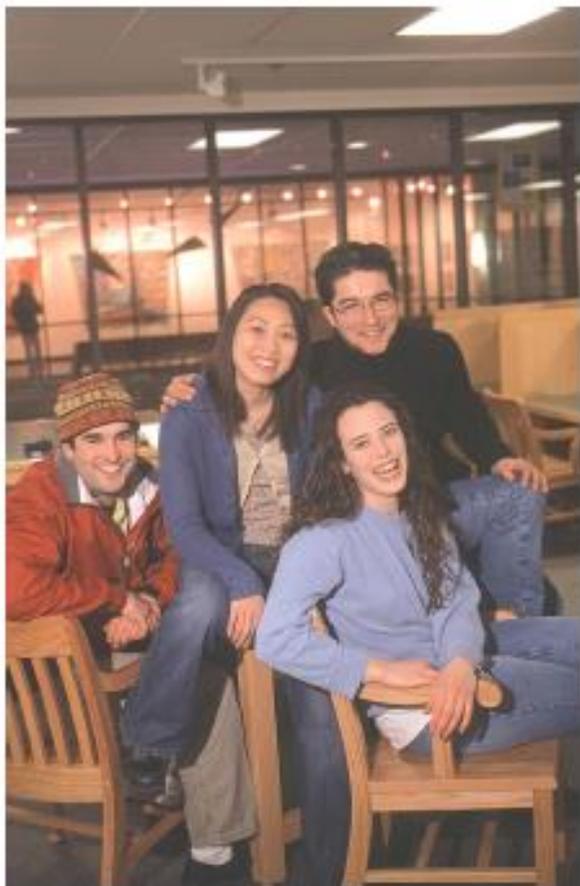


2014 Applicant Summary



Washington Scholars Program

A Washington Opportunity Pathway

Recognizing . . .

the academic achievement, leadership ability, and community service of 147 high school seniors, three from each legislative district, and 49 alternate recipients.



 WASHINGTON STUDENT
ACHIEVEMENT COUNCIL
EDUCATION · OPPORTUNITY · RESULTS



Washington Scholars Program

Washington Student Achievement Council
917 Lakeridge Way SW
P.O. Box 43430
Olympia, WA 98504-3430

Phone: 360-753-7843
Fax: 360-704-6243
www.wsac.wa.gov and <http://readysetgrad.org>

Cover photos courtesy of Edmonds Community College and the University of Washington

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The Washington Student Achievement Council administers the Washington Scholars program, a Washington Opportunity Pathway, in cooperation with the Association of Washington School Principals. Foundations, corporations, organizations, and individuals interested in providing scholarships for Washington Scholars are invited to contact the Washington Student Achievement Council.

**Washington Scholars Program,
A Washington Opportunity Pathway
Washington Student Achievement Council**
917 Lakeridge Way SW / PO Box 43430
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STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT COUNCIL

917 Lakeridge Way SW · PO Box 43430 · Olympia, WA 98504-3430 · 360-753-7800 · www.wsac.wa.gov

November 25, 2013

Dear Washington Scholars candidate:

Congratulations! Your high school has nominated you for Washington Scholars recognition because of your exceptional high school career.

The Washington Scholars award represents the highest meritorious honor conferred by our state's education and government leaders on the most exemplary graduating high school seniors, recognizing excellence in academic achievement, leadership, and community service. To be in the running for Washington Scholars recognition, you must submit an application, with required attachments, to the Washington Student Achievement Council **by January 21, 2014.**

You will find the on-line electronic application at the secure web address provided in the emailed nomination notice. Before starting the application, carefully read the attached program summary, which includes important details for you to consider. Note that the application includes statements that you and your principal must sign. Your parent or guardian also must sign if you are under the age of 18.

Your accomplishments will be evaluated on the strength of information contained in the application, your cumulative grade transcript, senior year first quarter grade report (or mid-semester fall term progress report), and SAT/ACT test score(s). The selection committee will review and score applications in late February or March 2014.

The Council will accept a hard copy paper application if you do not have an email address or internet access. Mail the application packet, with attachments, using **Express Mail, Federal Express, United Parcel Service, or USPS certified mail with a return receipt** to ensure delivery tracking. **Late applications will not be considered.**

Candidates selected as Washington Scholars for 2014 will receive award certificates and gubernatorial congratulatory letters, and their names will appear in the Washington Scholars directory published in the spring. At that time, the Council will distribute a statewide press release to news media, college admissions and scholarship officers across the state, members of the Legislature, and the Governor. In addition, June 2014 will be designated "Washington Scholars Month" by gubernatorial proclamation to recognize the Scholars' achievements and community contributions. No monetary benefits are available due to state budget cuts.

Washington Scholars designation remains a prestigious highlight on the recipient's resume, and an asset in securing other educational scholarships, such as the Education Excellence Award. The Association of Washington School Principals sponsors the Education Excellence Award, which is open only to Washington Scholars candidates. Many colleges offer other financial and special incentives to attract the Scholars to their campuses.

Contact Ann Voyles, program manager, by calling 360.753.7843, or by email at wascholars@wsac.wa.gov if you have questions. We look forward to receiving your completed application packet.

Sincerely,

Gene Sharratt
Executive Director
Washington Student Achievement Council

WASHINGTON SCHOLARS PROGRAM SUMMARY 2014

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► What is the purpose of the program?

High schools in Washington graduate a significant number of students each year who distinguish themselves through outstanding academic achievement. The Washington Scholars program establishes a consistent and uniform method to:

- Recognize and honor the accomplishments of those students.
- Encourage and facilitate privately-funded scholarship awards by non-state organizations.
- Encourage outstanding students to attend Washington public and independent colleges and universities.
- Allow educational leaders, the Legislature, and the governor to reaffirm the importance of educational excellence to the future of this state.

► Who are the Washington Scholars, and how are they selected?

This award represents the highest meritorious honor conferred on graduating high school seniors by the state of Washington each year. The program recognizes academic excellence, leadership, and community service during the high school career. Principals of in-state high schools nominate the top 1 percent of the graduating class for Washington Scholars consideration, resulting in approximately 550 - 700 student applications from across the state.

For award consideration, nominated students must:

- Submit a signed application, using the on-line electronic version or the hard copy paper format, with required attachments, to the Council by the 11:59 p.m., January 21, 2014 deadline.
- Be a qualifying “resident student.” See www.wsac.wa.gov/ProgramAdministration/Residency.

A selection committee comprised of representatives from public and private high schools and colleges, state agencies, and education associations reviews the applications by legislative district. Committee members score each application based on the strength of entries in the associated review category headings. Only the application form, the 9th – 11th grade transcript, 12th grade first quarter grade report (or equivalent fall term mid-semester progress report), and test scores are taken into consideration. The Council discards all non-requested materials before committee review, including photos, recommendation letters, award certificates, newspaper articles, and report covers.

The Council pre-calculates the candidate’s academic score using a formula that takes into account the 9th – 11th grade cumulative grade point average (GPA) and the highest combined math and critical reading scores from a single test sitting of a national standardized exam (SAT or ACT). The Writing section score(s) do not apply.

Maximum points possible in each review element are:

Academic (test scores and GPA)	75 pts. max.
Leadership	10 pts. max.
Community service	5 pts. max.
Honors and awards	5 pts. max.
Overall excellence	<u>5 pts. max.</u>
Maximum score	100 pts. max.

The Council awards recognition each year to three Washington Scholars and one alternate in each legislative district, a total of 147 Washington Scholars and 49 alternates statewide. These students are the four top-ranked finalists from each legislative district. All applicants and high schools receive final status notices from the Council.

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► What do Washington Scholars receive?

Washington Scholars finalists and alternates receive:

- An honorary recognition award certificate signed by the Governor, Secretary of State, and the chair of the Washington Student Achievement Council.
- A congratulatory letter from the governor.
- Statewide recognition through:
 - Announcement of award recipients to admissions and scholarship officers at the in-state public and private colleges and universities, members of the Legislature, and the governor.
 - Publication of the “Washington Scholars Directory.”
 - A statewide media press release.
 - Declaration of “Washington Scholars Month” by gubernatorial proclamation in the spring.

► How is the Washington Scholars program publicized?

In late fall every year, the Washington Student Achievement Council requests that principals of the state’s public and private high schools with a 12th grade graduating class nominate their top students for Washington Scholars recognition. The Council distributes nomination materials, and the program policies and guidelines, to the principals at that time.

The Council individually notifies all applicants of their final status in the spring, and releases special announcements to in-state public and independent colleges and universities, legislators, the governor, and participating high schools. In addition, the Council broadcasts a statewide media press release and publishes a “Directory of Washington Scholars and Washington Scholars-Alternates” to the agency website. Finally, the Governor’s Office issues a gubernatorial proclamation designating the month of June as “Washington Scholars Month” to honor the many accomplishments and community contributions of the Scholars.

The Council assumes no responsibility for local recognition. School administrators are encouraged to coordinate local recognition efforts for their Washington Scholars.

► What happens to the personal information I provide?

An important part of the program is bringing state and local recognition to the achievements of these outstanding students, while encouraging non-state entities to fund private scholarships that support Washington Scholars.

The program expressly prohibits the sharing of information for commercial or non-scholarship purposes.

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► How do I apply?

To be considered for the award, you must complete and submit the on-line electronic application form, with required attachments, to the Washington Student Achievement Council by the submission deadline. For nominated candidates without internet access, a hard copy paper application is available. Detailed instructions are below.

General instructions:

- The application **requires a social security number (SSN)**, or a 9-digit Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) alien **identification number** if you are a qualifying non-citizen resident. The SSN or INS number must match the identification number you use to apply for other student financial aid via the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Applications with missing or invalid identification numbers are incomplete. All SSNs and alien ID numbers remain confidential.
- Provide the **physical street address** where you reside so that the Council may accurately identify your state legislative district. A post office box address cannot identify the legislative district. Applications missing a physical street residence address are incomplete.
- Also, provide an accurate **mailing address**, if it is different from the residence street address. This can be a post office box. Contact the Council to update your mailing address if you move after the submitting the application but before announcement of your final status.
- Before beginning the application, carefully think through the activities in which you have been involved over the course of your high school career. You may want to make notes and work from a detailed, written draft organized into the major headings used in the application.
- State your accomplishments carefully since these will differentiate you from other students of similar scholastic achievement. Remember that the selection committee cannot know what you do not articulate.
- Do not abbreviate organizational names. Committee members may be unfamiliar with the acronym.
- Ensure that you attach all required documents. The selection committee will not review incomplete applications.
- Electronically sign the application where indicated, or attach original “wet” signatures if submitting a paper application. Your parent or guardian must sign the application if you are under age 18. Your high school principal or designated representative also must sign if you are submitting a hard copy paper application.
- Electronically submit, or mail the hard copy, application in a timely manner. The selection committee will not review late or incomplete applications.

Step-by-step instructions for submitting the on-line electronic application:

- Access the secure on-line application using the web link provided to you, and create a password at the prompt. Make note of the website address for later use. You may exit the site after creating the password and return later to complete the application in multiple sessions. Use the registered email address and the password you created to log into the website.
- Upon entering the application, note the category menu to the left edge of the screen. You may complete the categories in any order (remember to save data before exiting each page). We recommend moving through the application in sequential order, beginning with “Optional Info,” to ensure you do not overlook a section.

Please note: The date of birth field in “Optional Info” determines whether a parental signature is required. If you are under age 18, or choose to leave the field blank, you will be required to attach the parental signature before completing application submission.

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► How do I apply? continued:

- To save your work and move to the next screen, click the “Save and move to” button. To save your work and remain on the same screen, click the “Save and continue editing” button.

Please note: A blank in any category column signifies that you were not involved in that activity during the year. For all categories except “Honors and Awards,” enter the “Total Hours” you were involved in the activity for the year into the grade level column (9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th). For “Honors and Awards,” enter a check mark (click or space bar) in the appropriate grade level column instead of the number of hours.

- A new row of blank fields will appear when you hit the “enter” key in the last field of a category table (i.e., Leadership, Community Service, and so on), allowing you to add an additional row of information to the activity category. (Clicking “enter” is NOT the same action as clicking either of the “save” buttons.)
- Save your work frequently. Remember to click “save” before clicking the “log out” button to ensure that you retain all your data and can return later to complete your work. The secure website will not retain unsaved work.
- Ensure that required documentation are attached, if your high school has not already done so **or** if you have documentation of higher test score(s) than previously entered by your high school. Required documents include:
 - Cumulative 9th through 11th grade high school transcript
 - First quarter senior year grade report (or equivalent mid-term fall semester progress report)
 - Highest SAT (combined Math and Critical Reading) and/or ACT Composite score report(s) for any one test date

The Council converts all documents into digital images for review by the selection committee and for records storage. To ensure that digital images will be legible and readable by the selection committee, attach only documents with valid file extensions.

Examples of acceptable and unacceptable file types (extensions) are:

Acceptable file extensions

.doc (MS Word)
.docx (MS Word)
.jpeg (photo file)
.jpg (photo file)
.pdf (Adobe Acrobat)
.png
.rtf
.tif (photo file)
.txt (text file)

Unrecognized/Unacceptable file extensions

.do
.htm
.html
.webarchive
(blank) – i.e., no file extension shown
or “unknown” file extension

Documents with unrecognized or unacceptable file extensions may attach to the nomination screen, however, those files will not convert to usable digital files that will open for viewing on the Council side. Selection committee members will be unable to review the document. If discovered before the committee meets, Council staff will ask that you provide a replacement document.

Note: Read “Instructions for completing and submitting a hard copy paper application” for other helpful hints that also apply to the creation of digital documents attached to the electronic application.

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▶ How do I apply? continued:

- Download and print a copy of the parental signature page if you are under age 18 or have elected not to provide your date of birth on the “Optional Info” screen. After your parent or legal guardian has signed the form, attach the scanned document to the website, or mail the signed form with a hard copy application.
- Carefully read and be sure you understand the information release statement before checking the box and clicking the final “submit application” button. Clicking the final “Sign and Submit” button means that you:
 - Certify that the information contained within the application is true and correct
 - Agree to the “information release” statement as a candidate competing for the Washington Scholars recognition award
 - Accept that your electronic signature is created by clicking the “submit application” button
- Successfully submit the electronic application to the Council, with all required attachments, no later than **11:59 p.m., January 21, 2014. The selection committee will not consider late applications.**
- You should see a “successful submission” screen message immediately after clicking the “submit application” button. You may print a PDF copy of your application at that point, before exiting the website.
- If you do not see the “successful submission” screen message, the application submission process did not complete.
 - If you encounter an “**error prompt**” message, the critical issue(s) noted in the pop-up message must be resolved before the application will successfully submit to the Council. Contact Council staff for assistance during regular business hours if you have questions or have attempted, but are unable to resolve, this condition.
 - If you encounter a “**warning**” message, the website will allow the application to complete the submission process if you proceed to click “submit application” again. However, depending on the warning message, you may be submitting an application with possible omissions. You are encouraged to resolve the issues to ensure a complete application. Contact Council staff for assistance during regular business hours if you have any questions.
- After you have successfully submitted the electronic application to the Council, you will be unable to make additional **on-line** changes or corrections to the application. Contact Council staff by phone or email during regular business hours to do so.

Instructions if submitting a hard copy paper application:

DO:

- Print the application on **white paper stock** with **black ink toner**. Color paper stock or toner is not acceptable. It renders the application difficult to read by the selection committee and illegible for further processing by the Council, which uses digital scanning to store the document.
- Print a **single-sided** application. Otherwise, Council staff must re-process your application materials to detach **confidential information pages** and ensure that all pages are digitally- scanned for committee review. The confidential information pages include the “Optional” section and the page containing the required signatures.
- Use **black or dark blue ink pen** to complete the application. **Do not use pencil.**
- **Write legibly.** You are likely to score fewer category points if committee members cannot read your entries.

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▶ How do I apply? continued:

- **Attach documentation of the highest scores from any one test date for each exam type.** You may attach documentation of the SAT and ACT if you have taken both exams. The Council will give you the benefit of the highest converted result when calculating the academic score. SAT and ACT Writing scores are not used to calculate the academic score. **However:**
 - For the SAT, **do not “mix and match” the math (quantitative) and critical reading scores from different test dates.** Report the highest math and critical reading scores resulting from any ONE test date when recording SAT results.
 - For the ACT exam, **report only the ACT Composite score.**
- **Sign the form.** If under age 18, obtain the required parent or legal guardian signature where indicated.
- **Have your principal, or designated representative, sign** the application well before the deadline.
- **Photocopy and retain a copy** of the completed, signed application for your file before mailing.
- **Use only one staple to connect the entire packet.** More staples are not better. The Council will disassemble and reorder the pages to a uniform standard for digital scanning for committee review. The need to remove multiple staples tears pages and increases processing time.

AVOID:

- **Photocopying and attaching documents originally printed on colored paper stock.** Photocopies of colored paper stock may “black out” important information, especially in shaded areas, making it illegible and difficult to read. The page becomes illegible for processing by the Council through digital scanning.
- **Highlighter pen.** Highlighter will “black out” important information when digitally scanned, making it illegible and hard to read when reproduced for the committee. Shaded areas become illegible for digital scan processing by the Council.
- **3-hole punched application materials.** Punched holes may delete critical words from the page.
- **Folders and report covers.** The Council discards folders and report covers prior to committee review.
- **Materials not specifically requested.** The Council will detach and discard any non-requested materials before committee review. Discard materials include: resumes, photos, recommendation letters, news articles, copies of award certificates, and so on.

OTHER:

- To be considered complete, the application packet must include:
 - The fully completed and **signed** application form
 - Required signatures: Candidate; principal; and parent (if under age 18 or omitting birthdate)
 - A copy of the high school grade transcript (9th through 11th grade)
 - A photocopy of the senior year first quarter grade report, or fall mid-semester progress report
 - A print-out or photocopy of your SAT/ACT test score document(s)

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▶ How do I apply? continued:

- The Council must receive all applications by **11:59 p.m., January 21, 2014**.
- The school may offer to mail the paper application for you. If you are responsible for mailing, ensure delivery tracking to the Council by using **Express Mail, Federal Express, United Parcel Service, or USPS certified mail with a return receipt**.
- **The selection committee will not consider late or incomplete applications.** The Council is not responsible for applications that do not arrive, or that arrive late.

Mail hard copy paper application documents to:

Washington Scholars Program
Washington Student Achievement Council
917 Lakeridge Way, Olympia, WA 98502 (use street address for UPS or FedEx delivery)
P.O. Box 43430, Olympia, WA 98504-3430 (use PO Box for U.S. Postal Service delivery)

If you have questions, contact Council staff at:

Phone: 360.753.7843 or 360.753.7850
Fax: 360.704.6243 or 360.753.7808 (original hard copy mailing **must** follow the fax)
E-mail: wascholars@wsac.wa.gov

