

U.S. Presidential Scholars Program

Guidelines for Nominations by Schools - School Year 2024-2025

The purpose of the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program is to recognize and honor outstanding high school seniors and thereby to encourage high attainment among all students by recognizing students whose performance demonstrates excellence. For more information, see [DESE’s Presidential Scholars Program page](https://www.doe.mass.edu/scholarships/pres-scholars/) and the [U.S. Presidential Scholars Program](https://www2.ed.gov/programs/psp/awards.html) web pages.

**Eligible Student**

Massachusetts high school seniors who will:

1. Graduate between January and August 2025;
2. Are U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents or will be by the application deadline date, and;
3. Are attending a Massachusetts high school or are home-schooled (as defined below).
	1. Each school may nominate up to two students (of different genders). Students may be nominated in the general category or in the career and technical education category.

**Eligible High School**: A Massachusetts public, private, parochial, or independent school, as well as those who are home-schooled are eligible.

**School Nomination Criteria**

* Each school may nominate up to two students of different genders;
	+ (i.e., no more than one female, no more than one male, and no more than one non-binary student, per their gender listed in the state’s Student Information Management Systems, SIMS)
* The school may nominate students who have demonstrated outstanding scholarship and related excellence as a member of their school communities, and who might not otherwise be nominated through current SAT/ACT or arts recognition U.S. Presidential Scholars processes;
* Candidates should have demonstrated leadership; school and community involvement; and may receive discretionary points for extraordinary achievement, heavy workload, family responsibilities, or obstacles overcome. The student’s performance in these areas must be documented in the following document.

Please note: the Presidential Scholar program allows each state’s commissioner to nominate up to 20 students for its “General” student category (with federal guidelines stating up to10 females, and up to 10 males), and additionally, up to five (5) Career Technical Education (CTE) students (of any gender), enrolled in Chapter 74 or Non-74 CTE programs, based on their accomplishments in CTE fields. Schools may choose to nominate students for the general category or the CTE category. The accompanying Individual School form provides space to indicate the category for which each student is being nominated. Regardless of category, the total number of students that a school may nominate is 2 total, and they both cannot be the same gender in the state’s student information management system (SIMS).

**Selection Process**: The superintendent of schools, charter school leader, or private school director **and** high school principal shall nominate the school’s candidates by completing the [Individual School Form](https://www.doe.mass.edu/scholarships/pres-scholars/schoolform24.docx), which must accompany a [Student Nomination Form](https://www.doe.mass.edu/scholarships/pres-scholars/studentform24.docx) for each nominee. Incomplete submissions will not be considered so please make sure to complete all the requested information.

**General Information**

* Staff at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) will review all nominations and select from them a group of students to present to the Commissioner, who will make the final selection of students to nominate to the national level (likely late fall or early winter 2024-2025).
* State level Nomination does NOT guarantee that the student will be selected as a U.S. Presidential Scholars recipient.
* Nomination by the state Commissioner advances the students to a second stage, in which the National Program Review Committee reviews all nominees from all states.
	+ Students selected through the state review process will be invited by the U.S. Department of Education (USED) Presidential Scholars Program to complete a more detailed application (likely January/February 2025). Semi-finalists are then selected by USED (likely mid-April 2025), and then the final 2024-2025 Presidential Scholars will be selected at the national level (likely early May 2025). An online U.S. Scholars Presidential Scholars Recognition Program will then be held by USED (likely in June).

### ****Due Date and Submission Instructions:****

1. Please ensure the checklist on the next page is completed to fidelity (i.e. make sure all directions are followed);
2. Please email all required attachments in one email to achievement@mass.gov by
**5:00 pm, Wednesday, October 23, 2024** *(extended from 10/17).*
3. Use “Nomination for Pres Scholar” in the subject line, and make sure to name the attachments as noted in the table below.

**Thank you for your support of all students, and for your efforts and consideration with nominations for this student recognition program.**

**Questions?** Please email the Office of Student and Family Support, with the subject line “Pres Scholar Question”.

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| **Form/Document** | **Directions** | **Check once completed** |
| The [Individual School Form](https://www.doe.mass.edu/scholarships/pres-scholars/schoolform24.docx), completed by the school.  | Please use "(studentname1)\_(studentname2)\_School" as the name of the file. Use “(studentname)\_school” if nominating one student. |  |
| The [Student Nomination Form](https://www.doe.mass.edu/scholarships/pres-scholars/studentform24.docx) | Please use "(studentname)\_Nomination" as the name of the file. |  |
| Two Recommendation Letters for each nominated student (as described in the [Student Information Nomination Form](https://www.doe.mass.edu/scholarships/pres-scholars/studentform24.docx), section C3). These can be letters written for college or a post-secondary program.  | **Recommendation Letter #1:** *Character and Leadership* 1. Please use "(student name)\_REC1" as the name of this file.
2. Please have this letter speak to the nominee’s character and leadership and answer the following question:
	1. What about this student makes them stand out as having outstanding scholarship and promise of future success?
3. The recommendation letter should be typed, font size 12, Times New Roman, and double spaced.

**Recommendation Letter #2:** *Overcoming Obstacles*  1. Please use "(student name)\_REC2" as the name of this file.
2. Please have this letter speak to the nominee overcoming obstacles and answer the following question:
	1. What challenges are you aware of that this student has overcome while still maintaining integrity and academic success?
3. The recommendation letter should be typed, font size 12, Times New Roman, and double spaced.
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| A Personal Statement from the nominee (as described in the [Student Information Nomination Form](https://www.doe.mass.edu/scholarships/pres-scholars/studentform24.docx), section C4).  | 1. Please use "(student name)\_WRITING" as the name of the file.
2. Please attach a personal statement from the nominee.
	1. The student writing sample should be typed, font size 12, Times New Roman, double spaced, and no more than two pages;
	2. The student writing sample may be a college essay, a personal statement for a post-secondary program, or a previously completed classroom assignment.

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| FOR CTE NOMINEES ONLY: A paragraph describing the CTE student’s ingenuity and creativity (as described in the [Student Information Nomination Form](https://www.doe.mass.edu/scholarships/pres-scholars/studentform24.docx), section D3).  | 1. Please label your file using the following format: "(student name)\_CTE\_PARAGRAPH."
2. In font size 12, Times New Roman, and double spaced, please write a paragraph (approximately 4 – 5 sentences) describing the nominee’s Ingenuity/Creativity/Problem Solving skills. Specifically, how has the CTE Student Nominee displayed ingenuity and creativity skills.
	1. For example: how have they solved a real-world problem through the application of technical skills they developed in their technical program (e.g., developed a new product/good or service such as an app, completed an assignment in a unique and creative way).
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