



## **Information About the Tuition Assistance Program at Town School for Boys 2021-22 School Year**

Town School for Boys is committed to attracting and creating a school community that reflects the diversity of the San Francisco Bay Area. We value the inclusion of families with a broad range of economic diversity, understanding that these students and their families enhance the educational experience and the culture of the school for all of us. Through our Tuition Assistance Program we offer financial support to families who embrace the school's mission, and who qualify for tuition assistance, in order to help them finance a Town School education.

### **Step by Step Guide on How to Apply For Tuition Assistance**

#### **By January 31**

- File your completed Parents' Financial Statement (PFS) directly with School and Student Services (SSS, an organization of the National Association of Independent Schools which is used by K-12 schools to help determine a family's ability to pay school costs). The PFS asks for information such as family size, total income, savings, investments, other assets such as home equity, indebtedness, medical and dental expenses, and any unusual expenses.

All SSS forms are available online at <http://sss.nais.org/parents/>. The website contains a wealth of information and will walk you through the necessary steps to fill out the forms, and to submit your tax returns (see below). You may also contact their customer service center with any questions at 800-344-8328, or email them at [sss@nais.org](mailto:sss@nais.org).

- The form will be available on the SSS website by October 2, 2020 for applications due January 31, 2021.
- Please complete only one PFS if you are applying to other Bay Area independent schools.
- The Town School for Boys code is 7708.

### **By February 15**

Submit the following supplemental financial records to the SSS:

- Copy of your prior year federal income tax return (Form 1040). For example, by February 15, 2021 please submit your 2020 tax return.
- Copy of all current supplemental schedules to your Form 1040
- Business/Farm Financial Statement (if applicable)
- Copies of all W2's and 1099's

Families will receive a report from SSS that provides a recommendation on the total amount the family can afford to pay for all children they have in tuition-charging schools. Town School will reduce that number with a Bay Area cost of living adjustment for San Francisco. Families should submit applications by the deadlines noted above. The availability of funds is limited after initial awards for tuition assistance are allocated and applications and financial records received after the deadlines may not receive full consideration.

The **Tuition Assistance Program Committee** (comprised of the Head of School, the Chief Financial Officer, the Director of Admission and Tuition Assistance, and the Director of Community Building and Inclusion) will review the SSS evaluation and each family's application in order to determine if and what level of tuition assistance the school can offer.

A family's acceptance letter will contain the dollar amount of tuition assistance the school is able to offer. Although a family may receive an acceptance letter and qualify for tuition assistance, funds may not be available. In this case the family will also receive notification in their acceptance letter that they are waitlisted for tuition assistance funds and if additional funding becomes available the family will be notified. Families who are waitlisted for tuition assistance are encouraged to contact the Director of Admission and Tuition Assistance if they wish to remain on the waitlist for funds.

Note: Decisions about admission and tuition assistance are considered independently and confidentially. All financial documents received for the Tuition Assistance Program are confidential and are reviewed only by the Tuition Assistance Program Committee.

## **Frequently Asked Questions About Our Tuition Assistance Program**

### **Will applying for tuition assistance affect a student's chance of admission to the school?**

No. Decisions about admissions and tuition assistance are made independently and confidentially.

### **What are typical ranges of tuition assistance that a qualified family receives?**

Families receive tuition assistance ranging from 5% to 98% of the tuition cost, based on demonstrated need.

**When should I apply?**

Please apply at the time of your *initial* application to Town School if you feel that tuition assistance is appropriate for your family. If you apply at a later time, funds may not be available.

**If we did not apply for tuition assistance in a prior year, may we apply in subsequent years?**

Families may apply in subsequent years if there is an adverse change to their financial situation. Awards will be made based on eligibility and budget availability.

**What factors determine a family's eligibility?**

Eligibility is determined by the School and Student Service for Financial Aid (SSS) of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), a service used by independent schools nationwide to help assess a family's ability to pay for independent school tuition. Using the service provided by SSS helps to ensure that a family's request for tuition assistance is treated objectively and professionally.

SSS computes a family's recommended tuition contribution based on a standard calculation that considers gross taxable income (based on the tax forms you submit), assets, family size, and number of children in tuition-charging schools.

**Who is receiving tuition assistance?**

During the 2020-2021 school year, 19% of our families will receive tuition assistance funds. The Tuition Assistance Program comprises approximately 12% of the school's operating budget. The Board of Trustees has approved long-term funding for our Tuition Assistance Program which allows for increases each year to ensure we support families who demonstrate the need during their time at Town School. Awards will be based on eligibility and budget availability.

**How does Town School fund its Tuition Assistance Program?**

The funds to support our Tuition Assistance Program come from the following:

- Fundraising through the Parents' Association
- Funds from endowment income
- Operating budget

**When do we find out if we will receive tuition assistance?**

For new families, the decisions and the corresponding tuition assistance (if applicable) are included in your admissions decision letters, which are mailed in March. Current families are notified of tuition assistance decisions in March as well.

**Will a family receive tuition assistance for the entire time they are at Town School?**

We are committed to offering tuition assistance to families throughout their enrollment at Town, provided they submit necessary written documentation and demonstrate continued need on an annual basis. If your family's financial circumstances remain unchanged from the prior year, the school will renew your tuition assistance award.

**Do tuition assistance levels increase commensurate with all tuition increases?**

Families should anticipate that tuition at Town School increases each year. From 2010 - 2020, tuition increases have averaged approximately 4% per year. We make every attempt to maintain tuition assistance increases from year to year for families who qualify.

**What about single families and divorced families?**

We believe that both parents are responsible for the educational expenses of their children, to the extent that they are financially able. Town School requires families to submit financial information from all adults living in the students' household(s). If parents are divorced, separated, have never been married, and/or are remarried, all parents and including step-parents must submit financial information. In the case of divorce, we take into account parents' and step-parents' financial commitments to their other children.

**Are we eligible for tuition assistance if only one parent works?**

In families with only one working parent, the family is eligible for tuition assistance if the parent who is not working outside the home is either caring for non-school age family members or is actively seeking work. It is our expectation that both parents are employed unless they meet one of these two conditions.

**What costs are covered by tuition assistance?**

Tuition assistance covers tuition, lunch, books, technology fees, activity fees and outdoor education trips. The costs of the Extended Day Program is reduced at the same percentage as tuition assistance. Tuition assistance funds also are used to ensure every family has equal access to all Town School activities like athletics, special events, and parent programs.

**What are our options if we do not qualify for tuition assistance?**

Town School makes the following interest free payment plans available to all families through TADS for a small annual enrollment fee - currently \$45 per year:

- Twelve installments – Twelve monthly installments starting on July 1 and ending on June 1
- Ten installments – Ten monthly installments starting on July 1 and ending on April 1
- Two installments – 60% due July 1<sup>st</sup> and 40% due January 1 (**No enrollment fee**)

**What if our financial circumstances change?**

Town School is committed to working with families who experience unexpected or significant financial change. We encourage you to contact the school as soon as it becomes apparent that modification to your tuition payment plan or tuition assistance may be needed. If you receive tuition assistance and have a positive change in your financial situation, you are obligated to inform the Business Office promptly for a review.

**Do you expect families who receive tuition assistance to support fundraising at Town School?**

All families at Town School are asked to support Annual Giving and to participate in our fundraising events to the extent they are able by volunteering, attending or purchasing items. Such support is a welcome demonstration of commitment to the school from all of our families. While it is natural to

assume a small gift will not make a difference, we strive for 100% participation from our parent body for purposes of pursuing grants and foundation donations. Therefore, it is really true that every gift, no matter what size, does count.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions:

**Brooke Jenkins**, Director of Admission and Tuition Assistance, at 415-746-1151 or [jenkins@townschool.com](mailto:jenkins@townschool.com), or **Flora Mugambi-Mutungu**, Directory of Community Building and Inclusion, 415-746-1135 or [mugambi@townschool.com](mailto:mugambi@townschool.com).