Guidance and Overview: Completing the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation Student Excellence Scholarship Application (Homeschool)

Congratulations on reaching your senior year of high school! Please use these instructions as a guide for submitting your application for a Herb Kohl Educational Foundation Student Excellence Scholarship. This is a prestigious accolade that is recognized throughout Wisconsin and beyond as a mark of excellence in education. Each year, the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation confers over 100 Student Excellence Scholarships, 86 to students in public schools, 14 to students in private schools, and 2-3 to students in homeschool settings.

The first step will be for you to build a Personal Profile using the SmartSimple platform by following the homeschool student link at: https://www.kohleducation.org/studentexcellence/homeschool_students/student_application_form.php

Personal Profile Information

Most of the information included in this section will be obvious, but some might require some explanation. See notes below on each of the fields under Personal Profile. Required fields have a red asterisk in the platform.

- First Name
- Middle Name
- Last Name
- Phonetic Pronunciation of Full Name: Even if this seems obvious, please write out a phonetic pronunciation. Recipients have their names and biographies read at regional banquets in their honor next spring, and getting names right is important. Example: George Washington is pronounced jORj wAWsh-ing-tuhn. Suggestion: Use a phonetic translator, which you can find through a web search.

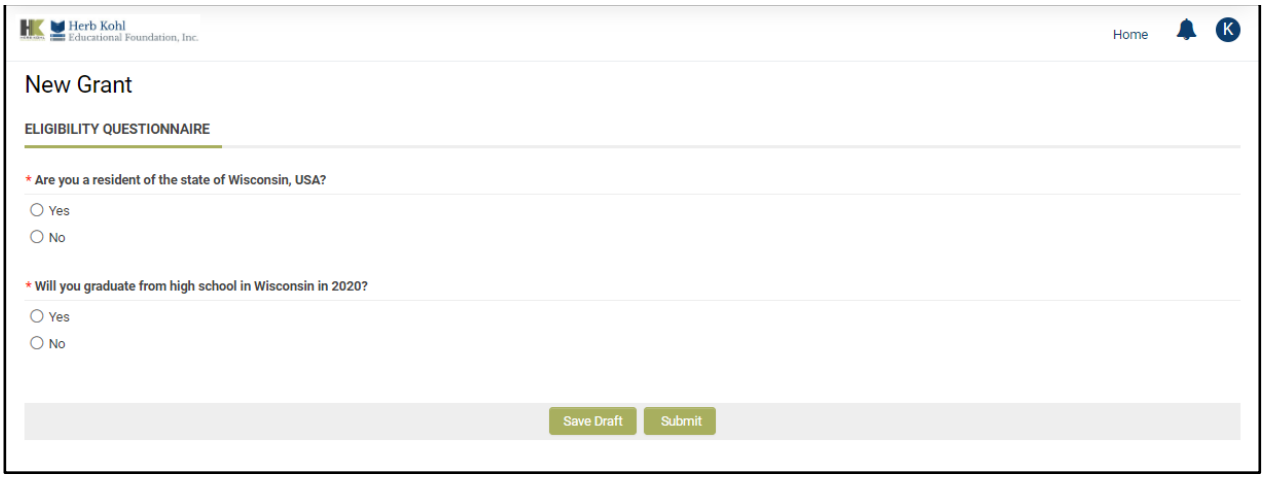
- Email: Choose an email that you will be able to monitor without access restrictions, and one that you will have after high school.
- Prefix
- Phone: Just as with your email, choose a phone number that you can access without restrictions.
- Cell Phone
- Address
- Address 2
- City
- Country
- State
- Zip
- What type of school are you associated with? Homeschool

Click on the “Validate Profile” button at the bottom to complete your profile, which will allow you to view the application once you return to your Home screen in SmartSimple.

Once you verify your profile information, you’ll be able to apply for a Student Excellence Scholarship award. You will need to select “Student Excellence” in the Funding Opportunities window, upper left side of your home screen. That will open an application for you. Once opened and saved, you’ll be able to return to the same application until the deadline for submission, or until you hit “Submit.”

Eligibility

Please answer the two eligibility questions in order to move forward.



If you have questions about the eligibility and residency requirement, due to situations like open enrollment, virtual school attendance, migrant students, status as an emancipated minor or homelessness, please contact Mark Mueller at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction at (608) 266-3945 or mark.mueller@dpi.wi.gov

Tabs

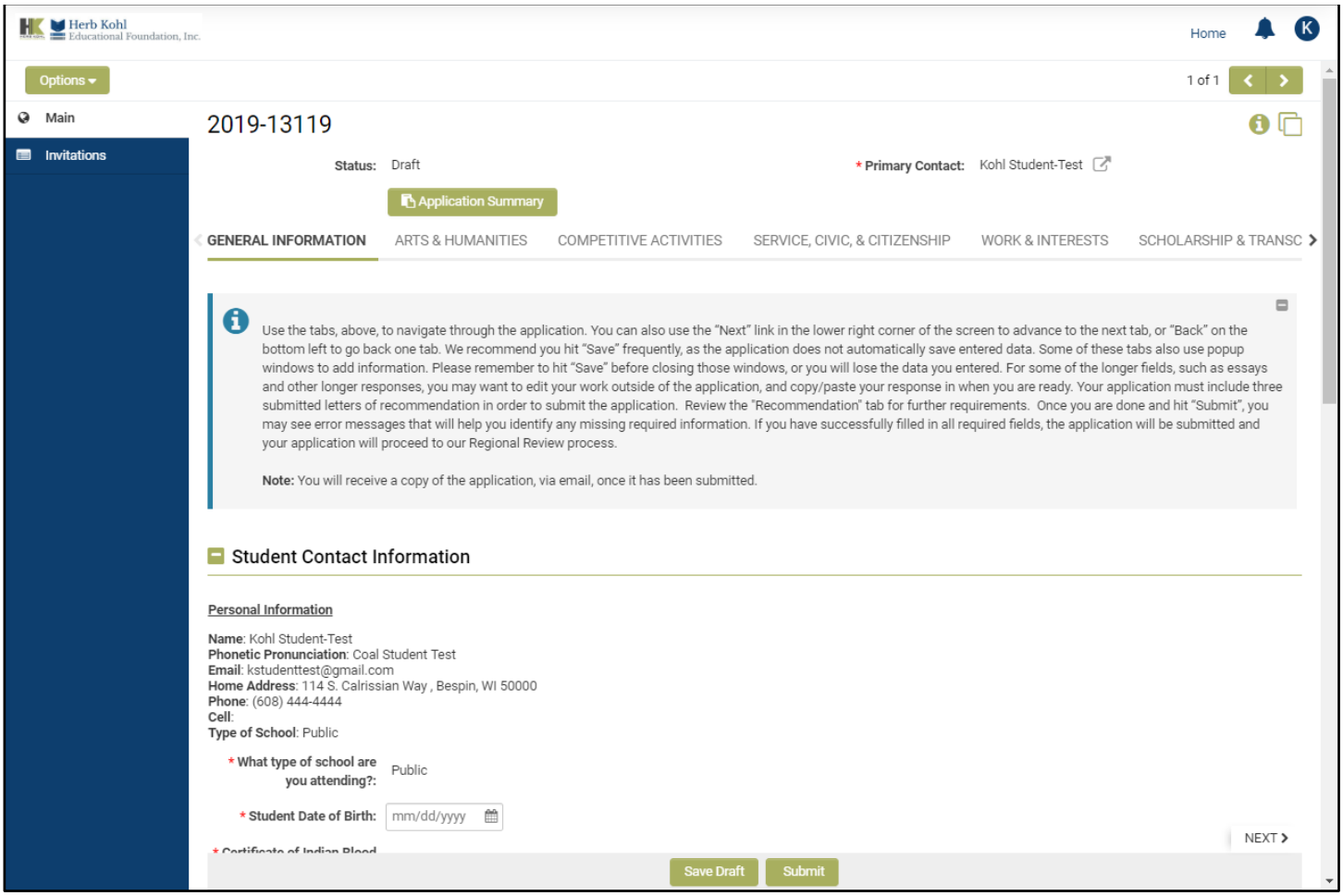
The Student Excellence Scholarship application asks you to work your way through using a series of ten (10) tabs, which you can follow in sequential order, or click through to jump from section to section.

The ten tabs are: General Information; Arts & Humanities; Competitive Activities; Service, Civic and Citizenship; Work & Interests; Scholarship & Transcript; Essay; Recommendation; Demographic Information; and Signature. On each tab are fields to fill out. Just like in the Personal Profile, fields marked with a red asterisk are required.

Each tab, and the information required for each tab, is explained in detail, below.

General Information Tab

The information you entered into your profile, along with some of the information from your nomination, will automatically populate most of the fields on this tab. However, there are some additional fields you must complete to move forward.



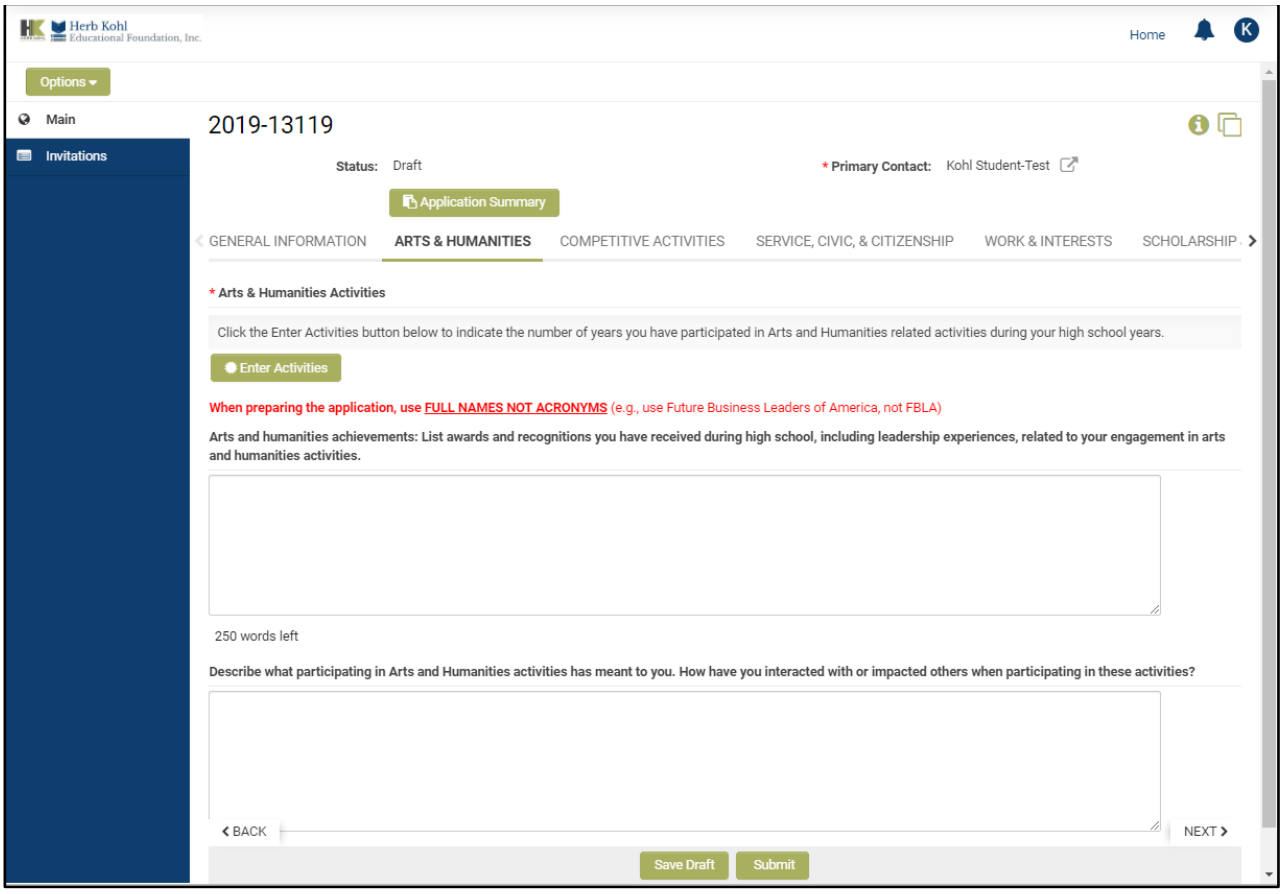
- What type of school are you attending? (this should read "Homeschool")
- Student Date of Birth
- Certificate of Indian Blood Status: Y/N
  If yes, Tribal Nation Affiliation: This need not be one of the 11 federally recognized tribal nations of Wisconsin, but applicants must upload and provide supporting documentation of affiliation or eligibility for membership.

School Information

- Homeschool School Mailing Address (the address of the parent or guardian who filed PI-1206 in Wisconsin)
- Public or community service is required for graduation (Y/N)
- Homeschool Administrator's Name (the parent or guardian who filed PI-1206 in Wisconsin)
- Homeschool Administrator's Email Address
- Homeschool Administrator's Phone

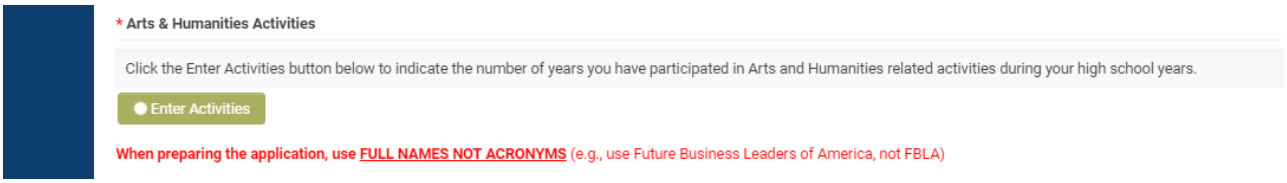
Arts & Humanities Tab

This tab has one subsection to open, and three writing prompts.



Prompt: Arts and Humanities Activities

Click the “Enter Activities” button to open a subsection for this tab:



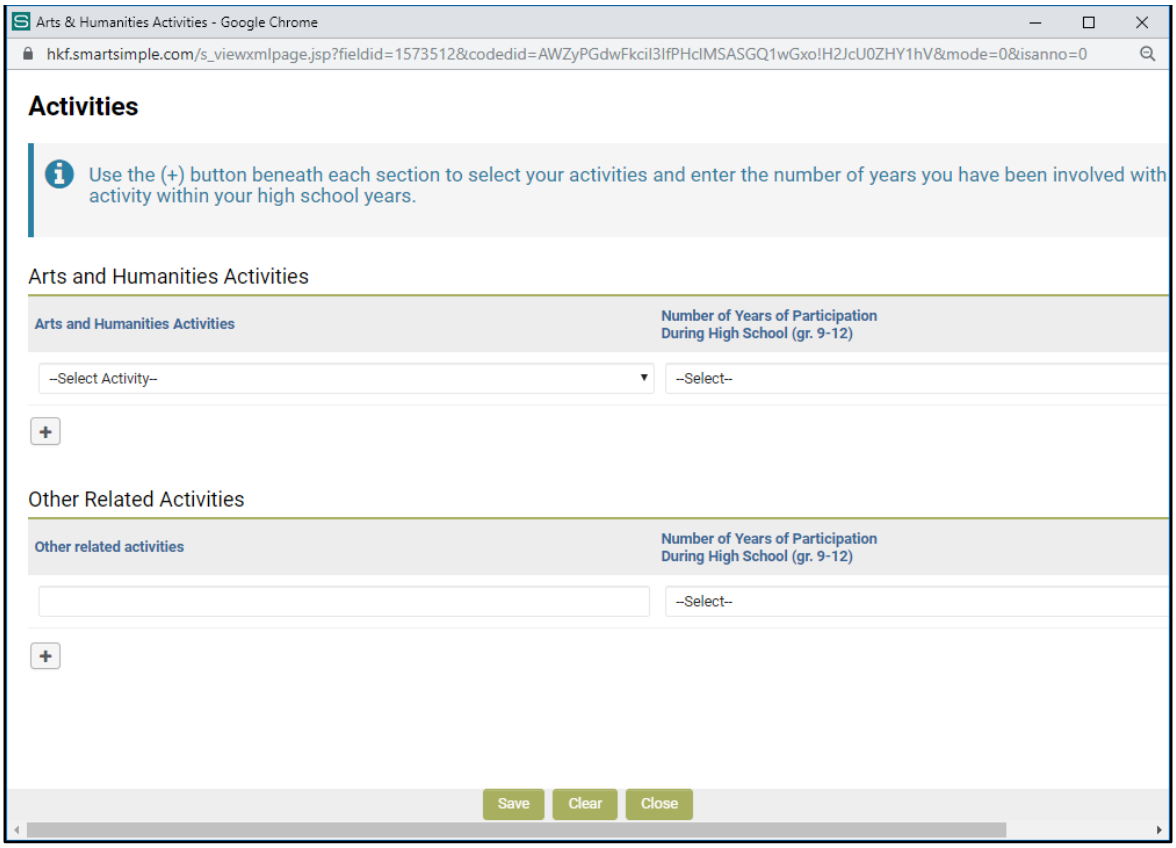
You will see a pop up box open that allows you to choose any activities you have taken part in related to arts and humanities.

Note: some of these activities may also appear in other sections of the application, such as in “Competitive Activities” for things like music contests or Marching Band. It is acceptable to list them in as many sections as are relevant for telling your story.

Arts and Humanities Activities has a handy dropdown that covers most activities, but it’s not all-inclusive of every activity possible in your school experience, so…

Other Related Activities can be used to add any activity that you don’t see on the list.

Reminder: "Save" before clicking "Close" in the pop up box.



Constructed Response Prompt:

Arts and humanities achievements: List awards and recognitions you have received during high school, including leadership experiences, related to your engagement in arts and humanities activities.

You have 250 words to describe your notable awards and recognitions.

It may help you to tell your story to include notes on why or how these would be viewed as notable achievements or recognitions. Readers don't always have knowledge of local awards named for specific people.

Constructed Response Prompt:

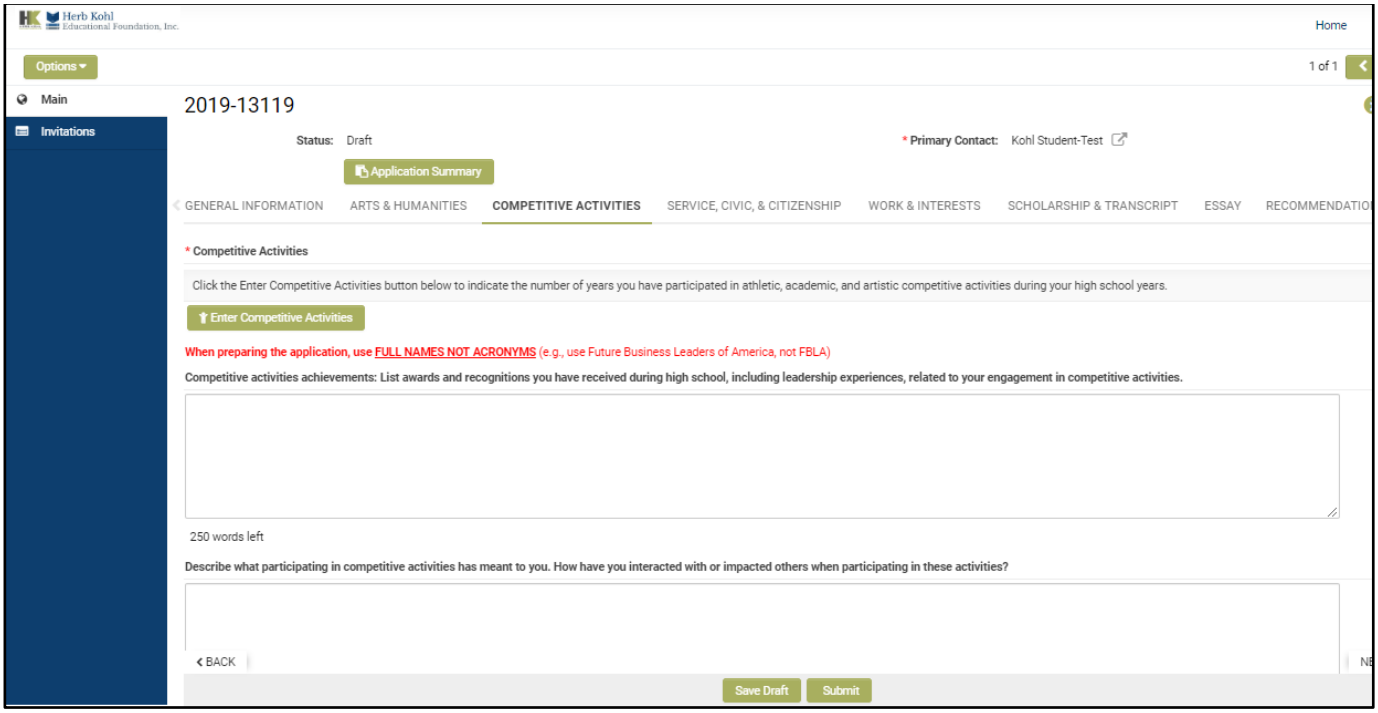
Describe what participating in Arts and Humanities activities has meant to you. How have you interacted with or impacted others when participating in these activities?

You have 250 words to discuss your impact and interactions.

Focus on how you have positively impacted others through your thoughts, words, and actions.

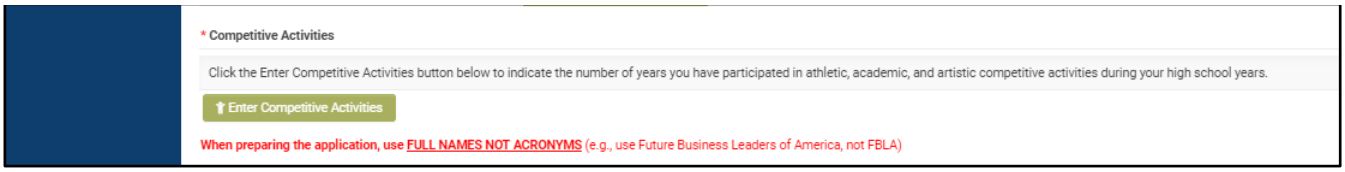
Competitive Activities Tab

This tab has one subsection to open, and three writing prompts.



Prompt: Competitive Activities

Click the “Enter Competitive Activities” button to open a subsection for this tab:



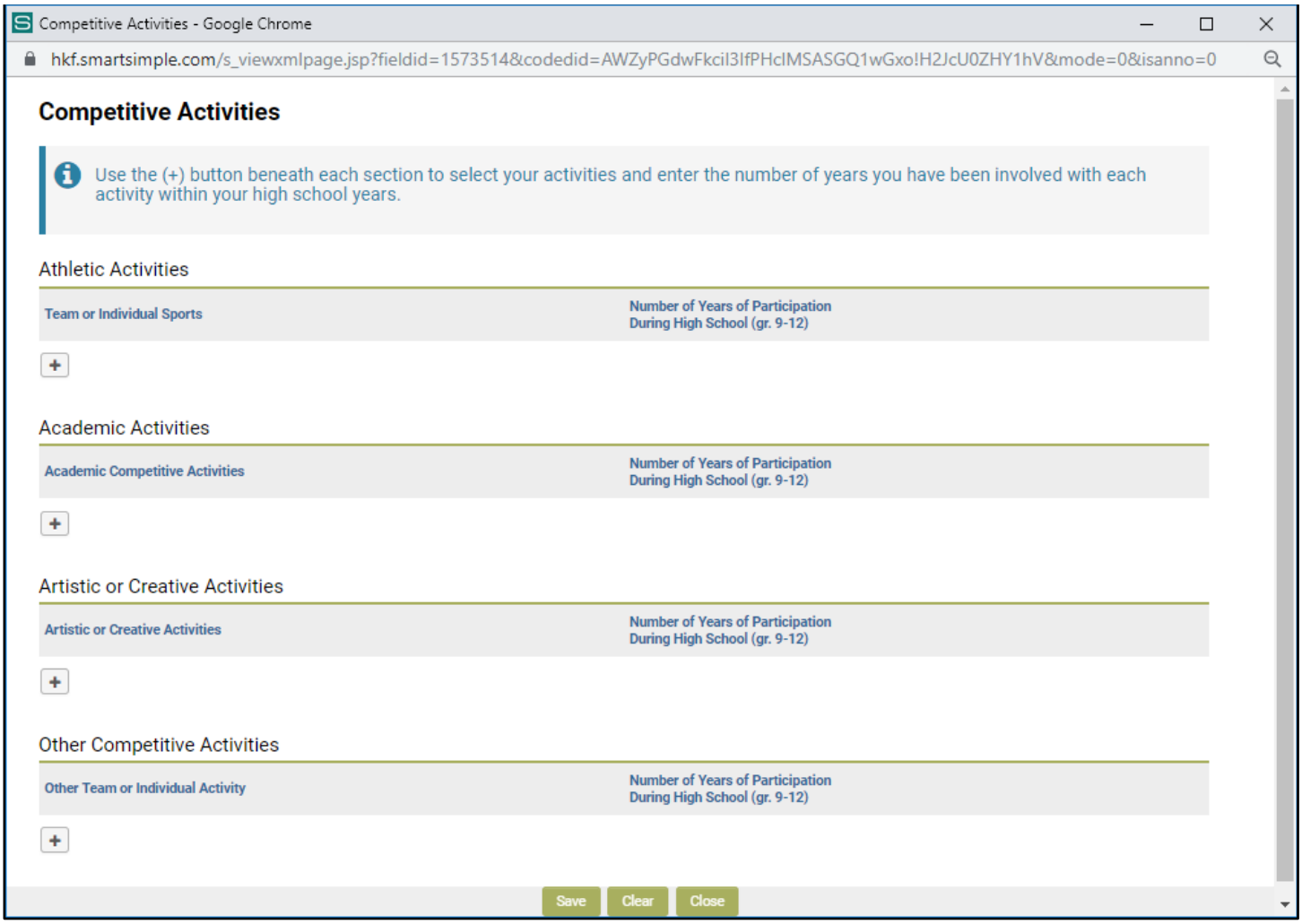
You will see a pop up box open that allows you to describe any competitive activities you have taken part in related to athletics, academic, arts and humanities competitive groups.

Note: some of these activities may also appear in other sections of the application, such as in “Arts and Humanities Activities” for things like music contests or Marching Band. It is acceptable to list them in as many sections as are relevant for telling your story.

Competitive Activities has handy dropdowns that cover most activities, but it’s not all-inclusive of every possible activity in your experience, so…

Other Competitive Activities can be used to add any activity that you don’t see on the list.

Reminder: “Save” before clicking “Close” in the pop up box.



Constructed Response Prompt:

Competitive Activities Achievements: List awards and recognitions you have received during high school, including leadership experiences, related to your engagement in competitive activities.

> You have 250 words to describe your notable awards and recognitions.
>
> It may help you to tell your story to include notes on why or how these would be viewed as notable achievements or recognitions. Readers don't always have knowledge of local awards named for specific people.

Constructed Response Prompt:

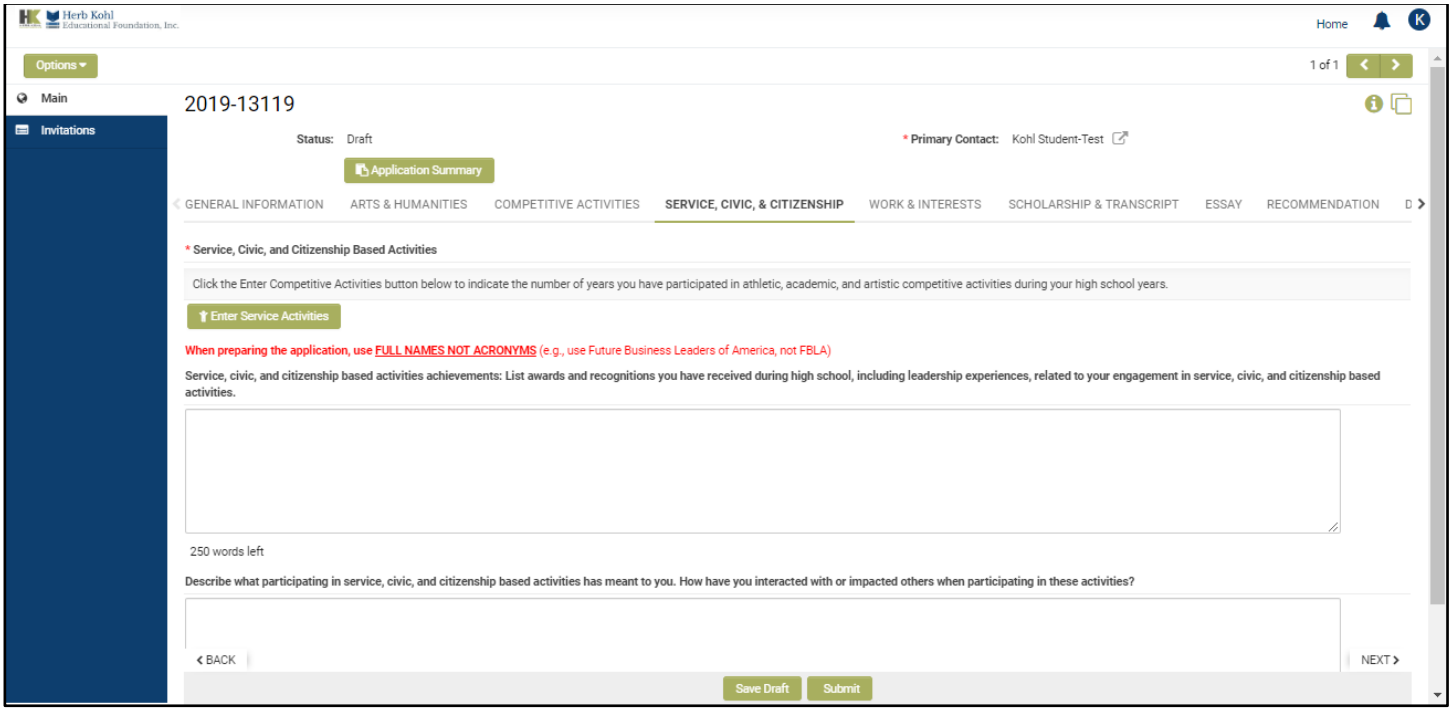
Describe what participating in Competitive activities has meant to you. How have you interacted with or impacted others when participating in these activities?

> You have 250 words to discuss your impact and interactions.

Focus on how you have positively impacted others through your thoughts, words, and actions.

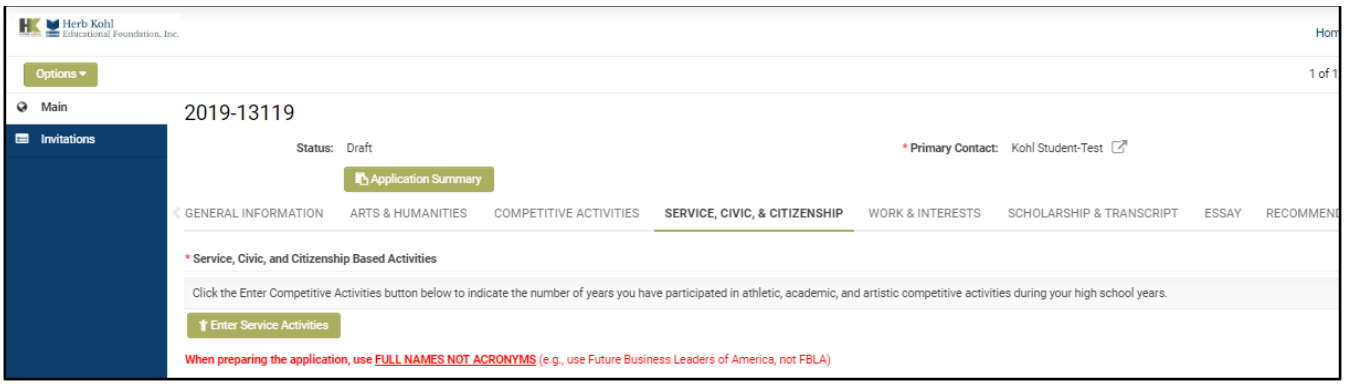
Service, Civic, and Citizenship Activities Tab

This tab has one subsection to open, and three writing prompts.



Prompt: Service, Civic, and Citizenship activities

Click the “Enter Service Activities” button to open a subsection for this tab:



You will see a pop up box open that allows you to describe any activities you have taken part in related to service, civic engagement, and citizenship.

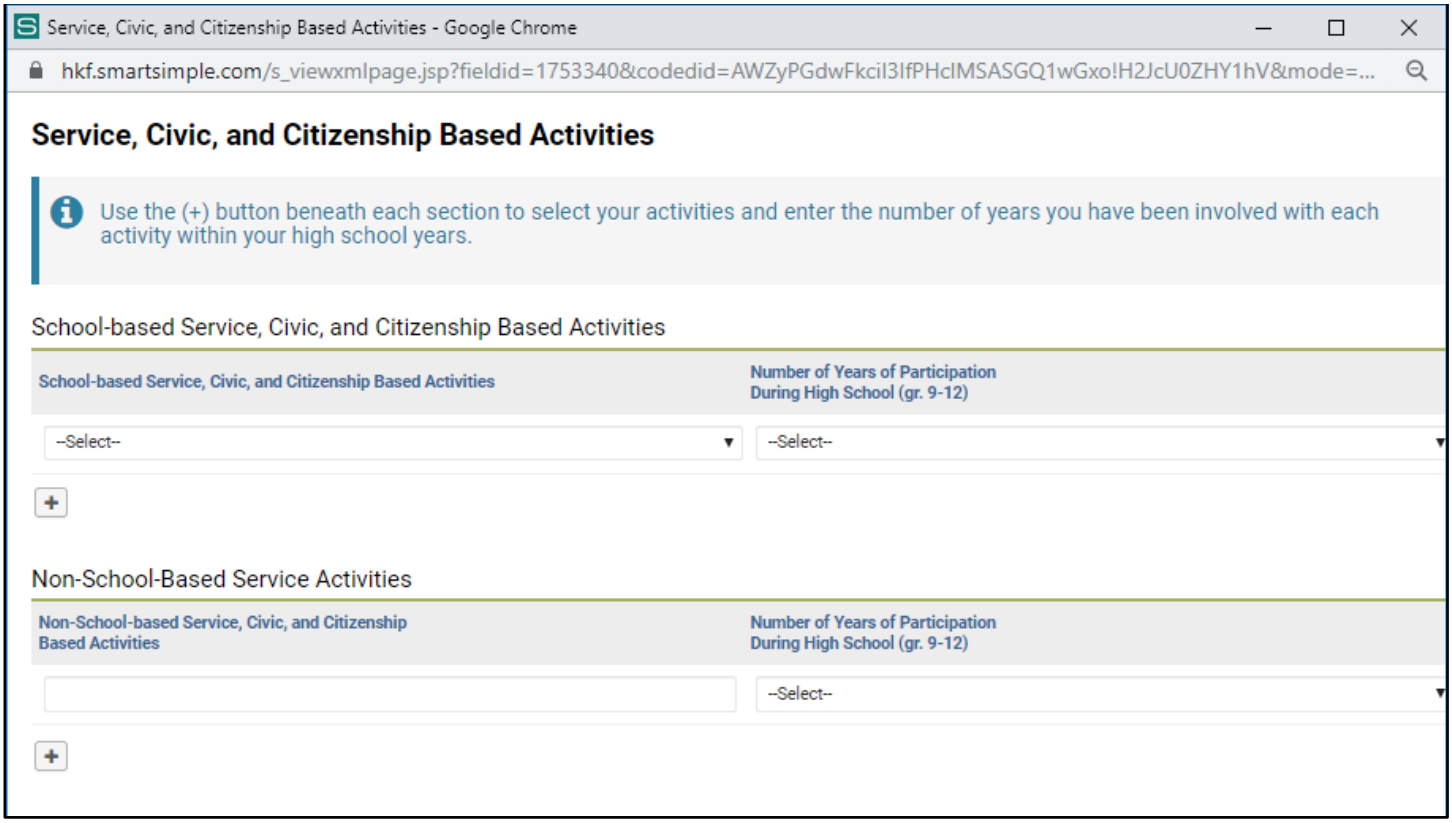
Note: some of these activities may also appear in other sections of the application. It is acceptable to list them in as many sections as are relevant for telling your story.

School-based Service, Civic, and Citizenship Based Activities has handy dropdowns that cover many service groups available through some schools, but it’s not all-inclusive of every activity available to every student, so…

Non-School-Based Service Activities can be used to add any service activity that was not provided through a school.

These activities do not need to be limited to your school. Many people engage in these activities outside of the school day, by engaging with community-based organizations, religious communities, service organizations, or volunteer opportunities.

Reminder: "Save" before clicking "Close" in the popup box.



Constructed Response Prompt:

Service, Civic, and Citizenship Activities Achievements: List awards and recognitions you have received during high school, including leadership experiences, related to your engagement in service, civic, and citizenship based activities.

You have 250 words to describe your notable awards and recognitions.

It may help you to tell your story to include notes on why or how these would be viewed as notable achievements or recognitions. Readers don't always have knowledge of local awards named for specific people.

Constructed Response Prompt:

Describe what participating in Service, Civic, and Citizenship activities has meant to you. How have you interacted with or impacted others when participating in these activities?

You have 250 words to discuss your impact and interactions.

Focus on how you have positively impacted others through your thoughts, words, and actions.

Work and Interests Tab

This tab has three writing prompts.

Prompt:

Work Experiences: Describe each of the work experiences you have had, including where you have worked, how long you worked there, what your duties included, and any leadership experiences you had.

You have 250 words to discuss your work experiences.

Focus on how you have positively impacted others through your thoughts, words, and actions.

Prompt:

Hobbies, Outside Interests, and Special Talents: Describe your hobbies, your areas of interest (if not already covered in a previous section of the application), and talents you have, including any leadership experiences you have had related to these activities.

You have 250 words to discuss your outside interests, hobbies, and talents.

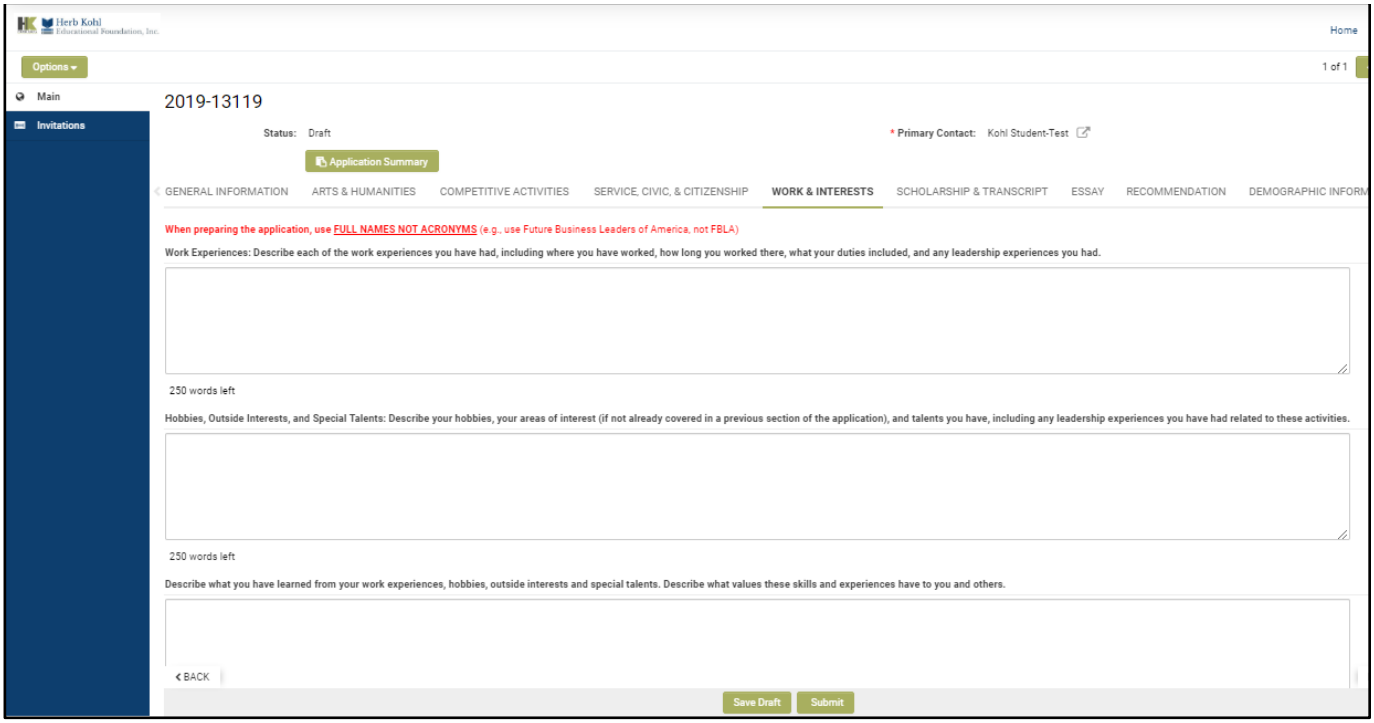
Focus on how you have positively impacted others through your thoughts, words, and actions.

Prompt:

Describe what you have learned from your work experiences, hobbies, outside interests and special talents. Describe what values these skills and experiences have to you and others.

You have 250 words to discuss what you have learned.

Focus on how you have positively impacted others through your thoughts, words, and actions.


Herb Kohl Educational Foundation, Inc.
Home
Options
1 of 1
Main
Invitations
2019-13119
Status: Draft
* Primary Contact: Kohl Student-Test
Application Summary
GENERAL INFORMATION
ARTS & HUMANITIES
COMPETITIVE ACTIVITIES
SERVICE, CIVIC, & CITIZENSHIP
WORK & INTERESTS
SCHOLARSHIP & TRANSCRIPT
ESSAY
RECOMMENDATION
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORM
When preparing the application, use FULL NAMES NOT ACRONYMS (e.g., use Future Business Leaders of America, not FBLA)
Work Experiences: Describe each of the work experiences you have had, including where you have worked, how long you worked there, what your duties included, and any leadership experiences you had.
250 words left
Hobbies, Outside Interests, and Special Talents: Describe your hobbies, your areas of interest (if not already covered in a previous section of the application), and talents you have, including any leadership experiences you have had related to these activities.
250 words left
Describe what you have learned from your work experiences, hobbies, outside interests and special talents. Describe what values these skills and experiences have to you and others.
BACK
Save Draft
Submit

Scholarship and Transcript Tab

This section has three prompts, including two uploads and a constructed response.

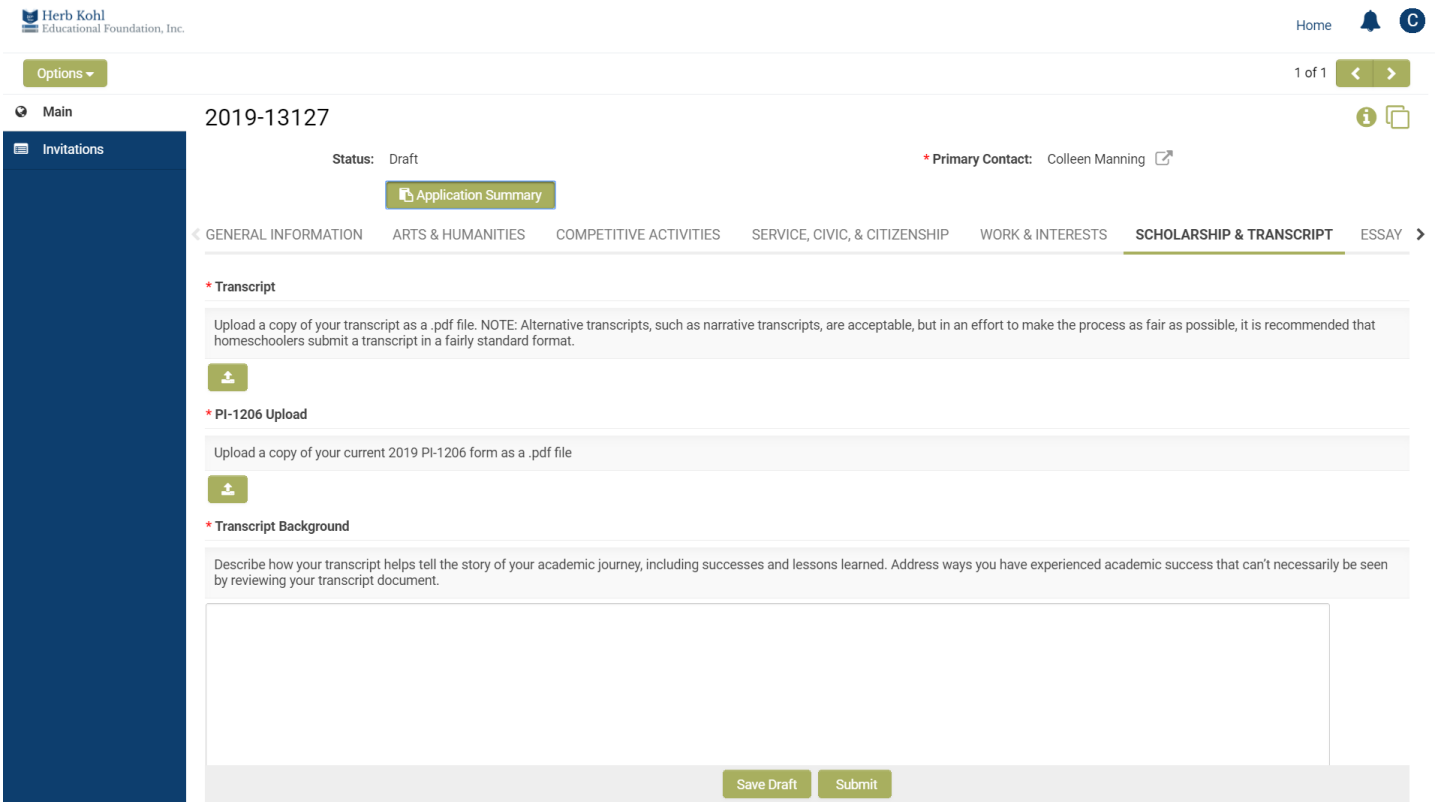
Transcript section

Click the green upload button to upload a .pdf copy of your current high school transcript. NOTE: Alternative transcripts, such as narrative transcripts, are acceptable, but in an effort to make the process as fair as possible, it is recommended that homeschoolers submit a transcript in a fairly standard format.

> The transcript must be in .PDF format, or it will not upload and save.
>
> The transcript can be an unofficial copy, as long as it is unaltered before upload, and has the signature of a homeschool administrator on it certifying it to be accurate.
>
> The transcript must be legible and easy to review, even if it has protective devices (ex. watermarks)
>
> Any inaccurate, falsified, incomplete or altered uploads may render your application ineligible.

PI-1206 Upload

Click the green upload button to upload a .pdf copy of your Wisconsin PI-1206 Homeschool Report for the current year. Your homeschool administrator (the parent or guardian who homeschools you) should have a copy of this year's completed form or will have access to this form by signing into their



account at https://sms.dpi.wi.gov/HomeSchoolParent/

After you have uploaded your .pdf files, the name of each file will appear on the Scholarship & Transcript tab.

Transcript Background Prompt:

Describe how your transcript helps tell the story of your academic journey, including successes and lessons learned. Address ways you have experienced academic success that can't necessarily be seen by reviewing your transcript document.

> You have 250 words to discuss your academic journey.
>
> Focus on how you have positively impacted others through your thoughts, words, and actions.
>
> This is a great place to really tell the story of your journey through high school, and how you have prepared to take the next steps into post-secondary education. It is not necessary to have a "perfect" transcript (e.g., a 4.0 on a 4.0 scale) to be eligible. This is the best section to describe any challenges and how you overcame them or what you learned from them.

Essay Tab

This section has one writing prompt.

Write a personal narrative essay, not to exceed 500 words, that describes your goals in the following areas:

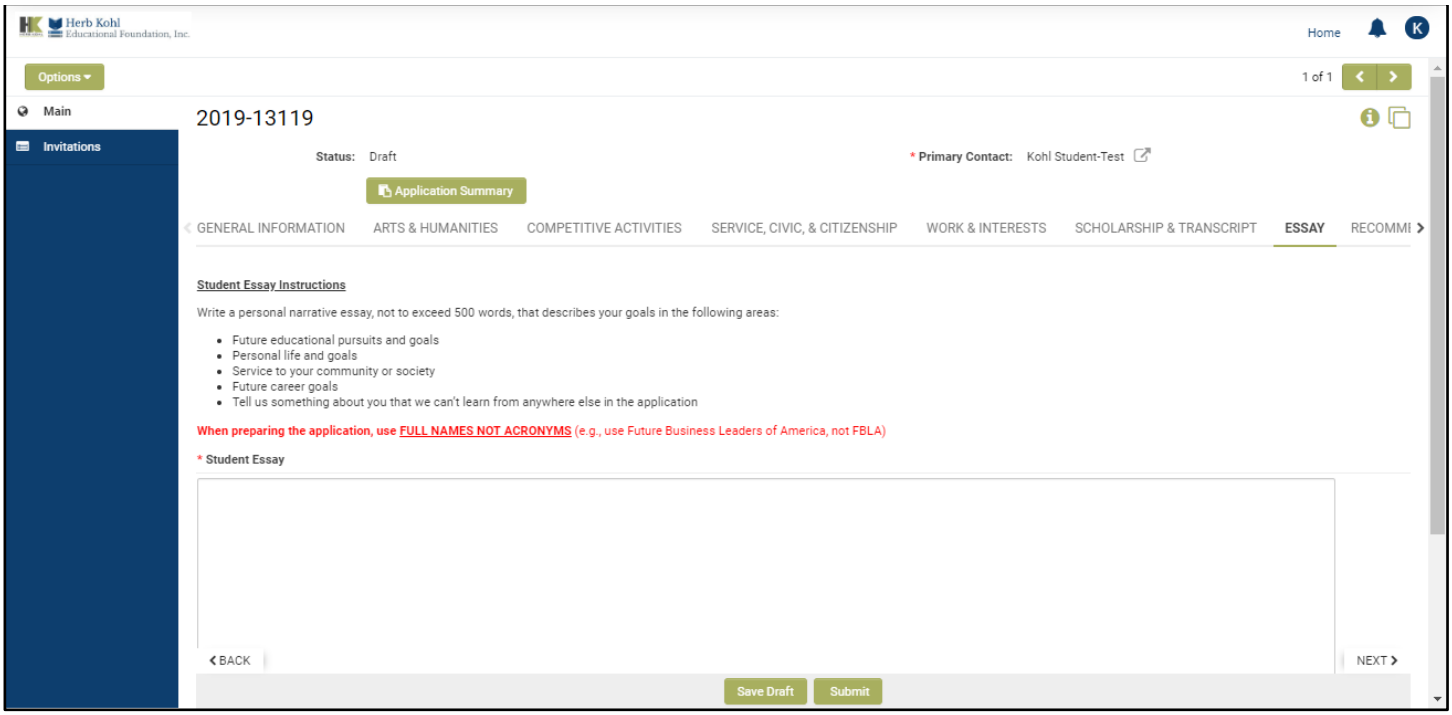
Future educational pursuits and goals

Personal life and goals

Service to your community or society

Future career goals

Tell us something about you that we can't learn from anywhere else in the application



Advice for this section:

Compose, revise and edit your responses in a word processing program (ex. Google Docs, Microsoft Word) and then copy/paste the final version into your application.

Proofread your work! Reading it out loud to yourself will help you locate errors.

Write truthfully and tell your story with humility, but take credit for your actions and the impact of your decisions as a student.

If you are going to describe an activity that several people collaborated on, specifically address your role in that work, and how your work impacted the outcomes of the group's work together.

Give real-life examples when you can.

Consider protecting any specifically identifiable information about others when possible.

Consider addressing how your context affects your decisions and impact of your words and actions (including things like geographic location in the state, relative affluence of the school and community, and proximity/availability of resources, such as being near a college or university).

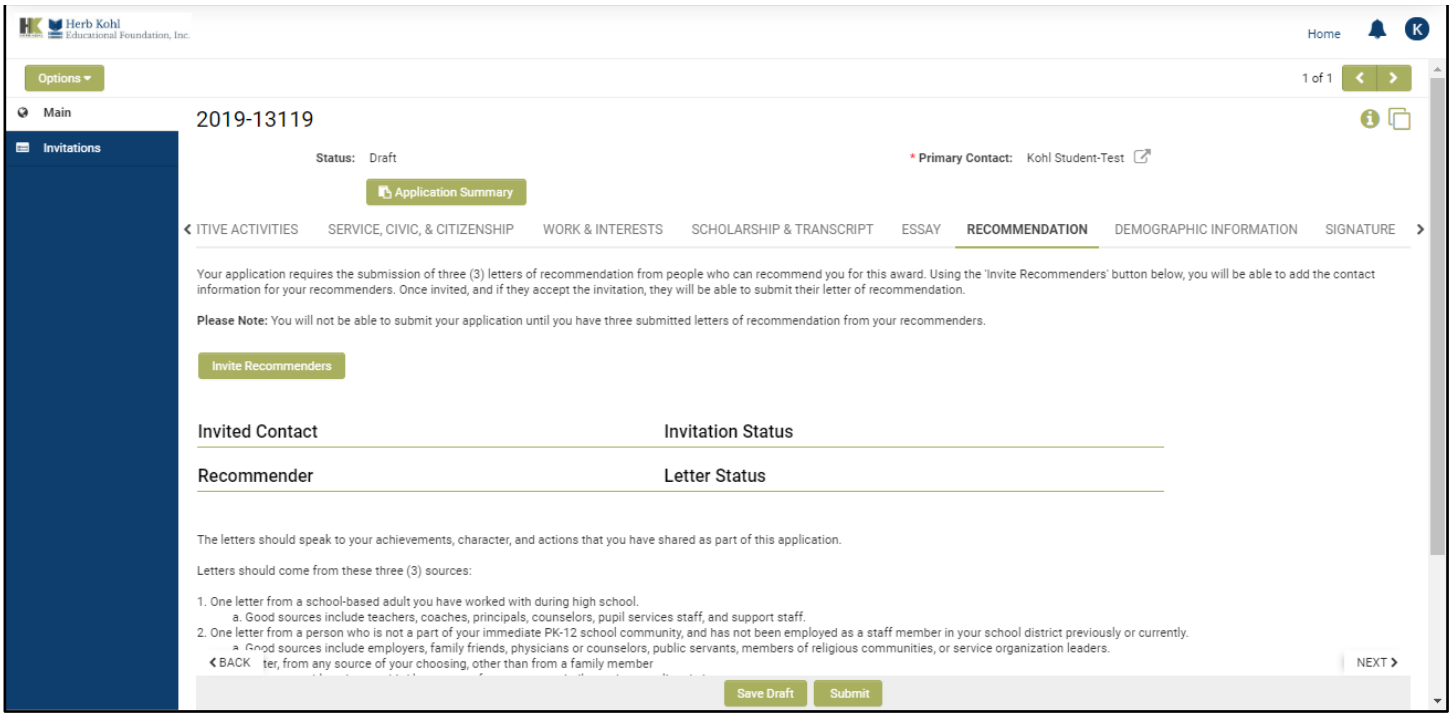
Consider describing the challenges you have faced, or the barriers you've overcome, in becoming the student you are today.

Focus on speaking to things like innovation, leadership, impact/results, and equity through your words and actions.

Consider how the letters of recommendation you request will support and deepen the evidence for the things that you share in your personal reflections.

Recommendation Tab

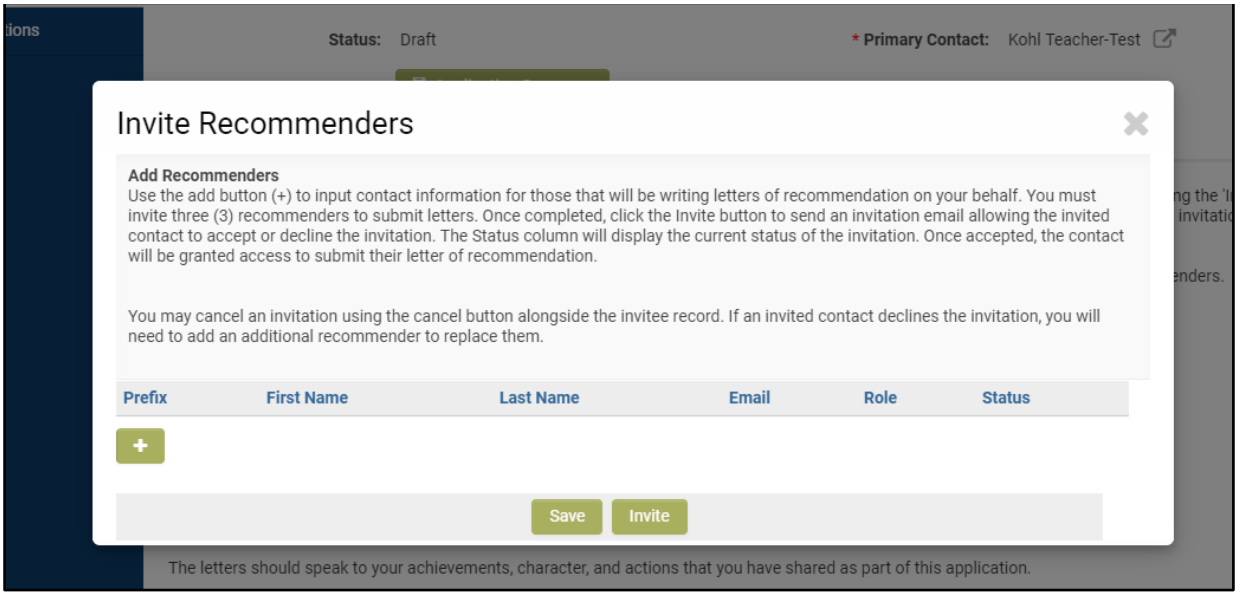
You will need to secure three (3) letters of recommendation before you can submit your application as complete. You will use the application to invite your recommenders to complete a letter of recommendation form on your behalf. You will be able to see if they have been invited, have accepted and are drafting a letter, have completed their letter, or declined the invitation from within this tab. You will NOT be able to see what they have written or shared about you.



The letters should speak to your achievements, character, and actions that you have shared as part of this application.

Homeschool letters should come from these three (3) sources:

1. One letter from an adult you have worked with in an academic capacity during your high school years (While it is acceptable to submit a letter from your parent as your primary teacher, it is advisable to find an adult outside your family who can speak to your academic experiences).
2. One letter from a person who can speak to your role in the community. Good sources include employers, family friends, physicians or counselors, public servants, members of religious communities, or service organization leaders.
3. One letter from any source of your choosing, other than from a family member. It is acceptable to have this third letter come from a source similar to the ones listed above.



Recommender statuses:

Once you invite a person to recommend you, their status will change to “Invited”. They will receive an email with an invitation to “Accept” or “Decline” the invitation to submit a letter. Once they respond, their status will update to whichever option they chose (“Accepted” or “Declined”).

Once their letter has been submitted, their recommender status will change to “Submitted” in your application.

If someone declines, or is generally unresponsive, you can also “Cancel Invite” using the green button with an “X” on it in the Invite Recommender submenu, and then you can add another recommender. **You must have all 3 recommendations submitted before you can submit your application.**

Advice for this section:

Actively manage your invitations and completion of letters of recommendation!

A packet will not be considered if it has fewer than the three required letters of recommendation.

No extensions of time will be granted to applicants or recommenders. Please plan accordingly.

Consider being strategic in your invitations, and clear in what you hope a recommender can speak to about your activities, leadership and the impact of your words and actions.

Reach out to recommenders personally before you invite them using the SmartSimple platform, so they know to look out for the request. This also allows you to decide whether or not they might be a good reference for you.

Encourage recommenders to give evidence and examples in their recommendations.

Letters written in a language other than English will be shown to reviewers in the language in which they were written, to preserve as much of the authentic word selection and intent of the writing as possible. However, English translations will also be made available to reviewers. We will use commonly available services (ex. Google Translate) unless a recommender is able to provide a translation. For any questions on this provision, please contact Mark Mueller at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction at (608) 266-3945 or mark.mueller@dpi.wi.gov

Demographic Information Tab

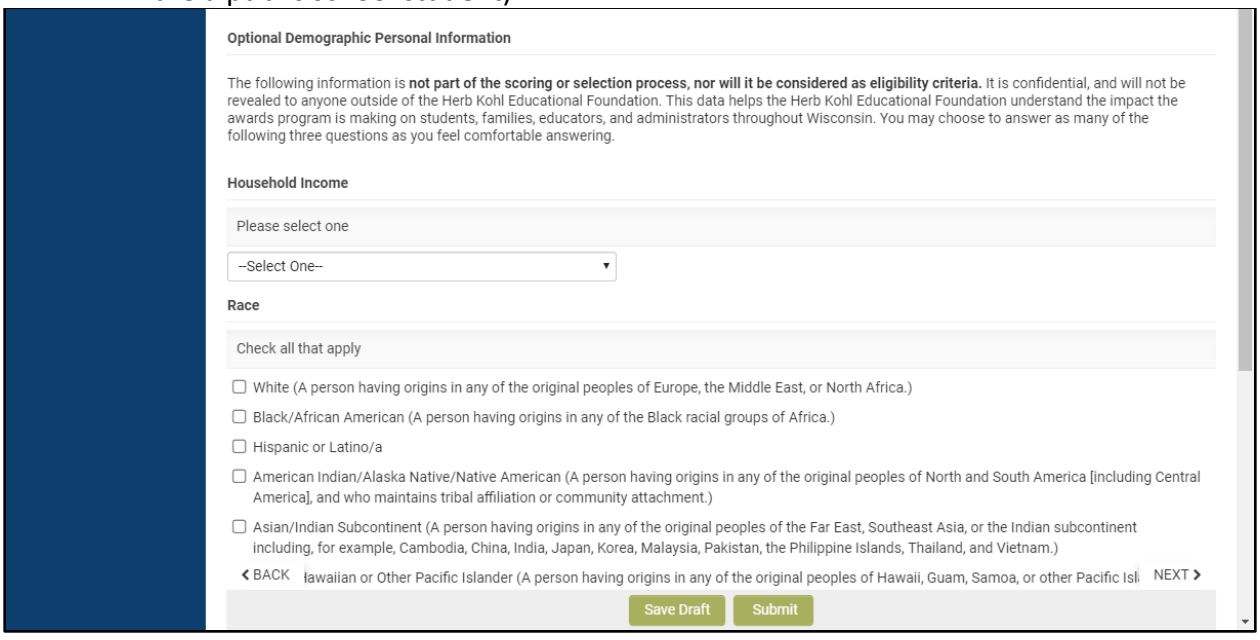
The following information is not part of the scoring or selection process, nor will it be considered as eligibility criteria. It is confidential, and will not be revealed to anyone outside of the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation. This data helps the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation understand the impact the awards program is making on students, families, educators, and administrators throughout Wisconsin. You may choose to answer as many of the following three questions as you feel comfortable answering.

Household Income (dropdown menu of choices)

Race (Check all that apply)

School Context (Check all that apply to your homeschool)

Urban
Rural
Suburban
Tribal
Charter (does not apply to homeschool students; if you are enrolled in a charter school, you are either a public or a private school student)
Virtual (does not apply to homeschool students unless you are enrolled in an out-of-state private online school; if you are enrolled in a Wisconsin private online school, you are a private school student; if you are enrolled in a Wisconsin public online school, you are a public school student)

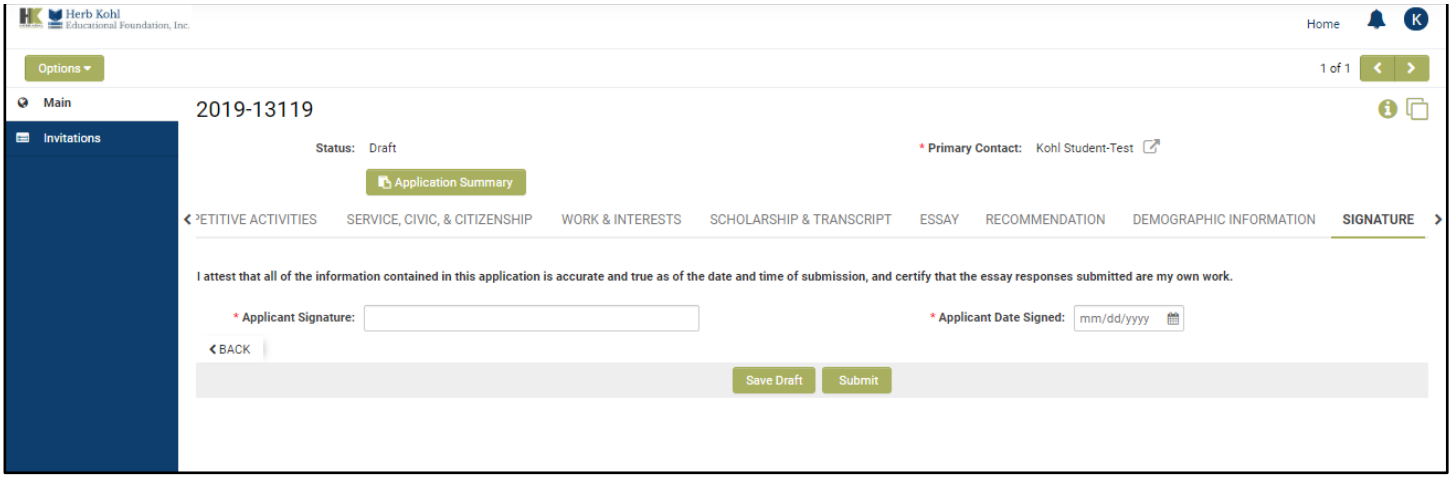


Signature Tab

Once you have completed the application, have filled in content for all required fields, and received back three letters of recommendation, you will be able to submit your application for consideration at the first level, a committee named by the Wisconsin Homeschooling Parents Association (WHPA) Board of Directors.

Applicant Signature (You must type your full name in the field)

Application Date Signed



Submitting your Application

Click “Submit” at the bottom of the Signature tab to send it in for consideration. If there are any required fields left empty or letters of recommendation missing, you will receive error messages with links to click that will take you directly to the error.

Once you submit, you cannot re-open your application for editing.

The deadline for submitting the Student Excellence Scholarship Application is listed on the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation website. Late applications will not be considered, even if the reason that it is late is not the applicant’s fault. The deadline for the 2021 Excellence Scholarship Applications is the same for all students applying, whether public school, private school, or homeschool.

Questions

If you have any questions, please contact one of the following to help you:

Wisconsin Homeschooling Parents Association, Kohl Scholarship Support Representative, kohlsupport@homeschooling-wpa.org

Kim Marggraf, Herb Kohl Educational Foundation, (920) 457-1727, marggraf@excel.net

The Herb Kohl Educational Foundation, and program co-sponsors, Association of Wisconsin School Administrators, Cooperative Educational Service Agencies, Wisconsin Council of Religious and Independent Schools, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Wisconsin Newspaper Association and Wisconsin Homeschooling Parents Association, do not discriminate against any student, teacher or principal award applicant on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital status, military status, national or ethnic origin, pregnancy or parenting status, political belief or affiliation, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation in the administration of the foundation's educational programs and activities.