



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: August 14, 2020
To: Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads, Nonpublic School Administrators
Route To: Principals, Guidance Counselors, High School Staff Involved with Student Recognition
From: Kevin Dehmer
Interim Commissioner of Education
Deadline: October 16, 2020

2021 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program Announcement

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) invites New Jersey school districts to nominate graduating seniors 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.

I encourage 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 *October 16, 2020*.

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 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. The NJDOE will submit to the U.S. Department of Education up to 10 male and 10 female nominees in the general component, and up to five additional students in the CTE component. The U.S. Department of Education will announce the students who are invited to apply for consideration as a Presidential Scholar in mid-January 2021 and will provide information regarding its application process.

Nominees for General Outstanding Scholarship

All high school seniors graduating between January and June of 2021, 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 U.S. Department of Education, it may be helpful to consider the following questions as you contemplate the selection of your nominees:

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

The U.S. Department of Education 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 based on outstanding scholarship and demonstrated ability and accomplishment in career and technical education fields. All high school seniors who are participants of a CTE program graduating between January and June of 2021, 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. Please see the accompanying U.S. Department of Education 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 New Jersey nominees in the Chief State School Officer's nominee category, please submit the requested information listed in the following nominee checklists. This year the NJDOE will be accepting nominations via email **only** at pressscholars@doe.nj.gov (please note, attachments larger than 15MB cannot be accepted).

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

If you have questions, please contact Tara Rider at pressscholars@doe.nj.gov.

Thank you for your interest in this matter.

c: Members, State Board of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group

2021 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program Announcement-Candidates Nominated by Chief State School Officer

**Nominee Submission Package Checklist for General Outstanding Scholarship nominees:
these items are to be submitted to the New Jersey Commissioner of Education by October 16, 2020.**

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 _____

2021 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program Announcement-Candidates Nominated by Chief State School Officer

Nominee Submission Package Checklist for CTE Nominees. These items are to be submitted to the New Jersey Commissioner of Education by October 16, 2020.

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| 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 | _____ |

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 U.S. Presidential Scholars in Career and Technical Education (CTE) nominees.

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., healthcare, IT, advanced manufacturing, STEM, and transportation), as well as the socioeconomic characteristics of our nation’s high school graduates.

Specific Standards:

- **Academic rigor** as calibrated to 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.
 - 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 foundations skills for approximately 90 percent of jobs 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.