



COMMUNITY  
SCHOOL

# How to Apply for Financial Aid

Community School offers limited need-based financial aid. Please follow the guidelines below to submit your application. We have also included an information sheet from School and Student Services, as well as answers to frequently asked questions about Community School's financial aid process.

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1. Complete the Parents' Financial Statement (PFS) provided by School and Student Services for Financial Aid (SSS). Link to SSS from the financial aid page of our school website at <https://communityschool.net/admissions/tuition/tuition-assistance-programs/> or go directly to the SSS website at <https://www.solutionsbysss.com/>.
2. In the school section of the PFS, insert our school name and code (Community School, 2683).
3. Fill out the PFS form completely. Any blanks will delay the processing of your form. You will need your 2020 tax information when you complete the PFS. **If your 2020 tax information is not yet available, you can estimate your answers based on your 2020 W2 forms. However, your PFS will not be complete until you upload your 2020 return.**
4. SSS offers detailed instructions for completing the PFS on their website. You can find a step-by-step online workbook and on-demand webinars at <https://www.solutionsbysss.com/parents>. SSS also offers additional assistance through its helpline at 800-344-8328.
5. SSS will charge you a nonrefundable \$49 processing fee at the time you submit the PFS unless you qualify for a fee waiver. SSS uses the income and asset information in the financial aid application itself to assess the family situation and automatically applies a fee waiver if the family qualifies. Qualifying families will simply bypass all payment screens when their PFS is complete. SSS uses the income guidelines for the federal free lunch program to determine whether a family might qualify for a fee waiver.
6. **Deadlines: File your PFS by March 5, 2021. We will notify you about any financial aid award by March 31, 2021.** Ninety percent (90%) of our financial aid funds will be awarded in March. If you miss the application deadline, you risk receiving a smaller award or no award for 2021-2022.
7. You can check the processing status of your financial aid application and view your Family Report on the SSS website. Note: Families that applied previously and requested a report should receive an email communication from SSS letting them know when their "Family Report" is available.
8. After you submit your PFS, you can email [patrickc@communityschool.net](mailto:patrickc@communityschool.net) to verify that your application has registered in Community School's SSS account.
9. Applying for financial aid does not guarantee eligibility. All information regarding financial aid is handled with strict confidentiality. If you have any questions regarding financial aid, please contact [patrickc@communityschool.net](mailto:patrickc@communityschool.net).

Please note that applications to scholarship foundations under the VEISTCP program are separate from Community School's financial aid program. The VEISTCP foundation application process takes place later in the year, and students must be enrolled at Community School in order to participate. Visit the financial aid page of our website or contact the Admissions Director for more information.

# APPLYING FOR FINANCIAL AID FOR THE 2021-22 ACADEMIC YEAR

We partner with School and Student Services (SSS) in our financial aid process. To begin your financial aid application, you will complete SSS's Parents' Financial Statement (PFS).

The PFS is a comprehensive application that will take some time to complete. Give yourself the time you need by not waiting until the deadline to begin. You'll need your 2020 tax return before beginning the PFS. We also recommend that you review the wide range of materials that SSS has put together to help families with the financial aid process. They can be found at [solutionsbysss.com/parents](https://solutionsbysss.com/parents).

**We will communicate our financial aid decision to you.** To make our decision, we use the information from the PFS as a starting point but also consider our school policy, practices, and available budget.



## HOW TO COMPLETE THE PARENTS' FINANCIAL STATEMENT (PFS)

### ONLINE

- Beginning October 2, 2020, go to <https://sss.secure.force.com/familyportal>.
- Create your PFS Online account with your email address and a password. If you applied for financial aid last year, simply login to the PFS Online as a Returning Family, using the email address and password you set up last year.
- Begin a PFS for Academic Year 2021-22. You can log out of the PFS Online at any time, then return later to complete it.
- After you have pressed submit, you'll be brought to a payment screen. The fee of \$49 is nonrefundable. Once your PFS is submitted, it cannot be withdrawn from the SSS system.
- After you pay for and submit your PFS, you'll have access in the PFS Online to a section called "My Documents." You can upload the additional documents we require there.



## HOW TO SUBMIT ADDITIONAL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS ONLINE

- Prepare your documents to be uploaded. Make sure the documents are on your computer, each saved as a separate file. Remove any security or password protection from your document files.
- Return to the PFS Online and login.
- Select the Academic Year 2021-22 button.
- From the PFS Online, click on the "My Documents" tab.
- On the "My Documents" page, you will see an upload button or a hyperlink next to a specific document name in the "Required Documents" section of the PFS. Clicking either the upload button or a hyperlink will lead you through a series of steps allowing you to name, locate and save the file.
- Once you have uploaded a document, the date will appear in the "Date Uploaded" column within minutes of the upload. Some tax documents go through a verification process. It can take up to 48 hours for the verification process to complete.

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If you wish to submit required documents by mail, send to School and Student Services, PO Box 449, Randolph, MA 02368-0449. For overnight service, use: SSS, Application Processing Center, 15 Dan Road, Suite 102, Canton, MA 02021. **If you need help completing the PFS, contact SSS customer service at (800) 344-8328.**

## HERE'S KEY INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT OUR SCHOOL AS YOU COMPLETE THE PFS:

Our school's full name: **Community School**

Our school's SSS code: **2683**

Contact information for our financial aid office: [patrickc@communityschool.net](mailto:patrickc@communityschool.net) or [admissions@communityschool.net](mailto:admissions@communityschool.net)

Due date for completing the PFS: **March 5, 2021** Due date for submitting additional documents (see below): **March 5, 2020**

Documents we require you to submit, in addition to the PFS: **Community School requires additional documents.**

XX 2020 1040 Tax Return



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# Need-Based Tuition Assistance

## Frequently Asked Questions

Financing a private education can be challenging, so we are proud that 40-50% of our students benefit from reduced tuition each year. In order to assist as many families as possible, we limit the amount of need-based assistance available per student.

- We do not award any merit scholarships, full scholarships or sibling discounts for tuition.
- We do not award financial aid for before and after school charges or homeschool enrichment classes.
- Only students who have applied for admission will be considered for tuition assistance.
- Typical awards range from 15-25% of demonstrated need, but may be higher based on available funding and special circumstances.
- For families that meet the qualifications, additional scholarship funds may be available from a VEISTCP foundation. Ask the Admissions Director for more information.

### Will financial aid decisions influence my child's acceptance to Community School?

We do not consider financial need when making an admissions decision. However, we strongly encourage parents to carefully consider their financial situation and ability to pay tuition before applying for admission.

### How much financial aid is available?

We have a set financial aid budget each year, and we distribute the funds as equitably as possible among all qualified students. In recent years, most individual grants ranged from 15% to 25% of the student's demonstrated need. This means that even families with high levels of need may be expected to pay most of the tuition bill from their own financial resources. Please keep in mind the following general guidelines:

- The more families that qualify for aid school-wide, the smaller the individual awards.
- Families that are re-enrolling receive priority and slightly larger awards than new families.
- Late applicants may receive smaller awards.

### How do you determine eligibility for financial aid?

Financial aid is need based. We use School and Student Services for Financial Aid, a service of the National Association for Independent Schools, to process financial aid applications and provide us with a "need analysis" for each family. The "need analysis" is based on income, expenses, and family assets and includes an expected family contribution toward tuition. We use our financial aid grants to help families close some of the gap between the expected family contribution and the total cost of tuition.

### What is the process for applying for financial aid?

January 18 – March 5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Complete the School and Student Services (SSS) Parents' Financial Statement (PFS). You can link from the financial aid page on our website to the SSS website. You will need all of your income tax information from the tax year just ended. You must include our school code (2683) on the PFS. SSS charges a processing fee for on-line submissions. Your information will be held in strict confidentiality.</li> <li>2) Notify the Admissions Director when you file the PFS so that we can make sure that we receive your application.</li> </ol>
March 15-March 31	You will receive a letter from the Administrative Director with the results of the financial aid decision. If you receive an award, we will enclose a Financial Aid Award Agreement.
March 31-April 16	Return the signed Financial Aid Award Agreement to the Administrative Director.

### What if I miss the March 5 deadline for filing the PFS?

We reserve a small portion of our financial aid budget for late applicants and will consider all financial aid applications as long as funds remain. Late applicants may receive smaller individual awards.

### What if I have extenuating circumstances?

If your income has decreased, or if you have other special financial circumstances that were not taken into consideration on your PFS, you can contact the Administrative Director regarding the possibility of filing additional documentation. Extenuating circumstances will only be considered after you have filed the PFS and received an initial award.

### How much would my monthly payments be after receiving a financial aid award?

Your individual award will depend on the “need analysis” from your PFS, but the following examples illustrate what the semester and monthly tuition payments would be with some typical financial aid amounts. (Payments are calculated on the balance owed after payment of the \$200 tuition deposit. Families receiving financial aid grants are exempt from the 7% administrative fee for paying in monthly installments.)

A new partial-day early learner student:		A full-day early learner student re-enrolling:	
Total 2020-2021 Tuition	\$5520	Total 2020-2021 Tuition	\$8370
CS Financial Aid Award of 15%	\$828	CS Financial Aid Award of 20%	\$1674
Family's Total Tuition Responsibility	\$4692	Family's Total Tuition Responsibility	\$6696
2 Semester Payments of	\$2246	2 Semester Payments of	\$3248
or		or	
10 Monthly Payments of	\$449	10 Monthly Payments of	\$650

A new elementary student:		An elementary student re-enrolling:	
Total 2020-2021 Tuition	\$9810	Total 2020-2021 Tuition	\$9810
CS Financial Aid Award of 15%	\$1472	CS Financial Aid Award of 20%	\$1962
Family's Total Tuition Responsibility	\$8338	Family's Total Tuition Responsibility	\$7848
2 Semester Payments of	\$4069	2 Semester Payments of	\$3824
or		or	
10 Monthly Payments of	\$ 814	10 Monthly Payments of	\$ 765

A new middle school student:		A middle school student re-enrolling:	
Total 2020-2021 Tuition	\$10326	Total 2019-2020 Tuition	\$10326
CS Financial Aid Award of 15%	\$1549	CS Financial Aid Award of 20%	\$2068
Family's Total Tuition Responsibility	\$8577	Family's Total Tuition Responsibility	\$8258
2 Semester Payments of	\$4289	2 Semester Payments of	\$4029
or		or	
10 Monthly Payments of	\$858	10 Monthly Payments of	\$806