Diocese of Erie
P.O. Box 10397
Erie, Pennsylvania 16514-0397

Tuition Assistance Program Overview

The Catholic School Tuition Assistance Programs are designed to provide tuition aid for students enrolled in a Catholic school in the Diocese of Erie.

The following information will familiarize you with these programs and answer many of your questions.

STAR Foundation

The STAR Foundation is a scholarship program that is funded through business contributions. Companies may elect to have part of their state business tax go to this scholarship fund. When companies contribute to the STAR Foundation, they may limit the use of the money to a specific school or they can make the donation eligible for all Catholic schools. Money that is designated to a specific school must be utilized at that school. The income eligibility limits for families are set by the state. The STAR Foundation then distributes the funds directly to financially eligible families as tuition scholarships. Because of the limited availability of funding, a family that meets the income guidelines may not receive an award. For the 2020-21 school year, in excess of $1.1 million dollars was distributed to qualifying students.

Bishop's Tuition Assistance Program

The Bishop's Tuition Assistance Program is a needs-based diocesan scholarship program that aids students attending a Catholic high school or elementary school in the Diocese of Erie. Scholarship awards from the Bishop's Tuition Assistance Program may be used at any Catholic school in the Diocese of Erie. For the 2020-21 school year, $200,000 was distributed to elementary students. For diocesan high school students, $250,000 was awarded.



Application Process

An applicant's need is determined by a formula that takes into consideration many factors, such as family income and expense items. All applications are processed by an independent company which allows the diocese to be unbiased in the decision process.

Families who receive a STAR Foundation award may also receive a Bishop's Tuition Assistance award. Receiving an award last year does not guarantee that the same family will receive an award this year. **All families are encouraged to apply.**

Applications are available at the school your child will attend. You may also print a copy from the diocesan web site at:
https://www.eriercd.org/schools/tuition.html

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Frequently Asked Questions

Who is eligible to receive assistance?

Any parent or guardian with a child in pre-school to 12th grade who is registered at a Catholic school within the Diocese of Erie is eligible to apply for aid. All families are encouraged to submit an application.

How are applications evaluated?

Awards will be based on a formula that includes the ranking of financial need of the applicant pool. The money is distributed to designated schools within the Diocese of Erie. An independent third party will process the applications, verify the accuracy, and enter the applicant information into a database. The applications are ranked based on a uniform ranking criterion relative to the total applicant pool for the year.

When is the application deadline?

Completed applications, including required financial documents must be postmarked by March 1 for Erie high school applicants. The deadline for all other applications is April 15. Late applications cannot be accepted.

If I am denied aid this year, can I appeal the decision?

Although all decisions for the diocesan programs are final, the family may apply for tuition asistance at their respective school.





If I do not receive aid this year, will I be eligible next year?

Applications are reviewed each year and evaluated based on the financial needs of the applicant pool for that year. It is necessary to apply each year.

I have more than one child registered in Catholic schools. How many can receive an award?

Families with more than one child enrolled in Catholic schools can apply for assistance for each child. All children to be considered for an award may be included on **one** application.

When will I find out if my child qualifies for an award?

All families who apply will be notified by mail by June 1. It is not necessary to call prior to that date since no information will be available until June 1.

Do I have to apply every year?

Families must apply each year because awards are based on a formula that ranks the financial needs of the applicant pool for a given year.

Will my personal financial information be kept confidential?

All applications and information received for aid consideration will be kept confidential and used only for evaluation purposes.