



## Financial Aid Program at Sand Hill School

### • How do we start the financial aid application process?

To help us make an unbiased determination of your family's need, Sand Hill School uses School & Student Services (SSS), an independent agency which is a part of the National Association of Independent Schools, who will collect all required forms on our behalf. It is essential you send in the required information on time directly to SSS, which uses a handy on-line secure data collection site, so that your file is complete and ready for consideration by the Sand Hill School Financial Aid Committee, which is the final arbiter of all financial aid awards.

### • How do I apply for financial aid?

Sand Hill School requires that the family file a Parents' Financial Statement (PFS) form along with additional required information. This is the official application provided by the School and Student Services (SSS). Please visit the SSS home page at <http://sss.nais.org/parents/> (or call (800) 344-8328) to learn more and download the latest application and information. We recommend that you complete your PFS online to expedite processing. The online PFS filing fee is \$35.00. If you are unable to afford their application fee, contact the school office, as a limited amount of fee waivers are available.

If you are unable to file information online, contact the Sand Hill School office for the appropriate forms. The PFS and supporting documents should be completed and mailed to SSS along with their \$42.00 processing fee. The SSS mailing address is: SSS by NAIS, PO Box 449, Randolph, MA 02368. *Please write the SSS Sand Hill School Code (157259) on all materials.*

In addition to the Parent's Financial Statement, you will be asked to file a copy of your signed IRS 1040 tax forms and all supporting schedules for 2009, plus W-2s both for 2009 and for 2010 (or a copy of your last 2010 pay stub(s)) and, if applicable, partnership/sole proprietorship and/or corporate returns (send electronically to SSS or by mail).

In addition, you will be asked by SSS to fill out and sign IRS Form 4506 as follows: complete boxes #1-4 and sign the form where indicated. *Do not date form or send the \$57.00 filing fee.* This form grants the school permission to access copies of your filed tax forms directly from the IRS, which we may request during the information verification process and is available on the SSS website.

All information related to the parents' financial circumstances will be handled in strict confidence. Your financial information submitted will only be used to arrive at a fair determination of financial need.

### • Who may apply for financial aid?

Anyone who has applied for admission may apply for financial aid. Your child must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.

### • Does applying for financial aid influence the admission decision?

No. Financial aid files are reviewed and awards are made separately from the admissions process. Please remember that financial aid requests must be made by the December 31<sup>st</sup> deadline (for the 2011 shortened school year) in order for an award to be considered.

### • Do I have to apply for financial aid before I know my child has been admitted?

Yes, due to the very tight time-frame this year, please file the financial aid application immediately after you have applied to enroll your child in the school.

**• What does the Financial Aid Committee do?**

The Financial Aid Committee is charged with the task of assessing the financial need of each applicant. The committee requires that an application be completed and financial data submitted so they may determine the level of assets, consider overall expenses, determine if Sand Hill School can offer financial assistance and to what level. Each family whose child is enrolled at Sand Hill School is expected to participate in at least a portion of the annual tuition expense. Families currently on aid have first priority to receive aid for the following year if the student is accepted academically for the next year. The second priority is for families whose child currently attends the school but did not apply for tuition assistance in the current year. The final priority is for new students entering Sand Hill School.

**• How is financial need determined?**

Financial need is defined as the difference between what it costs to attend Sand Hill School and a family's ability to pay. The SSS tabulation of your financial information provides the school with a general assessment of a family's ability to pay for education. Major factors in determining financial need include, but are not limited to, income, assets (including home equity, college funds, and investments), family size, and economic lifestyle choices.

**• Is financial aid automatically renewed each year?**

No. Sand Hill School requires families receiving financial aid to reapply each year. Changes in such things as income, family status, and family assets may increase or decrease an award. Every family's current situation is reviewed annually.

**• What happens if the parents are divorced or separated?**

Sand Hill School believes that parents have an obligation to pay for the educational expenses of their children to the extent that they are able. In cases of separation or divorce, each parent is required to complete a financial aid application (unless extraordinary circumstances prevent one of the parents from completing the application) regardless of custody or legal financial arrangements. Financial aid is granted to the student, and divorced parents must decide amongst themselves how the balance of the tuition is to be split between each parent regardless of legal custody or financial arrangements.

**• What is the deadline for applying for financial aid?** Financial aid applications for the 2011 shortened school year beginning February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011 must be completed by December 31, 2010. No financial aid award will be made until a student has been admitted into the school and all necessary documentation has been received.

**• Will a change in our family financial circumstances during the school year change the financial assistance award?**

If your circumstances change after you submit your application, please contact the school office to submit your new information. The Financial Aid Committee will review the new information, and awards will be based on your demonstrated need and our available resources.

**• My spouse does not work. How will that affect my financial aid award?**

Since it is our belief that families bear the primary responsibility for financing the education of their children, it is our policy to expect both parents to contribute financially. There are circumstances such as caring for a disabled or elderly parent, or a preschool child that might exempt a family from this policy. Each application is evaluated individually. We encourage you to explain any extenuating circumstances in the narrative portion of the application so that your true financial situation can be considered in the process, which will assist the committee to apply non-numerical judgment factors into their deliberations.

**• When will I be notified of my award?**

Families will be notified as the committee reviews the files. For the February-June shortened school year, we expect to notify families of financial aid awards by January 21, 2011.

**• Is it possible to appeal the financial aid allocation?**

Yes. Please write to the Financial Aid Committee explaining your appeal. Include any information that will help the committee to better understand your situation, such as a detailed list of monthly expenses or any information from your application forms that you wish to explain more thoroughly.

**•What payment plans are available?**

Sand Hill School offers three different payment plans: A one-time payment in August , a two-time payment plan in August and January or a monthly installment plan. The two-time payment plan and the monthly installment plan both require registration and an annual service fee. The monthly installment plan allows parents to spread tuition payments interest-free over a 10-month period. These options will be more fully explained when you are offered an enrollment contract.

**• May I complete the application “on line”?**

Yes. Go to <http://sss.nais.org/parents/> to start your application. If you have questions, you may call the SSS Helpline at 800-344-8328 (toll free).

**• Will my information be kept confidential?**

Sand Hill School respects the privacy rights of all individuals involved in the admissions process including parents, students and teachers. All Information of any kind furnished as part of the admissions process from any source or prepared by anyone at its request is confidential and will be used solely by the school administration and the Financial Aid Committee and will not be disclosed to anyone including the applicant and his or her family. The committee will review summary financial information for each applicant. All awards will be confidential and will not be disclosed beyond the committee, and members of the School administrative staff.

**• What is your policy on discrimination?**

It is the policy of Sand Hill School and Children’s Health Council to provide equal opportunities without regard to race, color, national origin, gender/sex, age, qualified handicap, marital or veteran status. This includes, but is not limited to, admissions, employment, financial aid and educational services. Inquiries concerning application of this policy may be referred to Children’s Health Council’s Compliance Officer.