

Cherokee Christian Schools and Financial Assistance

This article was written with the goal of helping current Cherokee Christian families and prospective families understand the schools' philosophy of financial assistance through a simple question and answer format

Q: What is the purpose of the school providing financial assistance?

A: The mission of the school is to partner with parents to provide a Christ-centered education for children. In order to further the mission, the school recognizes that the majority of families in the community are not in a financial position that enables them to afford CCS' full tuition. Therefore, a financial assistance program was established to assess the needs of individual families and create a tuition level that enabled more children to attend the school.

Q: Who can apply for financial assistance?

A: Only those who cannot afford to pay the full tuition should apply. This is a needs-based program and not an opportunity for any family to apply simply to see if they can receive a reduced tuition.

Q: I have noticed that the school uses the term financial assistance on some occasions and on others, the term scholarships is used. Is there a difference?

A: No, for our school the terms are essentially interchangeable. All families who have been approved for financial assistance, receive a scholarship which reduces their portion of the tuition, with the scholarship covering the balance.

Q: How does the school determine if a family should receive a scholarship and what amount the scholarship should be?

A: The school has set thresholds for income, assets, debts, and other financial metrics which delineate eligibility for scholarships and the amounts.

Q: How do I apply for financial assistance/scholarships?

A: An application is found on the school's website, or a parent may contact the business office at the school's main phone number for direction. Applications made in January and February are typically assessed and awards made by April. Applications received through the spring and summer will be assessed on a rolling basis.

Q: Once a family is approved for financial assistance/scholarship, is there a guarantee that they will receive financial assistance every year thereafter?

A: There are no guarantees that a family will receive a scholarship in the years that follow the initial approval. While the school desires children on scholarship to attend for many years, factors outside the control of the school may limit the availability of scholarships. Applications for the renewal of scholarship awards must be made each January and new assessments are usually completed by April.

Q: In addition to a family's finances, are there other factors that influence the approval of a scholarship or the renewal of a scholarship for another year?

A: Yes, there is an agreement that is signed by the parent when they accept the scholarship offer. The following points represent part of the agreement:

- The school must continue to receive parental support and cooperation (Note Family School Covenant).
- The student must show consistent and willing observance of school rules.
- The student must be engaged in the classroom and respect the teacher's direction.
- The high school service hour requirement must be current for the year the student is in attendance.
- The student must agree that their education (and all that is required to succeed in their education) takes precedence over extracurricular activities or work outside of school.

Q: If I am currently receiving a scholarship for one of my children, can I assign that money to a different child in my family?

A: No, scholarships are awarded by the school for specific students within the family and is not an entitled dollar amount that the family can move from one child to another.

Q: If my family is currently receiving a scholarship for more than one of my children and I decide to remove one of my children from the school, will the total amount of scholarships for my family be reduced?

A: Yes, the total amount of financial assistance/scholarship for a family is determined by assessing the amount of tuition the family can afford for all the students who are receiving a scholarship in that family. Removing the

parent's expense of one student at the school may result in the parents paying a readjusted higher tuition for the student who remains in the school.

Q: I understand that because I have received a scholarship, the school is not receiving the full tuition amount for my student. How does the school get reimbursed for the difference between the tuition I am paying and the full tuition the school typically charges?

A: The school is reimbursed, or made whole, when we have available funds from two sources. The first is the Goal Scholarship Program. Goal Scholarship monies are raised through a tax credit program sponsored by the state of Georgia. The second source of funds are gifts that the school receives designated specifically to provide financial assistance/scholarships. It is important to note that these two sources, used to offset losses to the school from less than full pay tuition families, are limited.