



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

PO Box 500

TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

KIMBERLEY HARRINGTON
Commissioner

August 8, 2017

TO: Chief School Administrators
Charter School Leads
Nonpublic School Administrators

FROM: Kimberley Harrington
Commissioner

SUBJECT: 2018 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program Announcement

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) invites New Jersey school districts to submit nominees who are graduating between January and June of 2018 for the United States Presidential Scholars Program. Since 1964, the program has recognized some of the nation's top-performing students with a prestigious award presented to honorees during an annual ceremony in Washington, D.C.

The NJDOE encourages you to submit nominations for one male and one female graduating senior for the general outstanding scholarship component, and one Career and Technical Education (CTE) graduating student (any gender) for the CTE component. **The deadline is September 25, 2017.**

The United States Presidential Scholars Program has historically invited student nominees to apply, based upon performance on the SAT/ACT, as well as in the arts. Since 2012, the United States Presidential Scholars program has expanded to allow each state's Chief State School Officer/Commissioner of Education to nominate to the U.S. Department of Education 10 male candidates and 10 female candidates from their state who demonstrate outstanding scholarship, but who might not otherwise be nominated through the SAT/ACT and arts recognition processes. In addition to these general nominations, each state's Chief State School Officer is asked to nominate five additional students who demonstrate excellence in CTE.

A panel assembled by the NJDOE will review nominee packages received by schools. The NJDOE will submit to the United States Department of Education (USED) up to 10 male and 10 female nominees in the general component, and up to five additional students in the CTE component. USED will announce the students who are invited to apply for consideration as a Presidential Scholar in mid-January 2018 and will provide information regarding its application process.

Nominees for General Outstanding Scholarship

All high school seniors graduating between January and June of 2018, who are U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents and who attend public, parochial or independent schools, as well as those who are home-schooled, are eligible. Per the USED, it may be helpful to consider the following questions as you contemplate the selection of your nominee(s):

1. What about the student makes him or her stand out as having outstanding scholarship?
2. Were there special challenges or hurdles the student overcame while still achieving high academic success?

The USED will also consider the following categories when evaluating the nominees at the semifinalist and Scholar evaluation levels:

- Involvement and service (in school and community)
- Leadership and character
- Writing samples
- Academic achievements
- Discretionary points for extraordinary achievement, such as a heavy workload, family responsibilities, or obstacles to overcome.

Nominees for Excellence in CTE

This component of the program will honor students on the basis of outstanding scholarship and demonstrated ability and accomplishment in career and technical education fields. All high school seniors who are CTE program participants, graduating between January and June of 2018, are U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents and who attend public, parochial, or independent schools, as well as those who are home-schooled, are eligible. Please see the USED form below for suggested criteria in the CTE category.

Nominee Submission Package to NJDOE

In order for your school's student(s) to be considered as a New Jersey nominee in the Chief State School Officer's nominee category, please submit the requested information listed in the checklists in the forms below to:

Kimberley Harrington, Commissioner
New Jersey Department of Education
P.O. Box 500
Trenton, NJ 08625

Visit the [U.S. Presidential Scholars Program](#) and the [Commission on Presidential Scholars](#) websites for more information.

If you have any questions, please contact Tara Rider at (609) 292-6038. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

- c: Members, State Board of Education Statewide Parent Advisory Network
Senior Staff Garden State Coalition of Schools
Executive County Superintendents NJ LEE Group
Executive County Business Officials
Executive Directors for Regional Achievement Centers

**2018 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program
General Outstanding Scholarship Candidates
Nominated by Chief State School Officer/Commissioner of Education**

Nominee Submission Package Checklist for General Outstanding Scholarship nominees:

- | | | |
|-----|--|-------|
| 1. | Student's name | _____ |
| 2. | Home mailing address | _____ |
| 3. | High School name and mailing address | _____ |
| 4. | High School CEEB code | _____ |
| 5. | Student's transcripts | _____ |
| 6. | Student's SAT/ACT scores | _____ |
| 7. | Student's involvement and service in
school and community | _____ |
| 8. | Information regarding student's
leadership and character | _____ |
| 9. | Student's writing samples | _____ |
| 10. | Student's academic achievements | _____ |
| 11. | Other information demonstrating | |
| | • Extraordinary achievement | _____ |
| | • Heavy workload | _____ |
| | • Family responsibilities | _____ |
| | • Obstacles overcome | _____ |

The above items are to be submitted to the Commissioner by September 25, 2017.

**2018 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program
Career and Technical Education (CTE) Candidates
Nominated by Chief State School Officer (Commissioner of Education)**

Nominee Submission Package Checklist for CTE Nominees:

- | | | |
|-----|---|-------|
| 1. | Student's name | _____ |
| 2. | Home mailing address | _____ |
| 3. | High School name and mailing address | _____ |
| 4. | High School CEEB code | _____ |
| 5. | Student's transcripts | _____ |
| 6. | Student's SAT/ACT scores, if applicable | _____ |
| 7. | Student's involvement and service in
school and community | _____ |
| 8. | Information regarding student's
leadership and character | _____ |
| 9. | Information regarding student's
work-based or community-based learning | _____ |
| 10. | Student's writing samples | _____ |
| 11. | Student's CTE achievements or awards | _____ |
| 12. | Other information demonstrating | |
| | • Extraordinary achievement | _____ |
| | • Heavy workload | _____ |
| | • Family responsibilities | _____ |
| | • Obstacles overcome | _____ |

The above items are to be submitted to the Commissioner by September 25, 2017.

Guidance from the U.S. Department of Education

U.S. Presidential Scholars in Career and Technical Education

Criteria for Candidate Identification and Nomination

The designated organization(s) will use the following *general principles* and *specific standards* to develop a pool of nominees for the U.S. Presidential Scholars in Career and Technical Education (CTE).

General Guiding Principles:

- **Academic Rigor** – students will demonstrate high proficiency on their State’s academic standards, based in part on their high achievement reflected on their State’s academic assessments in the core academic subjects.
- **Technical Competence** – students will demonstrate mastery of technical skills demanded by industry.
- **Employability Skills** – students will demonstrate such professional skills as teamwork, decision-making, and problem-solving.
- **Ingenuity and creativity** – students will have solved a real-world problem through the application of technical skills they developed in their career area.
- **Application pool** – students will represent the multiple sectors that are viewed as the pillars of our nation’s economic growth (i.e., the five sectors identified in the President’s Blueprint: Healthcare; Information Technology (IT); Advanced Manufacturing; Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM); and Transportation), as well as the socioeconomic characteristics of our nation’s high school graduates.

Specific Standards:

- **Academic rigor** as calibrated to the standard set by the National Technical Honor Society (NTHS) and based in part on their high achievement reflected on their State’s academic assessments in the core academic subjects:
 - An overall grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale (unweighted). Grade point average in their selected career pathway of 3.25 with no grade below B-.
- **Technical competence** as demonstrated by *one or more* of the following:
 - Completion of a work-based or community-based learning experience (Note: The term ‘work-based learning’ means a program of structured work experiences (such as internships, on-the-job training, apprenticeships, school-based enterprises, and Supervised Entrepreneurial Experiences) that is coordinated with classroom-based learning and that is designed to enable students to learn and apply career and technical education skills and knowledge in a work context).

- Placing a medal in State and/or national Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) skills competition in his/her career area.
- Earning an industry-recognized certification/credential.¹
- **Employability skills** as demonstrated by *one or more* of the following:
 - Completion of a work-based learning experience that is an integral part of the curriculum of the program of study.
 - Holding a leadership role in a Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) at local, state, or national level.
 - Completion of a community service project or other student leadership activity in his/her career area of interest.
 - Scores at the Gold Level in each of the three core areas of the National Career Readiness Certificate (i.e., Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information), which means that the student has the foundational skills for approximately 90% of jobs examined.
- **Ingenuity/Creativity/Problem Solving** as demonstrated by *one or more* of the following:
 - Solution to a real-world problem (e.g., developed electric car that goes faster than any before).
 - Development of a new product/good or service (e.g., development of an app).

¹ The term ‘certification’ means a certificate from industry and awarded by a certification body based on an individual’s demonstration, through an examination process, that he or she has acquired the designated knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform a specific job.