

To All Current Parents:

You have probably heard of HB68, a bill passed into law earlier this year by the Iowa Legislature. Of particular interest to Catholic school families is the initiation of an Education Savings Account (ESA) program benefitting Iowa students attending certified K-12 non-public schools. Below is a brief summary of the new law, which phases in an ESA program over the next three school years:

2023-2024 school year: An ESA is available to all Iowa students entering Kindergarten, students transferring from a public school or home school within Iowa, and Iowa students living in a family with income of less than 300% of poverty.

2024-2025 school year: An ESA is available to any student who received an ESA in the previous year, plus all incoming Kindergarteners, and students living in a family with income of less than 400% of poverty.

2025-2026 school year: An ESA is available to all K-12 Iowa students regarding of family income.

In year one, the value of the ESA is \$7598 - an amount that will be placed into an account for the benefit of one named student. The account will remain active as long as the student continues their K-12 education in a certified nonpublic K-12 school. Funds left over after graduation or transfer are returned to the State.

As stated above, during the first two years of the program, there is an income qualifier that determines who (as a returning student) can receive an ESA. If you believe your total family income may fall below 300% of the federal poverty guideline, we encourage you to apply as soon as the application becomes available.

For families that will remain on private pay tuition for the next one or two years, we provide the following tuition schedule for the Fall of 2023:

<p>K-8 tuition (active parishioner)</p> <p>1st student \$4380; 2nd student \$3,725; 3rd student \$2,850; 4+ student \$2,190</p>	<p>K-8 tuition (non-parish supported)</p> <p>1st child \$6,485; 2nd child \$3,725; 3rd child \$2,850; 4+ child \$2,190</p>
<p>AHS tuition (active parishioner)</p> <p>1st child \$6,360; 2nd child \$6,360</p>	<p>AHS tuition (non-parish supported)</p> <p>\$9,110 per student</p>

If you have an incoming Kindergartener as well as other children attending K-8, we will consider your Kindergartener to be your 1st student.

As your students transition to the ESA program we will be eliminating the multiple student discount. We believe this will be an effective way to begin modestly reducing the amount of parish subsidy we request from our eight supporting parishes. (They are currently providing \$2.6M to the combined Scott County Catholic School budget.)

Scott County Catholic Schools were represented at the recent “Students First Summit” in Ankeny – which was attended by 225 nonpublic school leaders from across the State of Iowa. Attendees heard from speakers who have been involved with ESAs in other states as well as the new Director of the Iowa Dept. of Education. The summit was educational, and we learned a lot that will be helpful as we navigate this exciting new ESA program.

What we did not learn, was the date the ESA application will go live!

The company awarded the contract for implementing the application process is named Odyssey. We heard from their CEO, who believes he can have the application available by mid-May . . . but by Iowa law it must be “live” by May 31st. **For those of you whose students may be eligible for an ESA this fall, rest assured - we will let you know just as soon as the application is available, since the absolute final date to apply is June 30, 2023. This is also Iowa law!**

We plan to have several opportunities for families to complete the application process in the Assumption computer lab. We will also try to let you know what pieces of information you will need to have near your computer when you complete the application.

Families that remain on private pay for the next one or two years may be eligible for a grant from MVSTO. Even though you have been able to manage your tuition payment in the past, if your total family income is less than 400% of poverty, (\$111,000 for a family of 4) we encourage you to consider submitting an application.