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Media Contacts:
Kelly Everitt
Communications specialist
208-332-6818
keveritt@sde.idaho.gov

Presidential Scholar nominations open for Idaho seniors

(BOISE) – Idaho high school seniors interested in being nominated for the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program are urged to submit applications to the State Department of Education by Nov. 2.

The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964 by executive order of the president to honor some of our nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors. In 1979, the program was extended to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the visual, creative and performing arts. In 2015, the program was again extended to recognize students who demonstrate ability and accomplishment in career and technical education fields. Each year, up to 161 students are named as Presidential Scholars, one of the nation's highest honors for high school students.

Seniors are automatically considered for participation if they will graduate during this school year and they scored exceptionally well on either the SAT or the ACT college admission test during the two-year window that began in September 2016 and runs through October 2018. The U.S. Department of Education looks at test records in each state and selects the top 20 male examinees and top 20 female examinees in each state as automatic candidates.

In addition, Superintendent of Public Instruction Sherri Ybarra may nominate up to 10 other male and 10 other female candidates from Idaho based on their outstanding scholarship. Students who have not been notified by the Presidential Scholars program of their eligibility and who would like to be considered for a nomination by Superintendent Ybarra should go to the [State Department of Education website](http://www.sde.idaho.gov) for details on how to submit an application.

Superintendent Ybarra also can nominate up to five students based on their accomplishments in career and technical education fields. Those students should submit the same materials listed on the website but should note in the self-assessment they are seeking the CTE nomination.

The arts component of the Presidential Scholars program requires participation in the YoungArts™ program and uses a separate selection process. There are no superintendent nominations. Contact the YoungArts™ program at for more information.

All graduating high school seniors currently enrolled in Idaho schools and who are citizens of the United States or Legal Permanent U.S. Residents are eligible to apply.

Selected candidates will be sent application materials in February, and in late March approximately 500 semifinalists will be chosen by an independent national committee of educators convened by the Commission on Presidential Scholars. Six to 20 semifinalists are identified for each state/jurisdiction by the review committee. The number of semifinalists identified per state/jurisdiction is based on its proportionate number of test-takers

In April, the Commission on Presidential Scholars will make the final selection of 121 students, choosing one young man and one young woman from each state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and from families of U.S. citizens living abroad. In addition, up to 15 students are chosen at large.

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Reporters, editors: Find application information at <https://sde.idaho.gov/events/presidential-scholars/index.html> and YoungArts information at <http://goo.gl/uRQ1O3>.