

Friends of Around the Sun Montessori PTO Scholarship Fund

Application Information Handbook

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

The PTO has set aside funds for the 2023-24 school year scholarships. Thank you, PTO! 2024-25 Scholarship Applications will be available starting Friday, March 1, 2024. They are due Wednesday, April 3, 2024.

MISSION

To support the philosophy of Montessori education, the Friends of Around the Sun Montessori Parent Teacher Organization (FOATSM PTO) of Around the Sun Montessori School, Inc. (ATS) sponsors the scholarship(s) for our ATS community. The purpose of this financial scholarship is to assist committed students and their families in a time of financial need to pursue or continue their Montessori education. The scholarship(s) will be awarded to families who have followed and completed the application process, provided documentation of need and who have demonstrated a commitment to the Montessori philosophy of education. The amount allocated to the fund will be decided annually by the PTO by April 24, 2024. A scholarship selection committee will choose the recipient(s) and amount of the scholarship(s).

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Who Is Eligible?

Family applicants of the FOATSM PTO scholarship award may be looking to enroll at ATS or be currently enrolled at ATS and in good standing. This means the family has willingly adhered to all the school policies. The parents/guardians have met their obligations and commitments to the school, to the classrooms, and to their child as applicable. The parents/guardians have also met all of their financial obligations, staying current with applicable tuition and fees. Current student applicants meet and maintain the academic and disciplinary standards of the school and their classroom.

Around the Sun, FOATSM PTO, and the scholarship selection committee does not discriminate in the in administration of its policies and programs (protected classes listed in Section 4112.02 of the Ohio Revised Code).

Selection Criteria

The primary basis for selection is the financial need of ATS families wishing to remain in or enter the elementary school. Need is established by considering each family's circumstances, such as income, assets, liabilities, family size, and/or number of siblings at ATS.

The secondary criteria for selection are (a) the student's character, performance, and motivation to learn and work to the best of his/her cognitive and physical abilities and (b) the family's involvement and commitment to their child's education and the school.

Disqualifications

- Families failing to complete the enrollment procedure to ATS as required by the administration by or before the first day of school will forfeit their awards. Awards will then be returned to the PTO general funds.
- Families falsifying any information will be disqualified and their application withdrawn.
- Families failing to remain in good standing or failing at any time to be financially current with tuition and fees will forfeit their award.
- Student applicants are expected to follow the policies and procedures of the school or risk nullifying the award.

How and When to Apply

- Application forms may be picked up at the school, printed from the school website, or obtained by emailing the school at enrollment@aroundthesunmontessori.com starting March 1, 2024.
- Applications are to be completed and returned to Emily Varner (see additional requirements below) by April 3, 2024.
- For students of divorced or separated parents/guardians, each parent/guardian financially responsible for the student must be represented on the application (multiple copies are allowed if needed) and provide all personal and financial information and the required attachments: tax return, most recent W-2, Statement of Need, Statement of Support.
- The applicant families are responsible for completing the entire application process and providing all the information and attachments requested. Incomplete applications will not be forwarded to the Scholarship Selection Committee.
- Families needing assistance will need to reapply each year. The amount awarded to a family may vary from year to year based on the PTO funds available, the number of families needing assistance, and changes in the family's financial circumstance.
- Once all forms are submitted, they become the property of the FOATSM Scholarship Fund.

Confidentiality Process

All application forms and supporting documents submitted are held in the strictest confidence and will be returned or held in confidence when no longer needed by the Selection Committee. *For this purpose, Emily Varner shall be appointed administrator for the collection of all applications.*

We promise to make every attempt to keep the applicant and recipient anonymous by following the procedure below:

1. Applicants will place completed forms and supporting material in a **sealed** envelope or email addressed to Emily Varner, **marked “confidential.”**
2. The administrator will photocopy every document, and on any document passed along to others, will black out all personal information or otherwise anonymize material that could reveal the identity of the applicant family and student such as name, address, etc.
3. The photocopied submissions will receive an identifying number code. The coded forms will then be given to the Scholarship Selection Committee for its review of eligibility.
4. When the scholarship recipient and amount determinations are final, the committee will report its decision of the awards to be made to the administrator. They will return to the administrator all applications and supporting information, and they will be destroyed.
5. The administrator will contact the family(ies) of the award(s) and the amount of the award(s).
6. The recipient family(ies) and student(s) will remain anonymous.

Selection and Distribution of Awards

- A Scholarship Selection Committee, approved by the FOATSM PTO, will make the determinations for the awards.
- Selections shall be made by or before April 24, 2024, and all applicants will be notified as soon as possible on or before April 24, 2024.
- Awards will be sent directly to the school – half each semester – to offset the tuition of the family(ies).