



ONE CHURCH
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The Cost of Catholic Schools: A Conversation Guide

These questions are a result of the conversation held between Dr. Ashton, Superintendent of Catholic Schools, and Fr. Lorig on the [EquipCast podcast](#). If you want to kick start your thoughts, listen to the linked episode first. ([Equip.Archomaha.org](#))

1. **Start With Why:**
 - a. What is the mission of our Catholic School?
 - b. Why do we have Catholic Education when public schools are free?
 - c. What kind of student are we producing?

2. **The Purpose of Tuition:**
 - a. How do we answer the question, “Why does our school charge tuition?”
 - b. Is tuition simply an exchange of money for services rendered? If not, what does it mean for a parent to pay tuition?
 - c. If someone cannot afford a Catholic education, would we deny their enrollment? If so, why?

3. **Alignment with the Mission:** Is our philosophy on school tuition in line with the mission and vision of our parish and diocese?

4. **Communicating the Purpose:** How do we communicate about tuition? Do we use the principles of good stewardship, or do we espouse an “exchange of services” mentality?

Fiscal Planning:

- start with the total cost of advancing your mission with prioritized components
 - base, non-negotiable (signed contracts, mortgage, utilities, etc)
 - variable (costs that could be lengthened or deferred if necessary like text purchases, new initiatives, special programs, new positions)
- once you have a total, calculate
 - based on past development, how much revenue can be expected?
 - based on past parish contributions, how much revenue can be expected?
 - based on past tuition collection, how much revenue can be expected?
- calculate expected revenue from different “categories” of families, i.e. families that are more than capable, families that are capable, families that are incapable

What is the gap between expenses and revenue, and what strategies can you employ to close that gap?

For more help with this discussion, contact the Catholic Schools Office. (402.557.5600;
[ArchOmaha.org/Directory/](#))