

CHESTERFIELD MONTESSORI SCHOOL

TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM 2012-2013

TUITION ASSISTANCE POLICY

CMS is committed to providing an authentic Montessori program for children of diverse backgrounds. Acceptance of students is made independent from tuition assistance requirements. To ensure the long-term quality of the education we offer, we feel it is essential to maintain racial, social and economic diversity.

Chesterfield Montessori School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, tuition assistance programs and any school-administered programs.

FUNDS

The Head of School will identify a dollar amount, not to exceed 5% per year, from the Operating Fund to be dedicated annually to financial assistance as part of the budget approved by the Board of Directors.

Additionally, any restricted contributions to CMS, earmarked for Tuition Assistance, will be added to the funds available for tuition assistance awards. At its discretion, the Tuition Assistance Committee will award all or part of the available funds in a given school year.

Any amounts not awarded will be returned to the Operating Fund, except that any Tuition Assistance Restricted Contributions not awarded will carry over to the next school year. Such contributions, together with any interest earned on them, will be made available for tuition assistance awards for the following school year.

TUITION ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE

The CMS Tuition Assistance Committee (TAC) consists of three members, including the Business Manager and two parents nominated by the Head of School. Each TAC Member shall serve for a term of one year. Committee members may be re-nominated for an unlimited number of successive terms. The purpose of this Committee is to administer and approve the CMS Tuition Assistance Program. Committee members sign confidentiality agreements to assure that all applications are handled in confidence. The Committee submits recommendations for tuition assistance to the CMS Board of Directors for final approval.

CRITERIA FOR AWARDS

Tuition assistance awards are based on a family's demonstrated financial need, number of children enrolled at CMS, commitment to the school and the availability of tuition assistance funding. An independent firm, FAST (Financial Aid for School Tuition) by Independent School Management, which specializes in the evaluation of tuition assistance applications, analyzes the financial criteria for each applicant. The FAST computation helps the Committee determine the amount of need for tuition assistance for each family. This information, along with the other award criteria, is used to make an award recommendation.

Once an award is granted, the school reserves the right to withhold it (1) if the students fails to perform current schoolwork at an acceptable level to the school; (2) if the student's or parent's behavior or lack of cooperation is unacceptable to the school; (3) if tuition and/or fee payments are overdue; or (4) if the student leaves the school.

PROCEDURE TO APPLY FOR ASSISTANCE

Families wishing to apply for tuition assistance must do so annually by submitting the materials listed below.

- ❑ Complete the FAST application online and submit the required \$36.00 processing fee by February 21, 2012. See the instructions below to access the application.
- ❑ Complete and return the CMS Application for Tuition Assistance by February 21, 2012.
- ❑ Complete and return to CMS by February 21, 2012 a brief statement describing your intended commitment to CMS, committee or volunteer work, and any other relevant information the Tuition Assistance Committee should consider when reviewing your application.
- ❑ Provide CMS a copy of your 2011 Income Tax Form 1040, as submitted to the IRS, by February 21, 2012.

Procedures to Access FAST Application:

Parents are asked to access the FAST Program website specifically for CMS applicants by clicking the FAST link on this page of the school's website: <http://cmsstl.org/FinancialAid.htm>. Once there, new applicants should click on the Start Application button, while families who have already registered should click on the Resume Application button. All financial information should be entered directly through the secure server. Space is also provided to fill out additional information that may be pertinent to the application. Additionally, a copy of the most recent tax return should be mailed directly to FAST in the enclosed envelope.

To be considered for tuition assistance, students must have applied and been admitted to Chesterfield Montessori School. Since the determination of the award is based in part on the analysis of the information submitted concerning the family's ability to pay school fees, it is important to have current and accurate information about family income and assets. This information is maintained confidential and is reviewed by the Tuition Assistance Committee and the Board of Directors only. If parents are separated or divorced, it is important that both parties submit a financial statement.

Once we have received evaluation reports from FAST, applications will be reviewed by the Tuition Assistance Committee. All decisions will be communicated to parents within two weeks of receiving all of the documents. Awards granted are valid for the 2012-2013 academic school year, September 2012 and through May 2013. If you have any questions concerning this process, please contact Amy at 314-469-7150.