

Saint Stephen Catholic School

Tuition Assistance 2026-27

Catholic school tuition can be made affordable through scholarships and tuition assistance. Please see below for more information on state scholarships and tuition assistance.

Tuition Assistance for Students Not Receiving State Scholarships

St. Stephen tuition assistance (Heart to Heart for grades PK-8) and Diocesan Tuition Assistance (CSTAG for grades K-8) may be available for families receiving the Active Catholic Parishioner Tuition Rate, have difficulty meeting the cost of a Catholic education, and **do not qualify for a state scholarship (proof of denial required)**. Applications are submitted through FACTS, and decisions are based on FACTS' recommendations. Families who do not qualify for Tuition Assistance may write an appeal letter to the Financial Aid committee explaining any special circumstances to be considered. Tuition Assistance does not cover enrollment/re-enrollment fee, device fee, or fundraising obligations.

CSTAG applications are made through FACTS Grant and Aid. The deadline to complete this application is **May 1, 2026**. A link to FACTS Tuition Management & Grant and Aid is on the school website, <https://www.sscsfl.org/> under Parents Links or go to <https://factsmgt.com/financial-management/grant-and-aid-assessment/>. All supporting documentation must be submitted for the application to be complete. No application will be considered without all paperwork, including IRS Federal 1040 U.S. Income Tax Return, W-2 Wage & Tax Statements, any other supporting documentation for household income, and the FACTS application fee. The Financial Aid Committee will review the FACTS application, and families will be notified of Tuition Assistance awards. If your child is a recipient of a Florida Tax Credit or Family Empowerment Scholarship, they are not eligible for the Diocesan Tuition Assistance (CSTAG).

Heart to Heart applications are also made through FACTS Grant and Aid and the deadline to complete the application is **May 15, 2026**. Heart to Heart is the school's tuition assistance program and is available to families who are active parishioners at St. Stephen Parish only. Donations to this program come directly from St. Stephen parishioners with the intention of supporting students in our parish. In order to be considered, families must attend Mass consistently and regularly (at least 75% of the time) for at least three consecutive months before an initial request for financial aid. Mass attendance is verified through the use of church envelopes. Continued proof of Mass attendance is required while enrolled at St. Stephen Catholic School. **If you are currently receiving Tuition Assistance, you must submit a new application each year.**

Families receiving the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship or Family Empowerment Scholarship (Step Up for Students or AAA Foundation) do not need to complete a FACTS application because they are not eligible for Heart to Heart or CSTAG. Please check each scholarship's website for requirements and deadlines (see more information below).

Tuition Assistance for Students Receiving State Scholarships

St. Stephen school-based tuition assistance may be available for families receiving the Active Catholic Parishioner Rate who have more than one child enrolled at the school. Families must submit a one-page application by May 15, 2026 (or at time of enrollment if after that date) to be considered. All income levels are eligible to receive assistance for their 2nd, 3rd, etc. child enrolled at St. Stephen for a maximum amount of \$500 per child.

If you have any questions, please contact Gail Leung at gleung@sscsfl.org

Or 813-741-9203, ext. 1208

State Scholarship Programs

Please check the websites listed below for more information regarding guidelines and applications for the 2025-26 school year.

Florida Tax Credit Scholarship

- Income-based scholarship
- Administered through Step Up for Students www.stepupforstudents.org/for-parents

Family Empowerment Scholarship – Equal Opportunities

- Similar to the Florida Tax Credit scholarship with higher allowable income levels
<http://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/k-12-scholarship-programs/fes/>

Family Empowerment Scholarship – Unique Abilities (formerly known as Gardiner and McKay)

- Provides scholarships to students with specific disabilities and is administered through Step Up for Students and AAA. For requirements, visit: <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/k-12-scholarship-programs/fes/>

The FACTS Grant and Aid application setup for the 2026-2027 school year is complete. Applications and documents received after May 1, 2026 are considered late for initial consideration.

All elementary/middle school families are required to submit their financial documents via the FACTS Grant & Aid Application, unless your school is a "community eligible" school.

Note: Pricing for the 2026-2027 FACTS Grant & Aid Application Fee will remain the same at \$38.00.

Resource for Families:

[FACTS Grant and Aid Brochure](#)

[FACTS Grant and Aid Brochure Spanish](#)

Diocesan aid is limited. Applications received after the initial consideration deadline of May 1, 2026 for the 2026-2027 school year will be subject to a reduced rate, provided that funds are still available. Appeals are to be made directly to the school.