



# Ohio School Choice

July 18, 2023

Dear Parents of St Antoninus School,

The St Antoninus School community (parents, faculty, staff and parishioners) has built a great school. We strive to continually improve the Catholic-based education St A School offers.

As you may know, the Ohio Legislature recently passed and Governor Dewine signed what he calls "School Choice" within the 2023-2025 two-year budget for the State of Ohio. Leadership of St Antoninus met yesterday to consider the facts of this new state funding template. This group consisted of members of Pastoral Council, Finance Committee and Education Committee as well as Pastor Fr Matthew Robben, Principal Marianne Rosemond and Business Manager Jeff Rinear.

## **Summary of School Choice**

Ohio School Choice offers scholarships of up to \$6,165 for all families. A substantial number of our St A families will qualify for a full scholarship, and all others will qualify for a partial scholarship based on family income. A participating school will move from a family-paid tuition model to a blended tuition model where the State of Ohio pays the lion's share. This program creates an opportunity for an increase in funding for the school while substantially reducing tuition paid by almost all parents.

Universal School Choice is a subset of the EdChoice Program from the State of Ohio. School Choice, also known as EdChoice Expansion, is different than Traditional EdChoice.

The new School Choice program is currently funded for two years. Of course, the expectation by state leadership is that this will be a long-term funding program. Each school chooses annually if they want to participate in this program.

The leadership at all the Catholic schools on the west side of Cincinnati is considering joining this program. Most have already committed to embracing this opportunity. The expectation is that most and probably all parish schools will take this opportunity. Since other west-side Catholic schools will be joining, St Antoninus would be at a competitive disadvantage by not joining.

Participating Catholic schools may benefit from increased demand from public school students. For those Catholic families who have chosen public schools purely for financial reasons, they can now afford to send their kids to a Catholic school.

Ohio School Choice funds are scheduled to be paid by check monthly from September through June. Annual budgeting and cash flow management would need to be adjusted accordingly.

## **School Choice Tuition Facts**

Families with an Adjusted Gross Income at or below 450% of the Federal Poverty Level are eligible for a full student scholarship. Families with an AGI above 450% are eligible for a tiered, reduced scholarship. *Please see the below chart to find your per student scholarship amount.*

*This table reflects changes to the EdChoice Expansion program with the FY24 budget.*

*It shows family income amounts for the **estimated** full scholarship (at or below 450% FPL), and includes the partial **estimated** scholarship amounts for families with income above 450% FPL:*

Scholarship Values Grades K-8	\$6165	\$5200	\$3650	\$2600	\$1850	\$1300	\$900	\$650
Grades 9-12	\$8407	\$7050	\$5000	\$3550	\$2500	\$1750	\$1250	\$950
Number in Household	Gross Income at or below 450% FPL	Gross Income between 451-500%	Gross Income between 501-550%	Gross Income between 551-600%	Gross Income between 601-650%	Gross Income between 651-700%	Gross Income between 701-750%	Gross Income Above 750%
1	\$ 65,610							Above \$109,350
2	\$ 88,740	\$72,900	\$80,190	\$87,480	\$94,770	\$102,060	\$109,350	Above \$147,900
3	\$ 111,870	\$98,600	\$108,460	\$118,320	\$128,180	\$138,040	\$147,900	Above \$186,450
4	\$ 135,000	\$124,300	\$136,730	\$149,160	\$161,590	\$174,020	\$186,450	Above \$225,000
5	\$ 158,130	\$150,000	\$165,000	\$180,000	\$195,000	\$210,000	\$225,000	Above \$263,550
6	\$ 181,260	\$175,700	\$193,270	\$210,840	\$228,410	\$245,980	\$263,550	Above \$302,100
7	\$ 204,390	\$201,400	\$221,540	\$241,680	\$261,820	\$281,960	\$302,100	Above \$340,650
8	\$ 227,520	\$227,100	\$249,810	\$272,520	\$295,230	\$317,940	\$340,650	Above \$379,200
		\$252,800	\$278,080	\$303,360	\$328,640	\$353,920	\$379,200	
Each Additional Person	\$ 23,130	Add \$25,700	Add \$28,270	Add \$30,840	Add \$33,410	Add \$35,980	Add \$38,550	Add \$38,535
Notes	Full Scholarship	Partial Scholarship	Partial Scholarship	Partial Scholarship	Partial Scholarship	Partial Scholarship	Partial Scholarship	Partial Scholarship

Clarification: Look for your ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME - **do not** look at your GROSS INCOME. If you look at your 2022 federal tax return, you can see your Adjusted Gross Income.

### Would additional students come to St A for the 2023-2024 school year?

The number of students that could still be added for the 2023-2024 school year is minimal and only in certain grades. We have a healthy enrollment of 392 students.

For the following school year, admissions criteria would be as follows:

Currently, reenrollment starts December 1 each year. Current families would be highly encouraged to reenroll by a certain date before enrollment would be opened to others.

New students would be prioritized

Siblings of current students

Registered and active St Antoninus parishioners (see Parish below)

Other students

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All new students will be automatically on probation. This allows staff the ability to assess each student for attendance, behavior, inability to keep up with the class and other determining factors. Marianne has experience with this strategy.

## **How would increased funds be used by St Antoninus School?**

St Antoninus would use the increase in funds to improve the school. Year to year these needs may change. Currently, the highest priority would be to increase teacher pay to make St A more attractive for our current and prospective teachers. With the current national and local teacher shortage, the labor market has been extremely tight.

Other ideas include possible additional educational programs. An additional program can strengthen the educational offering to all our current and future families.

The increase in school funds also frees up some money from the parish as well since the parish would not need to subsidize the school as much. This allows us to consider bringing back Youth Ministry or other upgrades.

## **St Antoninus School Approved for this program.**

After careful consideration, many questions and vibrant discussion among Pastoral Council, Finance Committee and Education Committee members, Pastoral Council approved St Antoninus School to join this Ohio program.

## **How will tuition at St Antoninus School work for the 2023-2024 School Year?**

St Antoninus will adjust tuition to \$6,165. For those families whose Adjusted Gross Income is 450% of the Federal Poverty Level, your tuition will be paid in full by the EdChoice Expansion scholarship.

Parents can apply for a new St A Active Parishioner Scholarship (non-refundable) for \$1,400 per student. That scholarship reduces the amount owed by the St A family, but it also reduces the amount received from the State of Ohio.

Family qualifies for:	Active Family Scholarship	Amount owed by family	Amount to be paid by Ohio	Total Amount received
\$ 5,200	\$ 1,400	\$ -	\$ 4,765	\$ 4,765
\$ 3,650	\$ 1,400	\$ 1,115	\$ 3,650	\$ 4,765
\$ 2,600	\$ 1,400	\$ 2,165	\$ 2,600	\$ 4,765
\$ 1,850	\$ 1,400	\$ 2,915	\$ 1,850	\$ 4,765
\$ 1,300	\$ 1,400	\$ 3,465	\$ 1,300	\$ 4,765
\$ 900	\$ 1,400	\$ 3,865	\$ 900	\$ 4,765
\$ 650	\$ 1,400	\$ 4,115	\$ 650	\$ 4,765

## **Tuition will still need to be collected.**

As you probably know, the school and parish work on a fiscal year from July 1 to June 30. Expenses for the upcoming school year started July 1 which is why we start collecting tuition in June. These expenses include salaries (which are paid through the summer), facility maintenance, utilities, summer projects, etc. We will continue to collect tuition as scheduled until EdChoice checks are received and any kinks are worked out. We need to be sure our bills are being paid from the income being collected before we stop collecting tuition.

Due to the program being implemented by the State quickly, we are conservatively planning for initial checks to be later than September.

## **Stopping Tuition Collection**

We appreciate your tuition payments keeping cash flowing to pay expenses while this program kicks in. Once EdChoice checks are received and kinks are worked out, we will compare what you have already paid to your new tuition amount, if any.

At that point, St Antoninus will refund you the difference. Those refunds will likely come in early 2024.

## **Next Steps**

The Ohio Board of Education is still coming out with details. Parish and School leadership are working with Archdiocese Schools Office specialists who are working directly with Ohio Board of Education personnel.

We will enroll St Antoninus as an EdChoice Expansion school. Then, we can start working with parents to enroll in the program. ***Application instructions are still being worked out by the Ohio Department of Education, and details of the application process will be shared when they are available.***

## **What should parents be doing now?**

Please review the attached information to calculate the amount of scholarship your family qualifies.

Please look for additional communication from St Antoninus School next Monday, July 24th. There will be subsequent communications as well.

If you'd prefer to email questions prior to the next communication on Monday, please send educational and admissions questions to Marianne Rosemond, Principal, at [rosemond@saintantoninus.org](mailto:rosemond@saintantoninus.org) and financial questions to Jeff Rinear, Business Manager, at [rinear@saintantoninus.org](mailto:rinear@saintantoninus.org).

Thank you for your patience as we work through this quickly changing process.