SCHOLARSHIPS

HOW TO APPLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

Getting Ready: Scholarship Committees are looking for diversity in your interests and activities. They want to see that you are well rounded. Start gathering materials on yourself. Build a file or resume, making complete and thorough lists of the following things: Grade point average, class rank, courses selected, personal Statement (Letter of Intent) stating goals and intentions, copies of ACT or SAT test scores if you are planning to attend a 4-year institution. List significant activities: School clubs, sports, etc. Avoid using acronyms and make sure the club’s purpose is identified. List Leadership, academic honors or other special achievements such as honor society, knowledge bowl, etc. List community involvement such as: Canned food drive, volunteering at a nursing home and other volunteer experience (community and school) Coaching youth sports teams, etc. List hobbies and interest. Finally list work history from grade 9 and up.

 Take appropriate tests if you haven’t already. Many scholarship applications require a copy of your SAT or ACT scores. Register online at www.collegeboard.org. Keep your eye on registration dates and deadlines! Contact at least three individuals to act as references. Check to see if they would be willing to write a letter of recommendation for you. Use the Request for a Letter of Recommendation form available from Mrs. Courtois in the Career Center.

Beginning the Application Process START EARLY. Most scholarship applications require: an application form, a personal essay or letter of intent (150-500 words), letters of recommendation, and your high school transcripts. Some will require an official and some will accept a unofficial. Get your transcripts from the counseling office (Courtois). Be sure to specify if you need an official or unofficial. Allow yourself at least 2 weeks to complete this process Complete the application forms. Many national and regional scholarships have online applications available to make applying easier. Often a school representative (teacher, counselor or administrator) will be required to complete a section of your application confirming your academic record and perhaps recommending you. Give the Counseling Office or Career Center at least one to two weeks to complete the school’s portion of your application.

BE AWARE OF DEADLINES! A late or incomplete application automatically disqualifies you.

Starting your Scholarship Personal Statement. You are writing for a purpose. Be persuasive in showing the reader you are deserving of the award. Remember your audience. State specifically your goals and major intentions for the future. State what college you will be applying to even if you are not completely sure. List all ideas--any possibilities. Be creative, brainstorm without censoring. Sort through ideas and prioritize. You can’t tell them everything. Be selective. Choose information and ideas which are not reflected in other parts of your application. This is your chance to supplement your application with information you want them to know about you.

 Writing the Draft--Apply what you have learned in English class. Develop paragraphs - one idea at a time. Include a topic sentence with examples of your point or convincing reasons. Make transitions between paragraphs. Select action verbs and avoid the passive voice. Use concrete examples. Often examples of behavior demonstrate an idea better than an adjective (demonstrate how or why, don’t just tell).

Develop exact, concrete language. Avoid vague references, wordy usage or clichés.

Editing Your Draft: Does your introduction capture the reader’s attention? Are you consistent in your verb tense? Are you clear and coherent? Are you concise enough to adhere to the limits in length? Have you checked for grammatical and spelling errors? Does the essay present you as you wish to be seen? Did another person review your essay for possible mistakes? Does your closing paragraph present you as you wish to be remembered?

Make and keep a copy for your records.

 Follow up your application. Thank those who assisted you in the application or write letters of recommendation. Follow up with a Thank-You note. Acknowledge the scholarship’s donors. If you are granted a scholarship be certain to keep in touch with the donors. It is especially crucial to maintain contact if the scholarship is renewable. A Thank-You note & follow-up on how you are doing is important!!!