

2019 Herb Kohl Educational Foundation Kohl Student Excellence Scholarship Application Guidelines (Public School Applicants)

Purpose

The purpose of the Herb Kohl Student Excellence Scholarship is to recognize student leadership, citizenship, school and community involvement, and academic achievement. It is the goal of the Foundation to encourage Wisconsin youth to pursue post-secondary education in a public or nonpublic university, college, or vocational/technical college. The Foundation awards \$10,000 scholarships to 100 Wisconsin high school graduates each year.

Eligibility

Applicants must be graduating high school students who intend to enroll in a postsecondary institution, which may be a public or nonpublic university, college, vocational/technical college, or certification program. Students who are residents of the State of Wisconsin, are in good standing, and who demonstrate probable success in postsecondary education are eligible to apply. This is a highly competitive scholarship.

There are no limitations as to the number of applicants who can be considered from any one Wisconsin high school.

Application Process

Eligible students may apply directly through the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation's SmartSimple application portal. In order to provide all nominees an equal opportunity, they must follow all instructions in the application form. **All applications must be submitted using the SmartSimple application process. Paper applications are not accepted.**

The SmartSimple application portal can be accessed on the web here: <https://hkf.smartsimple.com>

Advice about registering for a scholarship

When setting up a personal profile, be sure to scroll all the way to the bottom of the page and select a school type. For public school students, it will be "Public School". Questions in the application are specific to a student's context. Then, validate your personal profile and save your personal profile information.

Student's applications will be evaluated on his or her leadership, citizenship, school and community involvement, and academic achievement. In addition, students will be evaluated on their ability to clearly articulate goals in each of four areas: future educational goals, personal life goals, community/society service goals, and career goals. Because this is a statewide award, application evaluators may not be fully familiar with a student's school, community or area that a student is from, so students are encouraged to include information about their personal and school context so that a reader can understand the significance of his or her achievements.

Advice about completing the application

It's normal for a student to participate in several different kinds of activities throughout his or her high school experience, although it is unusual for a student to have a large number of activities in each category of the application. Schools offer many similar activities, but may also have some unique activities, clubs, or sports based on the local context of the school. Students are encouraged to share as much as they can about how they participated in an activity area (Arts and Humanities, Competitive Activities, Service-Civic-Citizenship, Work and Interests, and Scholarship). Several tabs have dropdown menus with a large list of activities, but if a student does not see an activity he or she engaged in, then it may be added using the "other" fields.

If a student did not participate in a given activity area, then they should talk about how they interacted with that area during high school as a part of the school's climate and culture, and what that meant to both the student and the rest of the school. Students should consider how their answers in each area of the application paint a complete picture of his or her high school experience. The application is reviewed for the quality of a student's experiences and activities, and in particular, what a student did with the opportunities presented to him or her.

Each student applicant must also **submit three letters of recommendation**: One must come from a teacher (current or previous) with whom the student has worked during high school, one must come from someone outside the immediate school community who is not currently employed by the school district or a board member, and the third may come from any other source the student chooses (other than family members).

Letters may come from teachers, school counselors, principals or administrators, community members, coaches or advisors, family friends, employers, physicians or counselors, public servants, service organization leaders, members of religious communities, or university or college professors. Letters should enhance the student's application by illustrating **specific examples of the student's skills and contributions, knowledge, or attributes emphasized in the application materials**.

The request to submit a letter of recommendation is not sent electronically to a recommender until **after** an applicant has completed his or her application and submitted the application (clicked the "Submit" button.) At that point, the requests for letters of recommendation are sent to the people who the applicant has identified as a recommender.

A submitted application is not considered complete until all three letters of recommendation have been submitted by the recommenders. An incomplete application will not be considered for an award.

Advice about letters of recommendation

It is advisable to allow 2-3 weeks for requests to be completed by the writers of the letters of recommendation. It is also advisable for an applicant to personally notify the letter writers before an applicant submits his or her application, and make sure that the request won't be blocked by their email, sent to the wrong email address, or sent to the junk mail box. It's also smart for an applicant to alert letter writers when the application has been submitted, so that the writers have the best chance of seeing the request and completing the letter. Applicants will receive email notifications when a letter has been submitted by a recommender, but will not have the ability to see the contents of the letter. **Remember, a submitted application is not considered complete until all three letters of recommendation have been submitted by the recommenders.** Plan ahead and allow sufficient time for recommenders to submit letters.

Letter of Recommendation Translations

Letters of recommendation will be read in the language in which they are written. However, an applicant may request to submit a version of that letter translated into English, or request a translation of a letter, by contacting Mark Mueller at the Department of Public Instruction at mark.mueller@dpi.wi.gov. Translations will be added as additional pages to the application, rather than replacing a letter in a different language, to both honor the intentional writing and word choices of the author, and allow for evaluators who may be familiar with the language to read the letter in its natural language.

New in 2019: Wisconsin's First Nations and indigenous people selection region

Applicants may choose to identify themselves as a member of one of Wisconsin's First Nations or as an indigenous person living in Wisconsin for consideration within the Wisconsin's First Nations Region. The applicant must upload information that supports their tribal affiliation or eligibility for tribal membership to be included in this region. Applicants with this identification will be screened by members of the Wisconsin's First Nations rather than through their geographic CESA region. Applicants whose packets are selected by the Wisconsin's First Nations and indigenous people region will proceed on to the Statewide Selection Committee for consideration.

Application Due Date

Applications must be submitted using the SmartSimple web portal **not later than Sunday, November 4, 2018 at 11:59.59 p.m.** Again, a submitted application is not considered complete until all three letters of recommendation have been submitted by the recommenders. Late applications are not accepted, and the failure of a recommender to submit a letter of recommendation by the deadline does not constitute grounds for an extension.

Selection Process

Applications will be sorted by the region in which the applicant goes to school, and will first be evaluated at a Regional Selection Committee meeting. The Regional Selection processes are coordinated in one of 14 different regions: each of the state's 12 Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESAs), Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS), or by the Wisconsin's First Nations region beginning **Monday, November 12, 2018**. Each Region is allocated a different number of Student Excellence applications that can be forwarded on to the Statewide Selection Committee level. Applicants whose packets are not forwarded on to the Statewide Selection Committee will be notified by the end of December.

The scoring rubric can be accessed online, from the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation website at: <http://www.kohleducation.org/> Public school award application scoring rubrics can also be found on the DPI website at: <https://dpi.wi.gov/teacher-year/program/selection-process/kohl-foundation>

Successful applicants' materials will be forwarded from a Region to the Statewide Selection Committee for consideration. Representatives of the Kohl Educational Foundation, CESAs and MPS, Wisconsin's indigenous people, the Wisconsin Council of Religious and Independent Schools, the Wisconsin Newspaper Association, business-education partners and state education-related associations and agencies serve annually on the Statewide Selection Committee.

The Statewide Selection Committee meets early in 2019 to review applications and make final selections. Applicants who are awarded a Herb Kohl Educational Foundation Student Excellence scholarship will be notified through traditional mail in March. Non-recipients will also be notified at the same time, also through traditional mail.

Scholarship recipients are then invited to attend one of the five Herb Kohl Educational Foundation Banquets, held throughout the spring at five different areas of the state, to be honored and receive certificates representing their award.

Use of Scholarship Grant

A Kohl Student Excellence Scholarship may be used to directly reimburse the student's post-secondary institution for tuition, room and board, books, technology, equipment and fees. In August, 2019, the Kohl Foundation will send the scholarship grant funds directly to the postsecondary institutions in installments based on how the student chooses to have the funds distributed.

Important Dates and Reminders

- Applications must be submitted in SmartSimple by **Sunday, November 4, 2018** at 11:59.59 p.m.
- **A submitted application is not considered complete until all three letters of recommendation have been submitted by the recommenders. Plan ahead!**
- All applicants will be notified of their status of proceeding to the Statewide Selection Committee or not progressing beyond the Regional Selection Committee in **December**.
- Recipients will be notified in **March**.

For more information or questions about the application process for public school teachers, please visit the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation website (<http://www.kohleducation.org/>) or contact:

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608-266-3945