

Returning Families,

The financial aid process at Wheaton Academy is officially open for the 2026-2027 school year. **The financial aid application deadline for returning families is Friday, December 5, 2025.** It is our hope that this timeline will help both families and Wheaton Academy financially plan for the 2026-2027 year.

Our records indicate that your family received a financial aid award for the current school year. To be considered for an award for the 2026-2027 school year, we require your family to re-apply through our partner processing company, Blackbaud Financial Aid, by **December 5, 2025.**

We then hope to distribute financial aid decisions to returning families starting as early as mid-December and continuing through January. 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 historically distributed by February.

## YOUR CHECKLIST

- Visit [wheatonacademy.org/affordable](https://wheatonacademy.org/affordable) and click to access the [Blackbaud Financial Aid application](#)

Login through your existing Blackbaud Financial Aid account. You may be prompted to verify your information via email or text before you can log-in.

- Submit the Blackbaud Financial Aid application and upload supporting documentation to the application portal by December 5, 2025.**

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 2024 tax returns to apply for financial aid considering the December 5 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 Blackbaud Financial Aid homepage upon log-in.

*Please note that Blackbaud Financial Aid takes several 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

- 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 detailed step-by-step instructions [HERE](#).

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Starting in **mid-December 2025**, the Wheaton Academy Financial Aid Committee will review the recommended aid award from Blackbaud. The timing of your family’s aid decision will depend on your family’s completed application date and the application processing time through our partnering organization, Blackbaud Financial Aid Management. This award will be issued to your family through an emailed 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. The award will then be reflected on your Tuition Management account in May 2026 before billing for the 2026-2027 school year begins in June.

*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: My student previously received financial aid through Empower IL or Children’s Tuition Fund. Is that funding available for this school year?**

**A:** No. Illinois passed the Invest In Kids (IIK) Act in 2018, and it ended in 2023. This scholarship program has been a blessing to our school community over the years. It is a vehicle through which our school has provided over \$1 million in scholarships to students each year, and its end has implications to our financial aid program and increases the importance of our [Warrior Fund](#). We are committed to make Wheaton Academy as accessible as possible to our families considering this recent change.

### **Q: Can you guarantee that I will receive our family’s financial aid decision by mid-December?**

**A:** The timing of your family’s aid decision will depend on your family’s completed application date and the application processing time through our partnering organization, Blackbaud Financial Aid Management. As a result, some families may receive a financial aid decision in January 2026. We appreciate your prompt action and understanding.

### **Q: I am applying another student for the 2026-2027 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. Be sure your new incoming student is applied and accepted through our admissions process as soon as possible, as we only award financial aid to accepted students.

**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: 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 at [aid@wheatonacademy.org](mailto:aid@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.

**Q: My student previously received a named or endowed scholarship as a part of our financial aid award. Where do you apply for those additional awards?**

**A:** This year, the application process for these need-based endowed scholarships is a part of our financial aid application. You will note the additional questions at the end of the application. No additional application needs to be completed. Then, a committee of Wheaton Academy leadership will nominate students to be selected for these endowed scholarships. For more information, [click here](#).

**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](mailto:financialaidsupport@blackbaud.school). Their service is completely confidential.

If you have any other questions, please contact Pat Brooke in the Business Office at [aid@wheatonacademy.org](mailto:aid@wheatonacademy.org).



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