

Dear Families,

This year we will utilize the online service of Financial Aid for School Tuition (FAST) to process applications. FAST will be the standard submission format for all applications.

FAST does not decide whether tuition assistance will be given or how much to give; rather FAST provides a need-based tuition assistance analysis service which includes a recommendation of what a family should reasonably contribute toward tuition. All information from FAST is kept confidential. Results are reviewed by the Methow Valley Community School, and upon approval by the Director, tuition assistance offers are then sent to families.

As a reminder, you must reapply each year. To start the process, please do the following:

\*Log onto the School's website at [www.mvcommunityschool.org](http://www.mvcommunityschool.org)

\*Click on the "FAST" button of the Admissions page.

\*The application process is self-guided. You may navigate in and out of the program allowing you to partially complete an application and go back to it at another time. Online e-mail and a 24/7 helpline is provided. **Please do not call the school with questions.**

\*The charge for the application is \$34.00 and to be paid by credit card at the end of the session. If you do not have a credit card, or cannot budget the fee, please call MVCS for assistance.

\*After completing the online application you will be required to mail your 2009 tax returns for federal taxes with all schedules and W-2's to:

FAST Processing  
ISM  
1316 North Union Street  
Wilmington DE 19806-2594

***(pre-addressed envelopes are available in the MVCS office)***

\*The online submission deadline for all applications is April 1, 2010 for returning students and April 15, 2010 for new students.

\*Your tax return must follow the submission, and be postmarked by **April 15 (returning) and May 1 (new)**

The goal is to have an award determination made by the time re-enrollment contracts are issued on June 1, 2010. While no financial aid procedure can be entirely equitable – there are simply too many individual factors and extenuating circumstances – this new process that has been selected should serve our School community well. Among its many features will be the ability to further secure your financial data, and maintain the high degree of confidentiality that past recipients most appreciated.

Sincerely,

Deb Jones-Schuler  
Director

## Tuition Assistance Guidelines

The Board of Directors has adopted the policy of funding most of the school's annual operating expenses with tuition dollars. This decision means that tuition controls, in large part, the quality of the education the Methow Valley Community School (MVCS) is able to offer. While recognizing that some sacrifice is appropriate for something as crucial as children's education, the Board acknowledges that tuition assistance will be necessary to build and maintain the sort of student body MVCS aspires to have. Consequently, since the beginning of the school in 1999, significant funds have been devoted to tuition assistance. For the 2009–2010 academic year, MVCS distributed 55% of its projected tuition income in need-based tuition assistance.

In order for us to allocate our resources wisely and fairly, we have enlisted the help of Independent School Management's FAST (Financial Aid for School Tuition) program. ISM's FAST does not decide whether tuition assistance will be given or how much to give; rather FAST provides a need-based financial aid analysis service. FAST provides the school with a report, which includes a recommendation of what a family should reasonably contribute toward tuition. All information from FAST is kept confidential. Applications are reviewed by the school and upon approval by the Director, tuition assistance offers are sent to families.

## Financial Aid Procedures

The financial aid process is outlined below.

### *PROCEDURES FOR PARENTS:*

1. Parents access the F.A.S.T. Program website specifically for Methow Valley Community School applicants by visiting [www.mvcommunityschool.org/admission](http://www.mvcommunityschool.org/admission). Once there, Click the **Get Started** button at the bottom of the first page. All your financial information should be entered directly through the secure server. Space is also provided to fill out additional information that may be pertinent to your application. In addition, a copy of your most recent tax return should be mailed directly to FAST. (Pre-addressed envelopes are available in the MVCS office).
2. There will be a fee of \$34 required to process this application. Once completed the application will be available immediately for school's review. You may be contacted by the Director if additional information is needed.



### *PROCEDURES FOR the Methow Valley Community School:*

1. Once the application is entered the MVCS can access your application.
2. Upon approval by the Director, tuition assistance offers are sent to families.

It is MVCS's desire to extend tuition assistance offers before families are required to sign and secure contracts, whether reenrollment contracts or new contracts. Unfortunately, this is not always possible. The most frequent cause of such delays is late application for tuition assistance. Families may contact MVCS to request extensions, but these cannot always be granted.

## Financial Aid Deadlines

The deadlines for applying for financial aid for the 2010–2011 school year are as follows:

**April 1, 2010** -- Current MVCS families for re-enrolling students

**April 15, 2010** – New applicants for grades 1-6 applicants

Once these deadlines have passed, families can still apply for aid, with the understanding that financial aid offers may not be extended by the time enrollment contracts are due.

## Checklist For Documents Needed

---

***Please send a copy of the following items for 2009.***

- W2's – **AND** your last pay stub of the year
- W-2G needed for gambling winnings
- 1099's for IRA, Pensions/Annuities (if you have entered figures on lines 15 and 16 of the Federal 1040), Unemployment compensation, Cancellation of Debt
- Federal Tax Return – 1040-1040A- 1040 EZ (please send complete copy of only the current year taxes, unless otherwise requested by your school)
- Additional applicable schedules: Schedule C or C-EZ (Business Income)  
Schedule D (Capital Gains)  
Schedule E (Supplemental Income)
- All Business Tax returns, such as K1s and 1120 for S Corp (if your business is incorporated)
- If you own the home you live in, please send proof of Property Taxes paid
- Documentation for Alimony and/or Child Support

**Please do not send originals, as we can not return these items.**

Tax forms should reach us at least **10 business days** prior to the requested tax form deadline. If you are unsure of the application/tax deadline, please check the front of the application.

Deadlines are set by the school - FAST cannot adjust the deadline.

Please send all items requested, so that we may process your application in a timely manner.

**Complete** application packages (all requested forms) will be processed. Incomplete packages will **not** be processed.

**Faxed** information cannot be accepted.

**You** will receive an email confirmation when your tax forms and your application have been completely processed by FAST.

**PLEASE DO NOT FOLD, BEND, OR STAPLE PAPERWORK MAILED TO FAST as this will delay processing your application.**

**Mail To: FAST Processing  
1316 North Union Street  
Wilmington DE 19806-2594**

**IMPORTANT** You must put “**Methow Valley Community School**” on the front of the envelope under your return address