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MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents

FROM: Jacob Oliva, Chancellor of Public Schools
Henry Mack, Chancellor of Career and Adult Education

DATE: September 3, 2021

SUBJECT: U.S. Presidential Scholars Student Nominations

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The Commission on Presidential Scholars is requesting nominations for the 2021-22 cycle of its Presidential Scholars Program. The mission of this program, established in 1964, is to recognize and honor superior high school seniors. Students are selected on the basis of outstanding scholarship in one of two categories:

- 1) Students are nominated for the academic component based on SAT/ACT scores.
- 2) Students nominated for the Career and Technical Education (CTE) component are students who demonstrate excellence in career and technical education.

We encourage you to nominate two students from your district – one who, while demonstrating exceptional scholarship, might not otherwise be nominated through the current SAT/ACT process, and another who is deserving of recognition for excellence in career and technical education. All high school seniors graduating between January and August 2022, who are U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents and attend public, parochial or independent schools, as well as those who are home-schooled, are eligible.

As in the past, the 2022 U.S. Presidential Scholars will be selected by the Commission on Presidential Scholars and will receive the Presidential Scholars Medallion.

It may be helpful to consider the following as you contemplate the selection of your nominees.

Academic nominees:

- 1) What makes the student stand out as having exceptional scholarship?
- 2) What special challenges or hurdles has this student overcome while still achieving high academic success?

In addition, it may be useful for you to know that the commission will be considering the following when evaluating the state's nominees in the Academic category:

- Involvement and service to school and community;
- Leadership and character;
- Writing samples;
- Academic achievements; and
- Discretionary points for extraordinary achievement, heavy work load, family responsibilities or obstacles overcome.

CTE nominees:

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 participants of a CTE program graduating between January and August 2022, who are U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents and attend public, parochial or independent schools, as well as those who are home-schooled, are eligible. Complete applications from candidates who are nominated and choose to apply will be reviewed by a committee of qualified individuals experienced in career and technical education. The committee will choose 60 applicants to be named as semifinalists. The 60 CTE semifinalist applications will then be reviewed by the Commission on Presidential Scholars. The criteria for CTE nominations are as follows:

General Guiding Principles:

- **Academic Rigor** – students will demonstrate high proficiency on Florida's academic standards, based in part on their high achievement as reflected on Florida's statewide assessments in core academic subjects.
- **Technical Competence** – students will demonstrate mastery of technical skills demanded by industry.
- **Employability Skills** – students will demonstrate professional skills such 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, 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 standards set by the National Technical Honor Society (NTHS) and based in part on their high achievement as reflected on Florida's statewide assessments in 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 no lower than 3.25 with no grade below B minus.

- **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 is designed to enable students to learn and apply career and technical education skills and knowledge in a work context.
 - Earning 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.
- **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 student’s program of study.
 - Serving in 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:
 - Finding a solution to a real-world problem (e.g., developed electric car that goes faster than any before).
 - Developing a new product/good or service (e.g., development of an app).

District nominations will be evaluated at the state level. Up to 20 state nominees, 10 male and 10 female, will be chosen for the academic portion. Up to five state nominees will be chosen for the CTE portion. State nominees will be invited to apply in mid-to-late January 2022 for the national program. Completed applications will be due at the end of February and scholars will be announced by mid-May 2022.

I encourage you to nominate two students from your district, one for the academic portion and one for the CTE portion, who are deserving of this honor. Nominations must be submitted to the online forms below:

- Academic nominations should be submitted at <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/6467062/2021-22-U-S-Presidential-Scholars-Student-Nominations-Academic>.
- CTE nominations should be submitted at <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/6467049/2021-22-U-S-Presidential-Scholars-Student-Nominations-CTE>.

In order to avoid multiple nominations from any one district, submissions should come from the district office, not from individual schools. The department is only accepting one academic and one CTE nomination per district. The due date for nominations is **Friday, October 8, 2021**. More information about the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program and the Commission on Presidential Scholars is available at <http://www.ed.gov/psp>.