



US Presidential Scholar Award

The National and Regional JSHS programs are honored to be able to submit nominations for the US Presidential Scholar Award sponsored by the US Department of Education. The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964, by executive order of the President (Executive Order 11155), to recognize and honor some of our nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors. Each year, up to 141 students are named as Presidential Scholars, one of the nation's highest honors for high school students. Program applications are done by invitation only and the students must either be graduates or receive their diploma between January and August of the program year. Awards are presented annually at the White House in June.

Recent efforts have been made to diversify the pool of applicants which is currently based on the top SAT and ACT test achievement scores. The Department of Education (ED) is partnering with JSHS and other like-minded programs in providing a more diverse school of candidates as distinguished from the traditional method of nomination selections.

Award Criteria

- ✓ High School Junior – Graduating between January and June 2021
- ✓ A STEM-oriented student who has demonstrated significant independent effort, persistence, and accomplishment despite barriers, hurdles to success for limited access to resources.
- ✓ Persistence, problem solving, level of effort and leadership characteristics are given higher weight than technical proficiency in STEM competition.

Involvement and Service (in school and community):

- ✓ Accomplishments and leadership roles in extracurricular and community activities
- ✓ Social concerns and contributions to others
- ✓ Awards/other commendations

Leadership and Character:

- ✓ Well-rounded
- ✓ Initiative
- ✓ Character and commitment to high ideals
- ✓ Out-of-school responsibilities
- ✓ Special talents, skills, interests

Academic Achievement:

- ✓ GPA/Rank/Test scores – Minimum overall GPA of 3.0 or better (on a 4.0 scale)
- ✓ Advanced or special courses
- ✓ Academic awards
- ✓ Depth-range-breadth of knowledge/demanding courses

Additional discretionary factors. Applicants must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- ✓ Extraordinary achievement



- ✓ Heavy workload or extensive family responsibilities. Students who have an unusual amount of responsibility such as part-time jobs to help their parents pay bills, caring for other family members, or live in a single-parent household.
- ✓ Obstacles to overcome – Academic or personal obstacle
- ✓ Diversity¹. Criteria for selecting students who fit the definition of diverse include students who self-identify with two or more of the following criteria:
 - Underrepresented². Identify as an underrepresented racial or ethnic minority in STEM.
 - Qualify for free and reduced lunch
 - First generation college student
 - Student learning English as a second language

1 Representative of diverse intellectual, social, ethnic, and economic backgrounds.

2 Underrepresented populations include low-income students; students belonging to race and ethnic minorities that are historically underrepresented in STEM (i.e., Alaska Natives, Native Americans, Blacks or African Americans, Hispanics, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders); students with disabilities; students with English as a second language; first-generation college students; students in rural, frontier, or other Federal targeted outreach schools; and females in certain STEM fields (e.g., physical science, computer science, mathematics, or engineering).

If selected by the JSHS Region as a US Presidential Scholar, the Regional JSHS may contact the student's teacher for the following information about the student:

- ✓ E-mail
- ✓ Phone number
- ✓ Home address
- ✓ A description of leadership and character qualities
- ✓ Current cumulative GPA
- ✓ Classes taken in the following categories: Advanced placement, IB courses, courses offered for college credit, or other high level STEM courses
- ✓ Academic awards nominated and/or won
- ✓ Comment on the students' depth, range, and breadth of knowledge with respect to his or her demanding courses
- ✓ Describe the nominee's academic achievements that make him or her stand out as having outstanding scholarship.
- ✓ Describe the student's independent scholarship as demonstrated by the conduct of an independent investigation in STEM, level of effort, persistence, and contributions.
- ✓ Report on the student's outstanding scholarship as demonstrated by academic pursuits and achievements or awards.
- ✓ Describe any special challenges or hurdles this student has overcome while still achieving high academic success