

SAN FRANCISCO UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL

FINANCIAL AID POLICY

2016-17

Philosophy

Since our founding, University High School has committed to building and sustaining a community of equity and excellence by admitting students of diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and talents, regardless of their financial means. To fulfill this commitment, UHS maintains a strong financial aid program and allocates a significant portion of our annual budget to financial aid. This year, 23% of the student body is receiving \$2.6 million in financial aid, with awards varying in amount. We award grants to our students each year based upon their families' demonstrated need and the school's available funds. Admission decisions and financial aid decisions are made separately; applicants are evaluated for admission without regard to a request for aid.

Admissions and Financial Aid

Determination of financial aid and admission decisions are made by two separate committees. Any family who, after carefully reviewing its own means and any other options such as the payment plan, believes that its resources are not enough to meet tuition costs is encouraged to apply for financial aid. It is important, however, for families to know at the outset that UHS does not have the resources available to meet the need of every admitted student who may qualify for financial assistance. The financial aid process is based on the assumption that families are applying for aid only after having fully explored every possibility for meeting tuition costs.

Application for Financial Aid

Families may apply for financial aid at any time during their tenure at University High School. Although all requests are carefully considered, there is an order of priority that the financial Aid Committee follows when making awards. Our first commitment is to the returning student who has already been receiving aid; the second level of priority is entering ninth-grade students; the last group of students to be considered for financial aid is returning students who have not received aid in the past and new students entering the 10th, 11th, or 12th grades. Families who have received financial aid previously will be sent an email each year in early November with a link to the UHS financial aid application, which is also available on the UHS website in the admissions section on the tab *Affording UHS*. All other families who requested financial aid information will be emailed the financial aid application link in early November as well.

To evaluate eligibility and level of need, UHS uses the School and Student Services for Financial Aid (SSS). SSS analyzes the Parents' Financial Statement (PFS) and recommends to UHS a family contribution dollar amount; in some cases, SSS will determine that a family does not qualify for financial assistance. To make a final financial aid decision in all cases, the Financial Aid Committee uses the SSS recommendation as a *guideline*, in conjunction with the copies of tax returns and accompanying documents, an optional Letter of Family Circumstance, and other documents that comprise the financial aid application, which families upload to SSS by the published deadlines.

Renewal of Financial Aid

Families who receive a financial aid award for the child's first year at UHS must reapply each year by filing a complete financial aid application, which can be found on the UHS website in the admissions section on the *Affording UHS* tab in mid-November. Families who submit their forms in a timely fashion and whose financial situations have not changed substantially can expect to receive a renewal of aid at about the same level, with the Financial Aid Committee taking into consideration annual tuition increases. While UHS is committed to funding students for the duration of their academic careers at UHS, we can only renew aid after a thorough evaluation of the requisite financial aid forms that have been submitted by the published deadlines. Failure to do so will jeopardize a family's chances of renewing their financial aid grant.

Divorced/Separated/Never-married Parents and Guardians

UHS believes strongly that parents/guardians have an ethical obligation to pay for their child's education to the extent possible. As such, we cannot be bound by a decree or other agreement that specifies of limits a parent's/guardian's responsibility for educational expenses. If either parent/guardian has remarried we will consider the income of the stepparent, keeping in mind the obligation of that stepparent to his or her other children. If either parent/guardian lives with another adult, we may consider the assets and income of that person, depending on the circumstances. We do not share the financial information of one parent/guardian with the other. If financial aid is awarded, UHS leaves it to parents/guardians to decide how to divide the responsibility of paying tuition. The financial aid process for legal guardians is determined on a case-by-case basis.

Billing and Financial Aid

All UHS families are billed at regular intervals; tuition is paid in installments on the 15th of each month from April through January. The amount of the required enrollment deposit each year will reflect the level of aid a family is receiving. All families receiving financial aid will be automatically enrolled in the Ten Month Payment Plan, which has a \$50 enrollment fee.

Financial aid awards cover the cost of tuition and, on occasion, mandatory fees and other costs, depending on the family's demonstrated need. Families should remember to include the fees and costs above and beyond tuition (approximately \$4,300) in their budgeting for the year. A list of estimated fees and additional costs is available on the *Tuition and Additional Costs* tab at www.sfuhs.org/admissions. The Financial Aid Committee considers these fees and costs, which comprise part of the total cost of a UHS education, when determining a family's financial aid eligibility. The financial aid award amounts and agreements will be mailed with the acceptance letters on Thursday, March 16, 2017 and as part of the electronic notification on Friday, March 17, 2017 at 4:00PM PST.

To maintain eligibility for financial aid, families must keep their accounts current or have made documented arrangements with the Financial Aid and Business Offices.

For more information and any questions, please contact Aaron Mieszczanski, Director Admissions and Financial Aid, at (415) 447-3104 or aaron.mieszczanski@sfuhs.org.