

Choosing Christian Schooling: *Tuition and the Christian Family's Budget*

Why do Families consider Christian Schooling?

As parents, we consciously provide the best nutrition possible for our children's growing bodies, whose current and future health likely depends significantly upon the quality and example of our choices in nourishment. Similarly, the *intellectual and spiritual health* of young minds and souls depends significantly upon the quality of intellectual and spiritual "nourishment" we provide. Good schooling should include **1)** both academic challenge and exercise of critical-thinking skills, **2)** patient, consistent cultivation of ethical and moral character as well as good decision making, **3)** an appropriate "*living curriculum*" manifest in the faculty and staff around them, and **4)** the respect of each child – unique in personality and blend of gifts, abilities, and limitations – deserves as an "image-bearer" of God who has made each. For these and other reasons, especially in the face of subtle but complex pressures inherent in the culture of our times, parents often seek the support of Christian schools to help them to nurture a Christian worldview in their children.

Who sends their children to a Christian School?

The community of families which make up a healthy, visionary Christian school contains a surprising diversity, representing various educational, socio-economic, and professional backgrounds, sharing a common awareness that their young children have but one opportunity to experience quality schooling. In spite of costs which might seem to be prohibitive to some parents, *even single-parent families choosing single-income lifestyles, others with several children to educate, or those under economic stress (erratic employment or medical bills, etc.) not of their own making can attend.*

How do young parents pay the tuition for private schooling?

Many parents simply assume that their budgets cannot afford tuition for quality Christian schooling. Sometimes, however, family or friends offer to help (I.e., grandparents or godparents) with the cost; occasionally, churches contribute subsidy directly to a Christian school for students from their congregations.

What if a family still cannot afford a quality Christian Schooling?

Some young families – even **1)** single-parent families, **2)** those with one-income, **3)** those with several children to educate, **4)** those in special circumstances of crisis – need more assistance. While trying to use gifts which go into the operating budget of schools to control tuition costs for all its families, most Christian schools offer some other type of financial aid – usually in the form of discounts for multiple children, church membership, etc., which offer a modest degree of help to limited budgets. Some families are, however, still excluded by the cost.

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Increasingly, however, *visionary schools* in pursuit of further quality are recognizing that tuition assistance must be used *not* to keep schooling “*affordable*” but to keep schooling “*available.*” They charge the true cost for educating each child while budgeting for and implementing a *college-type income and-need-based tuition-assistance*. It is calculated and administered by a third party agency in a confidential process – allowing each family to pay what its family budget can afford. Thus a **Classical and Christian Academy** can offer its visionary program of *classical, Christian* schooling to its growing community.

How does offering tuition assistance to families benefit the school?

Every student and family in a Christian school benefits from tuition assistance, providing for some families on a family-income need-basis. How?

- A. A program of tuition-assistance at a Christian school which enables students to attend, whose families could not otherwise afford full tuition, bolsters a sense of shared Christian community and mission on behalf of covenant children.
- B. Instead of a community comprised primarily of financially “comfortable” or affluent families, a much broader socio-economic range of families – one more characteristic of a healthy congregation and of the body of Christ – can receive quality schooling integrating faith and learning to establish a Christian worldview.
- C. Tuition assistance which enables children to occupy seats otherwise empty, adds what a family can pay and advances a school financially, lowering average costs per child and extending the reach and influence of its Vision to families otherwise excluded to the school community.
- D. The concomitant increase in the pool of students allows a school to fund its strategic plan, developing more rapidly its programming and staffing, both academic and co-curricular. Additional students and revenue bring additional individualizing among students as well an increase in the number and variety of opportunities to discover and exercise their God-gifted abilities and talents.

If you would like to explore potential enrollment eligibility for a college-type of tuition assistance at **Grace Classical Academy’s** *classical and Christian* program for your children, we can provide a confidential questionnaire that will work toward the goal of your child receiving an education of truth, goodness, and beauty. If you know a family who is interested in Christian schooling, or if Grace Classical Academy’s Tuition Assistance Fund intrigues you, please know your call to **Grace Classical Academy** at (949) 481-9250 will be welcome!

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