

**National Association of Independent Schools**  
**Principles of Good Practice**  
**Financial Aid Administration**

Recognizing that each family bears the primary responsibility for financing a student's education costs, NAIS's "Principles of Good Practice for Financial Aid Administration" are designed to serve as guideposts in the development of professional policies and orderly procedures among schools. Through these principles, NAIS affirms its belief that the purpose of a financial aid program is to provide monetary assistance to those students who cannot afford the cost of attending an independent school. Furthermore, these principles reflect the standards of equity and fairness NAIS embraces and reassert NAIS's ongoing commitment to access and diversity.

1. The school adheres to local, state, and federal laws and regulations that require non-discriminatory practice in the administration of its financial aid policies.
2. The school uses objective research to measure the effectiveness of its progress toward its goals, and communicates the outcomes as appropriate.
3. The school operates within the context of both short- and long-range financial aid budget and policy goals.
4. The school provides outreach, education and guidance to students and families on all aspects of its financial aid process and options.
5. The school determines eligibility for admission without regard to a student's application for financial aid.
6. The school commits to providing financial aid dollars to applicants who demonstrate that their family resources are insufficient to meet all or part of the total education costs.
7. The school continues to provide support to students as long as financial need is demonstrated.
8. The school maintains the same standards of behavior and academic performance for recipients of financial aid as it does for non-recipients.
9. The school enacts documented procedures that ensure a fair, consistent and equitable assessment of each family's ability to contribute toward educational expenses.
10. The school makes and communicates financial aid decisions in a manner that allows families to make timely, careful, and fully informed enrollment decisions.
11. The school establishes administrative and accounting procedures that distinguish the school's need-based financial aid program from tuition assistance programs that are not based on financial need.
12. The school safeguards the confidentiality of financial aid applications, records, and decisions.
13. The school supports collaboration between the financial aid office and other offices within the school.

# FINANCIAL AID POLICY STATEMENT

The financial aid program shall be compatible with the Policy Statement of Mount Pisgah Christian School, which has been adopted by the Board of Trustees. The school supports the National Association of Independent School's Principles of Good Practice of Financial Aid Administration.

## **PURPOSE OF FINANCIAL AID**

The primary purpose of financial aid shall be to provide financial assistance to parents of academically qualified children who have been accepted to the school and who would not be able to attend the school without such financial aid.

Additional purposes of financial aid shall be:

- to support and implement the school's commitment to serve academically qualified young people from all segments of the community
- to support the school's philosophy and mission and to enhance the school's long-range viability

## **CRITERIA FOR FINANCIAL AID**

All grants will be based on demonstrated financial need. Financial aid will be granted in the following order of priorities:

1. currently enrolled financial aid students
2. currently enrolled students seeking aid for the first time
3. already accepted new applicants applying for aid

Financial aid grants are available to qualifying students in grades K-12. No performance based financial aid is available.

## **AMOUNT OF FINANCIAL AID**

Strong preference is given to the awarding of partial financial aid grants. Parents have the obligation to finance their child's education to the maximum extent that they are able. Financial aid shall not exceed the student's tuition.

Financial need shall be demonstrated to the Director of Finance by the report from the School Scholarship Service (SSS), filed by the parents with this service, and any other financial documents as requested. These reports and requested supplemental information, if needed, shall be used confidentially as guidelines in determining the amount of aid granted.

## **APPLICATION AND AWARD PROCEDURE**

Applicants for aid will file the Parent's Financial Statement (PFS) with the SSS and other information as may be required, to the financial director.

The financial aid committee will consider all pertinent information made available to it by Director of Finance and make an award that is within the financial aid budget and that follows, as far as possible, the SSS recommendations. The information submitted to the committee by the Director of Finance shall be kept confidential and consist only of that information pertinent to the award decision.

All grants are for one year and must be reapplied for each year, following the procedure above. In the case of a current financial aid student's reapplication for a grant, the financial aid committee will consider, in addition to need, the applicant's academic progress and overall contribution to the school.

Generally, applicants will be advised in writing no later than May 15th whether an award has been made and, if so, the amount of the award.

## **FINANCIAL AID COMMITTEE**

There shall be a standing committee called the financial aid committee made up of the School Business Manager, Director of Admission, Director of Finance and Head of School.

This committee shall operate according to the school's policy and annually approve all financial aid awards. The Director of Finance will serve as chair of this committee.

All information considered by the financial aid committee shall be treated as confidential.

## **DIVORCED AND SEPARATED FAMILIES**

In cases of divorce or separation, both natural parents are required to file an application for aid. The custodial parent will file the standard PFS with the SSS in Princeton, and the non-custodial parent will file the PFS for Divorced or Separated Parents directly with the school's financial aid office. Other financial documentation may be required in order to make a financial aid decision.

The school will not be bound by any divorce agreement specifying a parent's responsibility for educational expenses since it was not a party to the agreement nor represented at the hearing.

In cases where one parent has had no contact with the student for more than five years, the requirement that both parents file may be waived.

## **VOLUNTARY REDUCTION OF INCOME**

The lifestyle and economic changes brought about by a family's voluntary reduction of income will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

## **APPEAL PROCESS**

Families who wish to formally appeal a financial aid decision should do so to the Head of School, who will then review the case.