, NAIS's Principles of Good Practice for Financial Aid Administration are designed to serve as guideposts in the development of professional policies and orderly procedures among schools. Through these principles, NAIS affirms its belief that the purpose of a financial aid program is to provide monetary assistance to those students who cannot afford the cost of attending an independent school. Furthermore, these principles reflect the standards of equity and fairness NAIS embraces and reassert NAIS's ongoing commitment to access and diversity.

1. The school adheres to local, state, and federal laws and regulations that require non-discriminatory practice in the administration of its financial aid policies.
2. The school operates within the context of both short- and long-range financial aid budget and policy goals.
3. The school uses objective research to measure the effectiveness of its progress towards its goals, and communicates the outcomes as appropriate.
4. The school provides outreach, education, and guidance to students and families on all aspects of its financial aid process and options.
5. The school determines eligibility for admission without regard to a student's application for financial aid.
6. The school commits to providing financial aid dollars to applicants who demonstrate that their family resources are insufficient to meet all or part of the total educational costs.
7. The school continues to provide support to students as long as financial need is demonstrated.
8. The school maintains the same standards of behavior and academic performance for recipients of financial aid as it does for non-recipients.
9. The school enacts documented procedures that ensure a fair, consistent, and equitable assessment of each family's ability to contribute toward educational expenses.
10. The school makes and communicates financial aid decisions in a manner that allows families to make timely, careful, and fully-informed enrollment decisions.
11. The school establishes administrative and accounting procedures that distinguish the school's need-based financial aid program from tuition assistance programs that are not based on financial need.
12. The school safeguards the confidentiality of financial aid applications, records, and decisions.
13. The school supports collaboration between the financial aid office and other offices within the school.