

Frequently Asked Financial Questions By Parents

- 1. How is tuition determined for our schools?** A diocesan committee comprised of principals, the superintendent and the associate superintendent of schools, and staff with financial expertise, propose tuition levels for the schools. The Proposal is then given to the bishop for his approval.
- 2. How are teacher salaries determined?** Prior to 2008, teachers were on a traditional teachers pay scale. Since the financial crisis in 2008, teachers in our system were given minimal raises because tuition levels were not increased proportionally. These minimal increases did not keep up with the cost of living. Recently, teachers in the diocese have been placed back on a scale.
- 3. I have heard that Catholic school teachers make more money than public school teachers, because they work in a private school. Is this true?** No. Most teachers and principals in our system make less than their public school and private school counterparts. This is because we are a tuition driven system and teacher salaries are determined by the amount of tuition we can charge.
- 4. Why did the tuition scale add an additional tier for the 2018-2019 school year?** The cost tier, or tier 1, was added to the scale this year to show the real cost a school incurs to educate a student in our school. This average amount has not been calculated since 2008. Therefore, no family has been required to pay the cost to educate a student in our system since 2008. Thus, this tier was calculated so that the tuition scale could reflect the true cost to educate a student.
- 5. Why are parents now being asked to pay the cost when the system has gotten by for so many years charging parent less than it costs to educate their children?** Many of you have read or heard media reports that there is a teacher shortage in Utah and that public schools have recently increased teacher pay by as much as 10%. For example, this year a starting teacher in the diocese received \$30,152 while a starting teacher in the public system received approximately \$41,000 on average. This low rate of pay for Catholic school teachers has kept tuition lower. If we continue this way, the wage gap between public/private and Catholic teachers will grow even greater. More importantly, we need to be able to pay our teachers a just and livable wage so that our talented teachers stay with us for many years.
- 6. Why can't the fundraising we do go towards paying teachers more?** Our school does not make enough in fundraisers each year to pay for this needed increase in teacher salaries. Additionally, fundraising is not a reliable source of income. If we fell short in any given year, we could not pay our teachers. In reality, fundraising efforts are needed to help with the upkeep of the school such as repairing roofs, heating systems, etc., and to purchase educational materials and equipment. Most of our schools rely on fundraising to meet their operational budget.

7. **What if I cannot pay afford to pay any of the tiers listed or what if we were already receiving a reduction in tuition?** If you feel that you cannot afford any of the tiers or you already receive a tuition reduction, you may have your tuition level evaluated by filling out a FACTS form. FACTS is a company our school uses to help the administration determine the tuition level that you can afford.
8. **Does this FACTS Company provide the school with money to help with tuition reduction?** No. FACTS is only a tool that the school uses to determine your tuition level based on your income and size of family.
9. **Tuition just goes up every year; I may have to remove my child from the school.** Our school will work with you to keep your children in the school. Tuition has gone up every year. It must, in order for us to pay our teachers and staff and for us to be able to hire new teachers in a competitive environment. We have always worked with families to pay what they can afford. This is still the case.
10. **Why doesn't the Diocese give the schools money for teachers' salaries, or fund scholarships for students?** Currently, the Diocese annually assesses most Catholic parishes a portion of their income. This assessment goes into a fund for Catholic schools. All schools may write grants for emergency funding should a special need arise. Additional money is distributed to schools based on their financial need. The Skaggs Tuition Assistance Program also provides some financial assistance to schools for families that are below the poverty level. In order to receive this assistance, families must be referred by a principal or pastor.