

FINANCIAL AID at RUFFING MONTESSORI SCHOOL 2009-10 ACADEMIC YEAR

Ruffing Montessori School has established a financial aid program to assist families that are not able to manage the full cost of tuition using one of the payment plan options offered by the School. Ruffing's financial aid program is compatible with the mission, values and goals approved by its Board of Trustees. The School's policy is also consistent with the National Association of Independent Schools' Principles of Good Practice of Financial Aid Administration.

PURPOSE OF FINANCIAL AID

The primary purpose of financial aid is to provide financial assistance to families of students who have been accepted to the school and who demonstrate financial need. Additional purposes of financial aid are to support and implement the school's commitment to socio-economic diversity, and to enhance the school's long-range viability by maximizing enrollment at various levels.

CRITERIA FOR FINANCIAL AID

All financial aid awards are based on demonstrated financial need. (No performance-based financial aid or scholarships for specific abilities or talents is available.) Only families whose accounts are in good standing with the School's business office will be considered for financial aid. The school does not charge a fee to apply for financial aid.

AMOUNT OF FINANCIAL AID

Recognizing that each family has an obligation to finance their child's education to the maximum extent that they are able, only partial financial aid grants are awarded by Ruffing. All Ruffing families pay a portion of their child's education costs and financial aid shall typically not exceed 50% of tuition. Financial assistance may only be applied toward tuition. It may not be applied toward fees, class trips, or extra-curricular activities.

Financial need shall be demonstrated by the report from the School & Student Service for Financial Aid (SSS) produced as a result of the parents' application with the service, by the 1040 tax forms if requested by Ruffing, and any other financial documents as requested. The SSS reports and any other supplemental information shall be used confidentially as guidelines in determining the amount of aid awarded.

APPLICATION AND AWARD PROCEDURE

Applications for financial aid may be requested from the business office after December 1. Applicants for aid for the 2009-10 school year must apply to the School & Student Services for Financial Aid (postmarked or completed on-line) by **February 6, 2009**. Other information may be required and requested by the school's financial aid committee to assist in the decision-making process.

The financial aid committee will consider all pertinent information made available to it to determine 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 shall be kept confidential and consist only of the information pertinent to the award decision.

All awards 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 assistance, the financial aid committee will consider, in addition to need, the applicant's overall progress and contribution to the school.

DIVORCED & SEPARATED FAMILIES

In cases of divorce or separation, both natural parents are required to file an application for aid. Other financial documentation may be required 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 in writing to the financial aid committee.