Students of the Year 2023

APPLICATION & GUIDELINES

DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION
Louisiana Believes

PROCESS FOR SELECTING AND AWARDING STUDENTS OF THE YEAR

OVERVIEW

The Students of the Year Awards Program recognizes outstanding students who have demonstrated excellence in all of the following areas:

✓ **leadership**   ✓ **service**   ✓ **citizenship**   ✓ **academic and/or career and technical achievement**
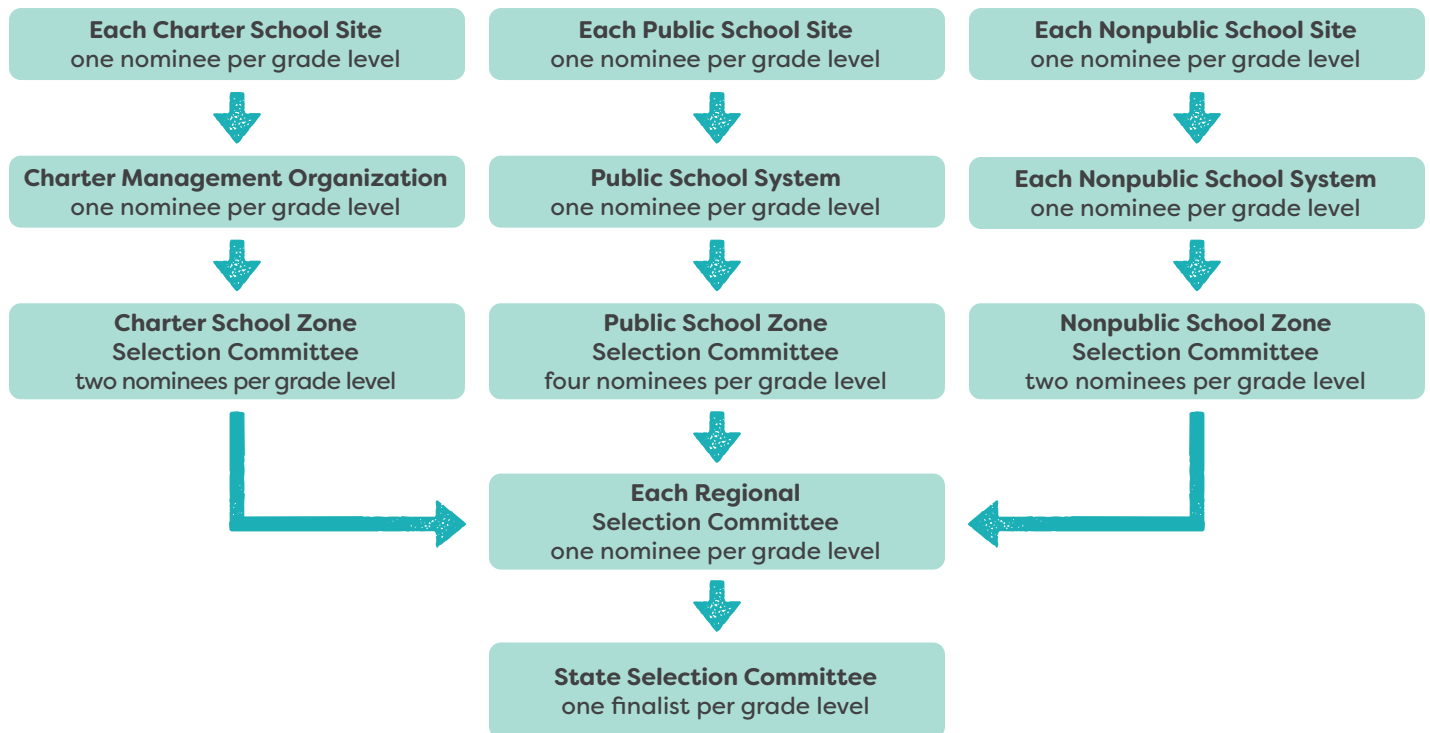
The Louisiana Department of Education and the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education sponsor this annual program, which is open to every Louisiana public and approved nonpublic school with students enrolled in the grade levels that correspond to the award categories. The winners of the three categories are selected by a selection committee.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT OF THE YEAR: one fifth-grade grade student	MIDDLE/JR. HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT OF THE YEAR: one eighth-grade student	HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT OF THE YEAR: one twelfth-grade student

Only students who are enrolled in the above grades are eligible to participate.

Each educational agency participating in the Student of the Year Program submits a **school system information form** to the state coordinator. This form indicates the point(s) of contact and level of participation. School systems are responsible for implementing a student nomination process consistently and equitably across the school system. Families are informed of this process before the school-level committee considers nominees. Students and families should be aware of the protocols for resolving potential disputes. After nominees are selected, the school will submit nominee's names to the School System Selection Committee.

OVERVIEW OF SELECTION PROCESS

Each Charter School Site one nominee per grade level	**Each Public School Site** one nominee per grade level	**Each Nonpublic School Site** one nominee per grade level
↓	↓	↓
Charter Management Organization one nominee per grade level	**Public School System** one nominee per grade level	**Each Nonpublic School System** one nominee per grade level
↓	↓	↓
Charter School Zone Selection Committee two nominees per grade level	**Public School Zone Selection Committee** four nominees per grade level	**Nonpublic School Zone Selection Committee** two nominees per grade level

Each Regional Selection Committee one nominee per grade level

↓

State Selection Committee one finalist per grade level

ZONE SELECTION COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

The system leader appoints members to the school system or diocesan selection committees to select nominees. The Zone Selection Committee is composed of three to five members per grade level. The function of these committees is to apply established criteria to select a nominee to represent your school system.

All committees are to include equitable representation from various ethnic and racial groups, composed of a combination of the following stakeholders:

• grade level appropriate teacher

• professional school counselor

• school or central office administrator

• community member

• career/technical instructor or supervisor (only grade 12)

• postsecondary personnel

SCHOOL SYSTEM AND ZONE SELECTION PROCEDURES

All school systems and nonpublic schools, will submit their nomination forms and portfolios to the Zone Coordinator of the BESE district representing the school site of the nominee. See **Appendix A** for more information.

• A school site will submit nominations to their school system coordinator. A school system will then select a nominee using the established criteria and rubrics. The zone nomination form and portfolio will be submitted to one of the Zone Selection Committees as determined by the BESE District of the nominee's school site.

• Nonpublic and charter Zone Selection Committees will each submit two nominees per grade level and the public school system Zone Selection Committee will submit four nominees to the Regional Selection Committee Coordinator for the BESE district representing the school site of the nominee.

• In the event of a tie, a committee should reach a consensus to determine nominees and finalists. Committees may meet virtually or in person. It is highly recommended that committees conduct interviews and review writing samples at the school system level since these are components of the regional and state-level programs.

REGIONAL AND STATE SELECTION PROCEDURES

The Regional and State Selection committees will be composed of at least five members, composed of the combination of the stakeholders listed above. The following process is to be used:

1. Each regional grade level selection committee chairperson (See **Appendix A**) submits one nomination to the State Student of the Year Coordinator.

2. The State Selection Committee Chairperson notifies the regional nominees and their respective school system coordinator on a confidential basis a few days in advance of the public announcement. These notifications will occur in time for families to finalize their arrangements for the final phase of the selection process.

3. The State Student Selection Committee reviews the applications, evaluates the writing samples and interviews the nominees dates.

4. The State Student Selection Committee names one Student of the Year in each category.

AWARDS

All regional nominees and their parents, system leader and principal; the State Superintendent of Education; Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education members; Legislative Educational Committee members; and news media are invited to attend the Students of the Year Awards Ceremony, which is traditionally held in Baton Rouge. Awards are presented to the twenty-four (24) regional finalists and to the three (3) State Students of the Year.

Note: The State Student Selection Committee may organize a virtual ceremony if a health or other crisis prevents groups from gathering for an in-person event.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY
AND APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION

At minimum, Students of the Year nominees should have a cumulative grade point average of 3.1 on a four-point scale based on the grades listed below. The grade point average is calculated on **semester grades** in the following fashion:

- **Grade 5 nominees:** GPA in grades 2, 3, 4 and the first grading period or semester of grade 5
- **Grade 8 nominees:** GPA in grades 5, 6, 7 and the first grading period or semester of grade 8
- **Grade 12 nominees:** GPA in grades 9, 10, 11 and the first grading period or semester of grade 12

Once nominees have been selected, the school should support the student(s) during the application process. A school representative will forward the completed application portfolios to the School System-level Selection Coordinator. Grade point average is determined using the final grade for each completed course annually.

Note: The LDOE recommends that school systems give nominees an opportunity to interview with a selection committee prior to submitting their application to the Zone or Regional Selection Committees.

STUDENT PORTFOLIOS

SCHOOL SYSTEM-LEVEL SUBMISSIONS

The nominee's application portfolio is the basis for the selection process throughout the local, regional and state levels. As such, the School System-level Selection Committee should ensure that nominee's portfolios include all required application materials without exceeding 25 hard copy pages or 52 electronic pages, including the front and back cover. The application includes the following:

- ✓ LDOE application form
- ✓ Academic records
- ✓ Autobiographical sketch
- ✓ Leadership, service, citizenship and awards forms
- ✓ Additional artifacts

Each of these components is explained in Appendix B and Appendix C.

WRITING SAMPLES

In addition to the autobiographical sketch students include in their application portfolios, each finalist will write a short essay as part of the regional and state application process. The state coordinator will issue the writing topics to the school systems with nominees. Committee members consider content as well as mechanics as they review student writing. See **Appendix C** for evaluation criteria.

APPENDIX A: DISTRICT ASSIGNMENT GUIDANCE

Nomination forms and portfolios will be sent to the zone coordinator corresponding to the BESE District for the school site of the nominee as well as the type of school system (public, nonpublic or charter). Each zone will have three student selection committees: one for public, one for nonpublic and one for charter, with grade levels having separate committees.

Traditional public school systems may submit one public school nominee and one charter school nominee. Charter school management organizations may submit one nominee corresponding to the Charter Zone Selection committee for the BESE District of the school site of the nominee).

REGIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

(All assignments are based on the public, nonpublic or charter **school site** of the nominee.)

Region 1-District 1-James Garvey

(Archdiocese of New Orleans, Jefferson, Orleans, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John, St. Tammany, Washington)

Region 2-District 2-Kira Orange Jones

(Archdiocese of New Orleans, Assumption, Diocese of Baton Rouge, Jefferson, Orleans, St. Charles, St. James, St. John)

Region 3-District 3-Sandy Holloway

(Diocese of Baton Rouge, Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, Diocese of Lafayette, Iberia, Iberville, Jefferson, Lafourche, Lafayette, Plaquemine, Pointe Coupee, St. Bernard, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, Terrebonne)

Region 4-District 4-Michael Melerine

(Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Desoto, Diocese of Alexandria, Diocese of Shreveport, Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts, Natchitoches, Red River, Sabine, Vernon, Webster, Winn)

Region 5-District 5-Ashley Ellis

(Caldwell, Catahoula, City of Monroe, Claiborne, Concordia, Diocese of Alexandria, Diocese of Shreveport, East Carroll, Evangeline, Franklin, Grant, Jackson, LaSalle, Lincoln, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Rapides, Red River, Richland, Tensas, Union, West Carroll)

Region 6-District 6-Ronnie Morris

(Archdiocese of New Orleans, Diocese of Alexandria, East Carroll, Evangeline, Franklin, Grant, Jackson, LaSalle, Lincoln, LSU Laboratory School, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Rapides, Red River, Richland, Southern University Laboratory School, Tensas, Union, West Carroll)

Region 7-District 7-Dr. Holly Boffy

(Acadia, Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Diocese of Alexandria, Diocese of Lafayette, Diocese of Lake Charles, Evangeline, Iberia, Jefferson Davis, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, Vermillion)

Region 8-District 8-Preston Castille

(Ascension, Avoyelles, Central Community Schools, City of Baker, Diocese of Alexandria, Diocese of Baton Rouge, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Pointe Coupee, Southern University Laboratory School, St. Helena, St. Landry, West Baton Rouge, Zachary)

APPENDIX B: PORTFOLIO SUBMISSIONS

School/School System Level: The portfolio must include information that is relevant and pertinent to the areas listed below. Excessively decorated or over-sized portfolios are not encouraged. The initial portfolio should be in a binder no larger than 11.5 X 12, should not exceed twenty-five (25) pages and should address only the items in the application. One page, printed back and front or a sleeve, with inserts printed front/back, counts as one page. Information submitted must be no smaller than a 12-point font. Points shall be deducted from the student's overall score if the portfolio exceeds twenty-five (25) pages or if documentation is presented in a font smaller than 12-point font. A copy of all supporting documents should be retained at the local level.

State/Regional/Zone Levels: The electronic portfolio should not exceed 52 pages, including a cover page, photo, required components and artifacts of choice. School systems should try to submit a single file but may separate application materials into sections if necessary. School systems must submit nomination forms and electronic portfolios to the zone coordinator by the specified deadline. Zone Coordinators will submit the electronic portfolio and nomination forms to the regional coordinator. Once the regional finalist for that grade level has been selected, regional coordinators will submit their electronic portfolios and nomination forms to the state coordinator.

PORTFOLIO APPLICATION GUIDANCE:

1. **IDENTIFICATION AND PRELIMINARY INFORMATION**

   The basic data sheet must be completed and attached to the application portfolio. Parents must sign an authorization for release of pertinent information relative to the program.

2. **AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

   Nominees at the school selection level must submit information about themselves in narrative form. This autobiographical sketch may serve as the writing sample only at the **school level** or school system level. This sample, which may be typed or handwritten, accompanies the application form when it is submitted to the local Student Selection Committee. This initial writing sample should include information such as family history, interests, career aspirations, etc. The students should be encouraged to address at least three or more issues that are important to them and that have had an influence on their lives.

3. **ACADEMIC RECORDS**

   A photocopy of the student's academic and attendance record, report cards and/or high school transcripts reflecting academic performance in **all previous years** and **including the first semester grades of the current grade level**, must accompany the application portfolio. Grade 5 portfolios should include grades 1-5. Grade 8 should include grades 1-8. Grade 12 should include grades 9-12 and Carnegie units earned prior to grade 9.

   Also, scores for **all statewide or non-public school annual assessments taken prior to the current school year are to be included. If grades/scores are unavailable, please include an explanation of why they are not accessible.** Nominees should include their AP, CLEP, ACT, PSAT, SAT, WorkKeys scores, High School Jump Start Certifications, TOPS-aligned dual enrollment coursework, TOPS/TOPS Tech eligibility status, work-based experience documentation from employer, Associates Degree coursework/status and/or other pertinent academic test results.

4. **LEADERSHIP, ACTIVITIES, RECOGNITIONS, SERVICE/CITIZENSHIP**

   All sections are to be completed by all students. Students should include leadership they have had at their school, church or in their community. Forms provided in the application are to be completed listing specific evidence of the student's leadership ability, participation in school and community activities, citizenship and service involvement, high school pathways accomplishments, work-based learning experiences/honors and recognitions and awards.

APPENDIX C: WRITING SAMPLE & INTERVIEW

In addition to the autobiographical sketch submitted at the school level, the regional and state nominees will be asked to write a short essay. School coordinators will submit an electronic version of the essay directly to the regional coordinators per the guidelines provided. In reviewing the composition, the committee considers the following points:

- Clarity and continuity of thought
- Originality of ideas
- Interest/appeal
- Use of words
- Correctness of sentence structure
- Correctness of capitalization, punctuation, spelling and usage

Nominees will also be interviewed by a selection panel at the zone, regional and state levels. These interviews are structured around questions and topics appropriate to the academic level of the students. The following are some factors that are considered during the interview:

- Poise/confidence
- Ability to relate his/her ideas
- Fluency in speaking
- Good voice projection
- Clear focus on the topic
- Use of facts to support a position
- Flexibility in response to questions
- Use of correct grammar
- Relevance of answers or explanations
- Appropriate body language and eye contact

APPENDIX D: SCORING RUBRICS

EVALUATION FORMS

Students are evaluated on all three components: the application portfolio, the writing sample and the interview. The organization, format, writing sample topics and questions used in the interviews will be consistent across all regions. A copy of the evaluation form that will be used at each grade level in the program is found on the following pages. These forms have been developed to give structure and consistency to the evaluations at the local, regional and state level.

STUDENT EVALUATION SHEET: **5TH GRADE**

1. **ACADEMIC EVALUATION**

A.	Grade Point Average	/3 possible points
B.	Assessments	/3 possible points
	SUBTOTAL	**/6 possible points**

2. **APPLICATION PORTFOLIO**

A.	Leadership/Activities/Services/Citizenship	/34 possible points
B.	Recognitions/Awards	/10 possible points
	SUBTOTAL	**/44 possible points**

3. **WRITING SAMPLE**

A.	Clarity/Continuity of Thought & Response to the Prompt	/5 possible points
B.	Originality of Ideas/Interest Appeal	/5 possible points
C.	Support, Elaboration, Organization	/5 possible points
D.	Correctness of Sentence Structure	/5 possible points
E.	Correctness of Capitalization, Punctuation & Spelling	/5 possible points
	SUBTOTAL	**/25 possible points**

4. **INTERVIEW**

A.	Poise/Confidence	/2 possible points
B.	Ability to Convey Ideas	/2 possible points
C.	Fluency in Speaking	/2 possible points
D.	Good Voice Projection	/2 possible points
E.	Clear Focus on Topic	/2 possible points
F.	Use of Facts to Support Position	/2 possible points
G.	Flexibility in Response to Questions	/2 possible points
H.	Use of Correct Grammar	/2 possible points
I.	Relevance of Answers/Explanations	/2 possible points
J.	Appropriate Body Language & Eye Contact	/2 possible points
K.	Scope & Breadth of the Response to the Posed Questions	/5 possible points
	SUBTOTAL	**/25 possible points**
	TOTAL POINTS	**/100 possible points**

STUDENT EVALUATION SHEET: **8TH GRADE**

1. **ACADEMIC EVALUATION**

A. Grade Point Average	/4 possible points
B. Assessments	/4 possible points
SUBTOTAL	**/8 possible points**

2. **APPLICATION PORTFOLIO**

A. Leadership	/12 possible points
B. Activities/Services/Citizenship	/20 possible points
C. Recognitions/Awards	/10 possible points
SUBTOTAL	**/42 possible points**

3. **WRITING SAMPLE**

A. Clarity/Continuity of Thought & Response to the Prompt	/5 possible points
B. Originality of Ideas/Interest Appeal	/5 possible points
C. Support, Elaboration, Organization	/5 possible points
D. Correctness of Sentence Structure	/5 possible points
E. Correctness of Capitalization, Punctuation & Spelling	/5 possible points
SUBTOTAL	**/25 possible points**

4. **INTERVIEW**

A. Poise/Confidence	/2 possible points
B. Ability to Convey Ideas	/2 possible points
C. Fluency in Speaking	/2 possible points
D. Good Voice Projection	/2 possible points
E. Clear Focus on Topic	/2 possible points
F. Use of Facts to Support Position	/2 possible points
G. Flexibility in Response to Questions	/2 possible points
H. Use of Correct Grammar	/2 possible points
I. Relevance of Answers/Explanations	/2 possible points
J. Appropriate Body Language & Eye Contact	/2 possible points
K. Scope & Breadth of the Response to the Posed Questions	/5 possible points
SUBTOTAL	**/25 possible points**
TOTAL POINTS	**/100 possible points**

STUDENT EVALUATION SHEET: **12TH GRADE**

1. **ACADEMIC EVALUATION**

A. Grade Point Average	/3 possible points
B. Difficulty Level of Courses	/3 possible points
C. Test Scores	/2 possible points
D. CTE Credentials	/2 possible points
E. Technical Diploma, Associate Degree, or Work-based Learning Experience Credentials	/2 possible points
SUBTOTAL	**/12 possible points**

2. **APPLICATION PORTFOLIO**

A. Leadership	/8 possible points
B. Activities/Services/Citizenship	/20 possible points
C. Recognitions/Awards	/10 possible points
SUBTOTAL	**/38 possible points**

3. **WRITING SAMPLE**

A. Clarity/Continuity of Thought & Response to the Prompt	/5 possible points
B. Originality of Ideas/Interest Appeal	/5 possible points
C. Support, Elaboration, Organization	/5 possible points
D. Correctness of Sentence Structure	/5 possible points
E. Correctness of Capitalization, Punctuation & Spelling	/5 possible points
SUBTOTAL	**/25 possible points**

4. **INTERVIEW**

A. Poise/Confidence	/2 possible points
B. Ability to Convey Ideas	/2 possible points
C. Fluency in Speaking	/2 possible points
D. Good Voice Projection	/2 possible points
E. Clear Focus on Topic	/2 possible points
F. Use of Facts to Support Position	/2 possible points
G. Flexibility in Response to Questions	/2 possible points
H. Use of Correct Grammar	/2 possible points
I. Relevance of Answers/Explanations	/2 possible points
J. Appropriate Body Language & Eye Contact	/2 possible points
K. Scope & Breadth of the Response to the Posed Questions	/5 possible points
SUBTOTAL	**/25 possible points**
TOTAL POINTS	**/100 possible points**

Type required information into each field of this form and include it in the application portfolio.

1. Attach the following:

   a. A photocopy of the academic and attendance record, report cards and/or high school transcripts reflecting academic performance in previous years--including the first semester grades of the current grade level; scores for **all required statewide or nonpublic school annual assessments** taken prior to the current school year; scores for any regional and national tests (AP, CLEP, ACT, PSAT, SAT, IBCs); TOPS-aligned dual enrollment coursework; TOPS/TOPS Tech eligibility status; Industry-Based Credentials certifications; work-based experience documentation; associate degree coursework/status; other pertinent artifacts that document academic and CTE accomplishments. If scores are not available, please indicate the reason

   b. An autobiographical sketch, according to the guidelines

   c. Electronic current school photograph or similar kind of print

   d. Signatures of the parent/guardian and nominee

2. Submit the completed application portfolio to the local student Selection Committee.

SCHOOL SITE BESE REPRESENTATIVE:		BESE REGION NUMBER:	TYPE OF SCHOOL:
APPLICANT'S NAME: *(First Middle Last)*			**GRADE:** *(5, 8, or 12)*
HOME ADDRESS:			
CITY:		**STATE:** Louisiana	**ZIP:**
PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME(S):			
HOME PHONE:	**PARENT CELL PHONE:**		**PARENT WORK PHONE:**
PARENT EMAIL:			
SCHOOL NAME:			
PRINCIPAL'S NAME:		**PRINCIPAL'S EMAIL:**	
SCHOOL MAILING ADDRESS:			**SCHOOL PHONE:**
CITY:	**STATE:** Louisiana		**ZIP:**
SCHOOL SYSTEM:		**SCHOOL SYSTEM SUPERINTENDENT/CEO NAME:**	

PARENT OR GUARDIAN'S STATEMENT: In accordance with La. R.S. 17:3914 (Louisiana Student Privacy Act), I hereby grant permission for my child to participate in the Louisiana Students of the Year Awards Program. I further authorize access and use of any school records and demographic information necessary for this competition and the subsequent press release information about this competition concerning my child to the universities and to the news media.

PARENT OR GUARDIAN'S NAME TYPED:	PARENT OR GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE: X

STUDENT'S STATEMENT: I certify that the information on this application is correct and that all work submitted by me during this competition is indeed mine.

DATE:	APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE: X

LEADERSHIP: List all elected or appointed leadership positions held in the school and community. Only those positions in which you were directly responsible for directing or motivating others should be included (e.g. elected student body, class or organization officer [BETA, NHS, FFA, Skills USA, JAG, FBLA, FCA, Drama, etc.], committee chairperson, team captain, community leader, etc.).

All students must complete this section, if applicable.

SCHOOL ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP POSITION	YEAR	ACTIVITY OR ORGANIZATION

EXTRA-CURRICULAR LEADERSHIP POSITION	YEAR	ACTIVITY OR ORGANIZATION

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP POSITION	YEAR	ACTIVITY OR ORGANIZATION

ACTIVITIES/SERVICE/CITIZENSHIP: List all activities in which you have participated that demonstrate a contribution to the school, church or community: for example, Boy or Girl Scouts, work-based leadership, internship or experience, volunteer groups, school organizations, library or clerical volunteer without credit, peer model or leader in a substance abuse prevention program, clubs, teams, musical groups, etc., beginning with the most recent.

SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES/ORGANIZATIONS	YEAR	MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	YEAR	MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT

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EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	YEAR	MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT

RECOGNITIONS AND AWARDS: List below any honors or recognitions that you have received to support your application for Student of the Year, beginning with the most recent.

SCHOOL RECOGNITIONS/ HONORS/AWARDS	YEAR	ACTIVITY/ORGANIZATION

LIST OF LEADERSHIP, ACTIVITIES, RECOGNITION, & AWARDS

ACADEMIC COMPETITION/AWARDS	YEAR	MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT

LIST OF LEADERSHIP, ACTIVITIES, RECOGNITION, & AWARDS

COMMUNITY RECOGNITIONS/ HONORS/AWARDS	YEAR	MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT