

Tuition Assistance Policy

Institution: Phil & Jennie Gaglardi Academy

1. Purpose and Philosophy

Phil & Jennie Gaglardi Academy is committed to ensuring that our educational community remains accessible to families from diverse financial backgrounds. This policy provides a structured, fair, and confidential process for families with limited financial means to request a reduction in tuition fees.

2. Budgeting and Fund Allocation

The total tuition assistance budget is established annually by the school Board.

- **Pre-Year Allocation Cap:** To maintain fiscal stability, a maximum of **90%** of the total budget will be allocated to applicants prior to the start of the school year.
- **Emergency Reserve Fund:** The remaining **10%** of the budget is strictly reserved for "Emergency Funds." These funds are held for families who experience unforeseen financial crises (e.g., medical emergencies or sudden job loss) during the academic year.

3. Updated Tiered Assistance System

This system uses a dual-component approach: an **Assessment Rubric** to determine the initial support level and a **Step-Down Model** to transition families toward self-sufficiency.

3.1 The Step-Down Support Model

Support is designed as a temporary bridge. To ensure the fund remains sustainable, the percentage of the awarded "Tier" amount decreases each consecutive year a family is on the program.

Program Year	Assistance Level	Rationale
Year 1	Max Support 50% of Gross Tuition	Initial crisis support and adjustment period.
Year 2	Max Support 40% of Gross Tuition	Structured reduction as the family stabilizes.
Year 3	Max Support 30% of Gross Tuition	Final year of standard support.
Year 4+	Exit / Appeal Only	Support expires unless a <i>new</i> catastrophic event occurs. "Families appealing for support beyond Year 3 must submit a Financial Recovery Plan . This document should outline the steps the family is taking toward financial independence (e.g., career training, debt restructuring) to justify continued use of school community funds."

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3.2 Financial Assessment Rubric

The Finance Committee uses a weighted points system to categorize families into Tiers. This ensures the 90% budget cap is allocated to those with the highest verified need.

Assessment Factor	Scoring Criteria	Weighting
Household Income	Total Gross Income compared to BC Low-Income Cut-Off (LICO) for the specific household size.	50%
Income-to-Expense Ratio	Verified fixed costs (housing, utilities, transportation) exceeding 45% of net income.	20%
Household Size	Consideration for families with 3+ children currently enrolled at the Academy.	15%
Extraordinary Factors	Documented medical expenses, elder care, or significant high-interest debt service.	15%

Refined Tier Breakdown (Based on Rubric Score)

- **Tier 1 (High Support):** Score of 85–100 pts. Eligible for up to **50%** tuition reduction.
- **Tier 2 (Moderate Support):** Score of 60–84 pts. Eligible for up to **30%** tuition reduction.
- **Tier 3 (Basic Support):** Score of 40–59 pts. Eligible for up to **15%** tuition reduction.

4. Application Procedures

- **Annual Reapplication:** Assistance is not automatically renewed. Parents/Guardians must apply every school year.
- **Deadline:** All completed applications and supporting documents (including CRA Notices of Assessment for both parents) must be submitted by **May 31st**.
- **Strict Processing Rule: Incomplete applications will not be processed.** It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all signatures and tax documents are included.

5. Approval Process

To ensure fairness, confidentiality, and fiscal responsibility, all applications for the **Tuition Assistance Program** shall be processed according to the following formal sequence:

- **Submission:** The completed application, including all required financial documentation, is submitted for formal review.
- **Finance Committee Review:** The Finance Committee conducts a preliminary assessment of the application to determine financial need based on the established rubric.

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- **Support Recommendation:** Based on the assessment, the Finance Committee issues a formal recommendation on the specific amount of support to be allocated or, if the criteria are not met, a recommendation for denial.
- **Anonymization:** To maintain objectivity and applicant privacy, the application is converted into a "blind" board copy, ensuring all personally identifiable information is redacted prior to Board review.
- **Board Adjudication:** The Board of Directors reviews the anonymized application and the Finance Committee's recommendation to provide final approval or denial of the assistance.
- **Notification:** Following the Board's decision, the Finance Committee—coordinated through the Business Manager—will formally contact the applicant family to communicate the results of the process.

6. Review, Notification, and Acceptance

- **Notification Date:** Applicants will be notified of the Board's decision regarding their allotment by **June 20th**.
- **Acceptance:** Families must formally accept the allotment and meet with the Business Manager to finalize a new payment schedule within 10 business days of notification.

7. Ongoing Eligibility & Requirements

To remain in the program, families and students must adhere to the following:

- **Student Attendance:** Students receiving support are expected to maintain a 90% attendance rate. Consistent unexcused absences may result in the revocation of assistance.
- **Account Standing:** The family's portion of tuition must remain current. Failure to maintain payments in good standing will result in a loss of the discount and may jeopardize a family's re-enrollment for the following school year.
- **Reporting Changes:** If a family's financial situation improves mid-year, they are expected to declare it so that funds can be reallocated to others in need.