

Tennessee Governor's Schools

School Counselor Guide

General Information

The Tennessee Governor's Schools offer intensive learning experiences on postsecondary campuses to selected high school students. Nominations for the Tennessee Governor's Schools must be submitted by high school counselors or principals. Students in the tenth and eleventh grades who would like to participate in a challenging and high-intensity program in one of the twelve areas should obtain application(s) materials from a school counselor.

Each Governor's School's review/selection committee selects the students who are offered admission. Governor's Schools differ in acceptance criteria, program schedule, and participation requirements. For questions about a specific school, refer to that school's application packet or contact the program administrator directly. Contact information for each school is available [here](#).

Student Nomination Criteria

In addition to meeting the prerequisites of the Governor's School to which application is made, students who are invited to participate in a Tennessee Governor's School typically:

1. Rank in the top of their class (upper 10 percent preferably) in performance/capability,
2. Display a high degree of motivation to participate in the school for the entire program,
3. Possess the ability to cope with a curriculum that stresses creative conceptual thinking,
4. Express willingness to expend considerable time and effort in the content area selected,
5. Demonstrate emotional maturity and possess evidence of many characteristics and attributes of a gifted student, such as:
 - a. Curiosity as a keen observer; thrives on complexity and gets involved.
 - b. Ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate; sees new relationships; is able to generate many alternatives; is self-motivated.
 - c. Ability to learn quickly, easily, and efficiently; retains and uses information.
 - d. Ability to express himself/herself in writing, orally, and/or creatively.
 - e. Inquisitiveness; asks provocative questions.
 - f. A record of out-of-school learning experiences or projects.

Due to the number of highly qualified applicants reviewed by each respective Governor's School, the selection committees place great weight on the written narratives and/or letters of recommendations from counselors and teachers. While completion of the numerical evaluation of the applicant is helpful, the written narratives and/or letters of recommendation often serve as the key to the selection of a student. We strongly encourage providing a written narrative as a part of the Counselor Recommendation and to request that teachers include a written narrative as part of the Teacher Recommendation form.

Preparing the Application

Students are expected to complete student application materials and return them to the school counselor, who will mail the complete nomination packet and supporting documentation to the Governor's School office(s) of interest. Applications submitted directly by students will not be accepted.

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Application Timeline

Applications are available beginning Sept. 1 – Dec. 2, 2017 on the [Governor's Schools website](#). Complete nomination packets must **be postmarked no later than Dec. 2**, with the exception of the Governor's School for the Arts (deadline of Nov. 4 to allow for student auditions). School counselors may set earlier deadlines to ensure that applications are submitted on time.

Required Application Information

A complete listing of application requirements is provided on page 3 of the application packet. Use the checklist to ensure application is complete and pages are arranged in the correct order.

Counselors are required to:

1. Provide official documentation of items such as class rank, class size, numerical test scores, etc. Please note that while PSAT, SAT, and ACT scores are not mandatory, school counselors are strongly encouraged to include this information if available.
2. Include an official transcript indicating rigorous courses (honors, early postsecondary, etc.).
3. Obtain completed, confidential teacher reference forms from the teachers listed on the application materials by the students. Students are required to list two teachers (see school-specific list) to complete these forms. There is a space at the top of the teacher reference form to put the name of the school counselor to whom the form is to be returned. Additional letters of recommendation are acceptable.
4. Ensure that students applying to more than one Governor's School complete the application and essay questions for each school. All supporting documentation must be submitted separately to each Governor's School to which a student applies.

State Distinction

According to State Board of Education policy 2.103, students who participate in a Governor's School may be recognized with state distinction, if the student also maintains at least a B grade point average. Local school board policy determines how students are recognized with state distinction. School counselors and administrators can confirm a student's successful completion of a Tennessee Governor's School by:

1. Viewing a student's certificate of recognition, which will be awarded to the student upon program completion, or
2. Verifying participation with the Governor's School to which the student was accepted.

Postsecondary Credit

Some Governor's School programs provide students with the opportunity to earn postsecondary credit through successful completion of the program. Earned credit requirements and transcription processes are determined by each Governor's School and respective university.

In the selection of students and faculty, the Tennessee Governor's Schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or disability.