Returning Families,

The financial aid process at Wheaton Academy is officially open for the 2023-2024 school year. Like last year, the deadline for a returning family's financial aid application for the 2023-2024 school year is December 31, 2022. This timeline allows Wheaton Academy to grant aid awards to returning families before new family aid awards are considered, as over 80% of our financial aid awards are distributed in February.

This year, we have partnered with a new financial aid processing company—Blackbaud Financial Aid. This new portal will better integrate with the internal systems Wheaton Academy already uses, making it an easier process for both you and our staff. We are no longer using FACTS.®

Our records indicate that your family received a financial aid award this year. To be considered for an award for the 2023- 2024 school year, **we require your family to re-apply through the Blackbaud Financial Aid application starting November 15, 2022 and before December 31, 2022.**

YOUR CHECKLIST

☐ **Visit wheatonacademy.org/affordable and click to access the Blackbaud Financial Aid application**

You need to create a new account through Blackbaud Financial Aid and verify your information via email before you can log-in.

☐ **Submit the Blackbaud Financial Aid application and upload supporting documentation to the application portal by December 31, 2022.**
We suggest gathering this paperwork before you apply to ease the application process.
The required documentation could include:
· Most recent W2 per working parent per job
· Most recent pay stubs per working parent per job
· Most recently filed federal tax returns (including 1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ with all schedules). Wheaton Academy permits families to use their 2021 tax returns to apply for financial aid considering the December 31 deadline.
· Note: Your family may need to provide further documentation for your family's unique circumstances.

☐ **Confirm receipt of the Blackbaud Financial Aid application**
The status of your aid application can be found on the homepage upon log-in.

Please note that Blackbaud Financial Aid takes about two weeks to process finished applications and verify submitted documentation. The Blackbaud Financial Aid portal will directly email families reminders to complete any outstanding items, so please look for these notifications and respond accordingly.

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS AS YOU APPLY THROUGH BLACKBAUD FINANCIAL AID

· Once you log-in, your **application ID** is listed under your name on the home page. Your application ID is very important and should be listed on any documentation uploaded to the system.

· Please use **legal names** as you complete the aid application so the names appearing on this application will match the names Wheaton Academy has on file.

· Please enter **annual values** unless otherwise requested as you complete the application.

- Be sure to **add all dependents** on the financial aid application, not just those applying for aid at Wheaton Academy.
- In Household Information, within Section C, "Select a School," please enter **school code 12646** to represent Wheaton Academy and to avoid searching for the school.
- Be sure to select **"Save and Continue"** within each section to save your progress, should you need to revisit the application later.
- Once you submit your application, it can be **viewed but no longer edited**.
  - Once you submit the application, the confirmation page will then list the **additional documentation** your family needs to submit to officially complete the process.
  - These items can be uploaded under "Documentation" in the main tool bar of Blackbaud Financial Aid Management.
- For more assistance, please review these helpful video tutorials HERE.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

In **mid-January 2023**, the Wheaton Academy Financial Aid Committee will review the recommended aid award from Blackbaud. The Committee will then issue financial aid award decisions to families beginning **February 15, 2023**. This award will be issued to your family through a notification from the Blackbaud Financial Aid portal.

Then, should your family qualify for an award, your family will need to accept the financial aid award through the Blackbaud Financial Aid portal within one week's time.

Please note: Awards are distributed as funds are available. There may be a season of a financial aid wait pool for families, even after awards begin to be issued. Thanks in advance for your patience should this possibility become a reality.

SOME COMMON QUESTIONS

Q: Will my family receive the same financial award as last year?
A: Current families who pay reduced tuition because of financial aid can expect to receive similar levels of funding each year if their financial circumstances remain the same. Typically, families pay part of any annual tuition increase. However, every family must re-apply for financial aid each year and meet all stated deadlines.

Q: I am applying another student for the 2023-2024 school year? Is there a separate process for new students?
A: No—your family's Blackbaud Financial Aid application should include both your returning student(s) and new student(s). Additionally, your family's financial aid award amount may be re-evaluated considering your family's increased enrollment.

Q: Who should complete this aid application?
A: Whomever the child resides with should complete this application whether it is a parent, grandparent, aunt/uncle, or legal guardian. There is a section within the application where you can enter contributions from non-custodial parents and relatives.

Q: Why do I need to input my spouse's information if I am remarried, and they are not legally responsible for my children?
A: Blackbaud Financial Aid Management's calculation works off the total household income, therefore including all income, whether the party is legally responsible for your children or not. The system, however, does take into effect your spouse's expenses as well as their income. It is important to list all expenses that are asked of within the application.

Q: I need help completing my Blackbaud Financial Aid application. Who do I contact?
A: If you have specific questions regarding your application and how to upload your required documentation, we recommend you contact Blackbaud Financial Aid Customer Service directly: 800-360-8027 or financialaidsupport@blackbaud.school. Their service is completely confidential.

If you have any other questions, please contact Pat Brooke or Sandy Dede in the Business Office at aid@wheatonacademy.org.

Q: My family's financial circumstance has changed, and we are no longer in need of financial assistance. Who do I contact?
A: Please contact Pat Brooke pbrooke@wheatonacademy.org directly so we can update our files accordingly.

Q: Are there any other factors that contribute to financial aid awards?
A: All aid awards are need-based; however, families must be current in their tuition payments to receive future awards.

Thank you in advance for your timely response.
Please let us know if you have any questions about our updated financial aid process

Kind regards,
Steve Karlson