Students of the Year 2021

GUIDELINES

Updated September 3, 2020

DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION
Louisiana Believes

PROCESS FOR SELECTING AND AWARDING STUDENTS OF THE YEAR

OVERVIEW

The Students of the Year Awards Program recognizes outstanding students who have demonstrated excellence in all of the following areas:

- ✓ **leadership**
- ✓ **citizenship**
- ✓ **academic and/or career and technical achievement**

The Louisiana Department of Education and the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education sponsor this annual program, which is open to every Louisiana public and approved nonpublic school with students enrolled in the grade levels that correspond to the award categories. A Louisiana Student Selection Committee chooses three state winners.

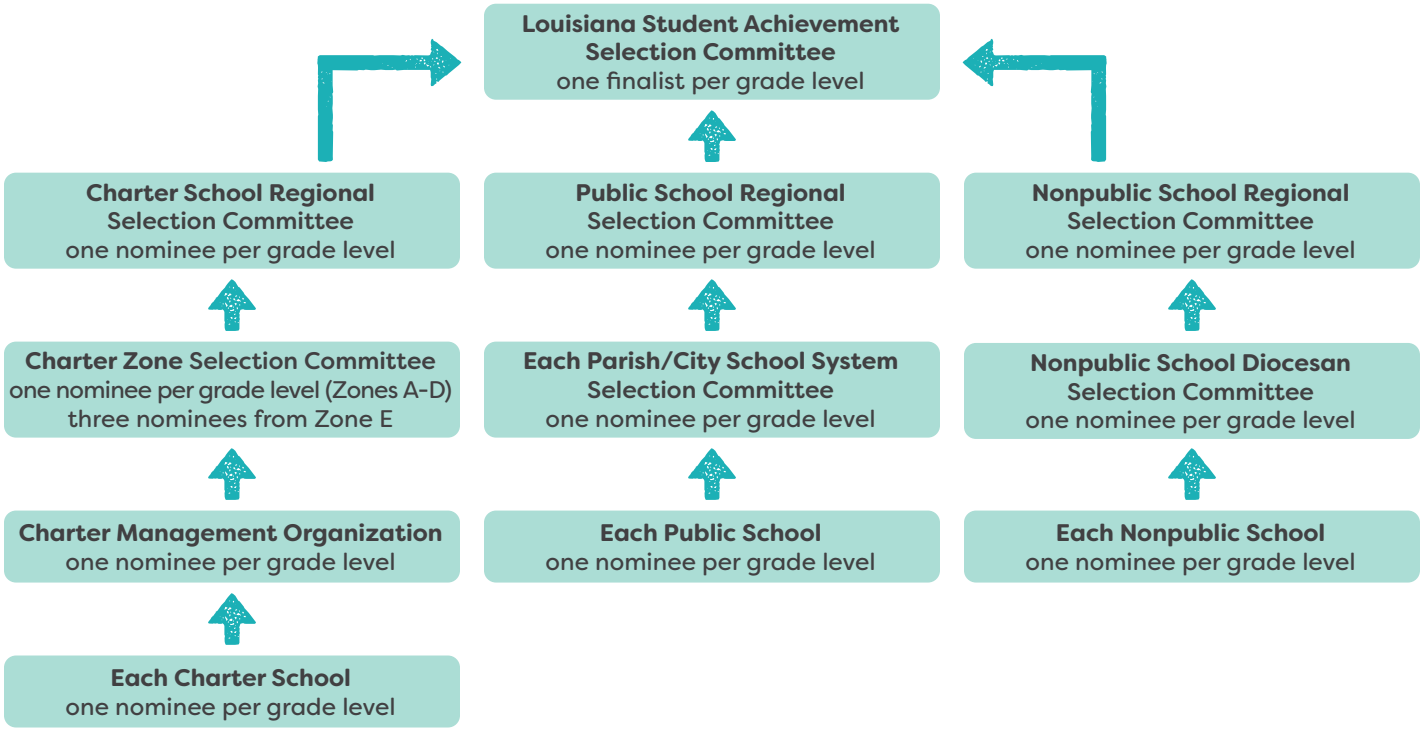
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT OF THE YEAR:	MIDDLE/JR. HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT OF THE YEAR:	HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT OF THE YEAR:
one fifth-grade grade student	one eighth-grade student	one twelfth-grade student

Only students who are enrolled in the above grades are eligible to participate.

Each educational agency participating in the Student of the Year Program must submit a school system information form to the state coordinator. This form indicates a school system's point(s) of contact and level of participation. School systems are also responsible for implementing a student nomination process consistently and equitably across the school system. Families must be informed of this process before the school-level committee considers nominees. Students and families must also be aware of the protocols for resolving potential disputes. After schools select nominees, they submit candidates' names to the School System Selection Committee.

SELECTION PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOL SYSTEMS AND DIOCESES

The superintendent/CEO or his/her designee appoints members to School System and Diocesan Selection Committees. Composed of three to five members each, the function of these committees is to apply established criteria to select a candidate in each of the three categories.



All committees are to include equitable representation from various ethnic and racial groups, composed of a combination of the following stakeholders:

- grade level appropriate teacher
- school counselor
- school or central office administrator
- community member
- career/technical instructor or supervisor (only grade 12)
- postsecondary personnel

In the event of a tie, the committee should reach a consensus to determine nominees and finalists. Committees may meet virtually or in person. It is highly recommended that the school system-level, diocesan and Charter Management Organization (CMO) zone committees conduct interviews and review writing samples since these are components of the regional and state-level programs.

- CMO Selection Committees submit nominee portfolios to a CMO Zone Selection Committee. See Appendix A for more information about CMO zones.
- School System, Diocesan and CMO Zone Selection Committees submit nominee portfolios to their assigned regional coordinator.

REGIONAL AND STATE SELECTION PROCEDURES

The seven Regional Selection Committees and the State Student Achievement Selection Committee will be composed of at least five members, composed of a combination of the following stakeholders:

- grade level appropriate teacher
- school counselor
- school or central office administrator
- community member
- career/technical instructor or supervisor (only grade 12)
- postsecondary personnel

All Regional Selection Committees use the same criteria to select one finalist in each of the three categories. The remainder of the process proceeds as follows:

1. **The Regional Selection Committee Chairperson submits the three finalists to the State Student of the Year Coordinator.**
2. **The Regional Selection Committee Chairperson notifies regional candidates and their respective superintendents/CEOs on a confidential basis a few days in advance of the public announcement. These notifications will occur in time for families to finalize arrangements for the interview portion of the selection process.**
3. **The State Student Achievement Selection Committee reviews applications, evaluates writing samples and interviews candidates.**
4. **The State Student Achievement Selection Committee names one Student of the Year in each category.**

AWARDS

All regional candidates and their parents, superintendent and principal; the State Superintendent of Education; Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education members; Legislative Educational Committee members; and news media are invited to attend the Students of the Year Awards Ceremony, which is traditionally held in Baton Rouge. At that time, awards are presented to the twenty-one (21) regional finalists and to the three (3) State Students of the Year.

Note: the State Student Achievement Selection Committee may organize a virtual ceremony if a health or other crisis prevents groups from gathering for an in-person event.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

At minimum, Students of the Year candidates should have a cumulative grade point average of 3.1 on a four-point scale. The grade point average is calculated on **semester grades** in the following fashion:

- **Grade 5 candidates:** GPA in grades 2, 3, 4 and the first semester of grade 5
- **Grade 8 candidates:** GPA in grades 5, 6, 7 and the first semester of grade 8
- **Grade 12 candidates:** GPA in grades 9, 10, 11 and the first semester of grade 12

Once they have selected candidates, the school must support student(s) during the application process. A school representative will forward the completed application portfolios to the School System-level Selection Committee. **Note: The LDOE recommends that school systems give nominees an opportunity to interview with a selection committee prior to submitting their names to the Regional Selection Committee.**

STUDENT PORTFOLIOS

SCHOOL SYSTEM-LEVEL SUBMISSIONS

The candidate's application portfolio is the basis for the selection process throughout the local, regional and state levels. As such, the School System-level Selection Committee should ensure that candidate portfolios include all required application materials without exceeding 25 pages. The application portfolio includes the following:

- ✓ LDOE Application Form
- ✓ Autobiographical Sketch
- ✓ Academic Records
- ✓ LDOE Leadership, Citizenship and Awards forms

Each of these components is explained in Appendices B and C.

REGIONAL- AND STATE-LEVEL PORTFOLIO SUBMISSIONS

School systems, CMOs and dioceses are responsible for assisting nominated students in converting their application materials into electronic portfolios. The portfolio should not exceed 50 pages, including the cover page, photo and all other required components and student-selected artifacts. School systems should try to submit a single file but may separate application materials into sections if necessary. School systems must submit electronic portfolios to the regional coordinator by the specified deadline. Once the regional finalists have been selected, regional coordinators will submit their electronic portfolios to the state coordinator.

WRITING SAMPLES

In addition to the autobiographical sketch students include in their application portfolios, each finalist will write a short essay as part of the regional and state application process. Committee members consider content as well as mechanics as they review student writing. See Appendix C for evaluation criteria.

INTERVIEWS

Panels from the regional and state committees conduct interviews with each finalist before selecting the Students of the Year. Judges will ask finalists questions about topics that are appropriate to the student's age and academic level. Panelists consider the content of students' answers as well as their ability to articulate those thoughts clearly and completely. See Appendix C for evaluation criteria.

APPENDIX A: CHARTER SCHOOL GUIDANCE

All charter schools (Types 1, 2, 3, 3A, 4 and 5) will be divided into five zones and placed within Region 7. Zone assignments are based on geographical locations, with zone nominee(s) submitted to the Region 7 Achievement Selection Committee. The number of nominees per grade level from each zone will be based on the number of charter management organizations (CMOs) identified in a zone. Nominees for each zone will be selected based on portfolio content and an interview which can be completed virtually or face-to-face.

All charter schools will submit nominees to their CMOs, and CMOs submit their nominees to their Charter Area Selection Committee Chairman. CMOs will be notified of their zone assignment. University Lab Schools will submit their nominees to the region in which they are located.

ZONE ASSIGNMENTS

Zone A – North Louisiana: one nominee

(Avoyelles, Caddo, City of Monroe, Claiborne, Concordia, Lincoln, Morehouse, Richland, Union)

Zone B – Southwest Louisiana: one nominee

(Calcasieu, Lafayette, St. Landry, Iberville, St. James, St. Mary)

Zone C – Central Louisiana: two nominees

(City of Baker, City of Bogalusa, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Tangipahoa)

Zone D – South Central Louisiana: one nominee

(Lafourche, Jefferson, Plaquemines)

Zone E – Orleans: three nominees

(Orleans)

If your geographic area is not listed, please contact the state coordinator for the correct assignment.

APPENDIX B: PORTFOLIO SUBMISSIONS

School/School System Level: The portfolio must include information that is relevant and pertinent to the areas listed below. Excessively decorated or over-sized portfolios are not encouraged. The initial portfolio must be in a binder no larger than 11.5 X 12 and shall not exceed twenty-five (25) pages and should address only the items in the application. One page can be printed both back and front, and a sleeve with inserts front and back counts as **one** page. Information submitted must be no smaller than a 12-point font. Points shall be deducted from the student's overall score if the portfolio exceeds twenty-five (25) pages or if documentation is presented in a font smaller than 12-point font. A copy of all supporting documents should be retained at the local level.

Regional/Zone Levels: The electronic portfolio should not exceed 50 pages, including a cover page, photo, required components and artifacts of choice. School systems should try to submit a single file but may separate application materials into sections if necessary. School systems must submit electronic portfolios to the regional coordinator by the specified deadline. Once the regional finalists have been selected, regional coordinators will submit their electronic portfolios to the state coordinator.

PORTFOLIO APPLICATION GUIDANCE:

1. IDENTIFICATION AND PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

The basic data sheet must be completed and attached to the application portfolio. Parents must sign an authorization for release of pertinent information relative to the program.

2. AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Candidates at the school selection level must submit information about themselves in narrative form. This autobiographical sketch **may** serve as the writing sample at the **school level** or school system level. This sample, which may be typed or handwritten, accompanies the application form when it is submitted to the local Student Achievement Selection Committee. This initial writing sample should include information such as family history, interests, career aspirations, etc. The students should be encouraged to address at least three or more issues that are important to them and that have had an influence on their lives.

3. ACADEMIC RECORDS

A photocopy of the student's academic and attendance record, report cards and/or high school transcripts reflecting academic performance in **all previous years** and **including the first semester grades of the current grade level**, must accompany the application portfolio. Also, scores for **all statewide or non-public school annual assessments taken prior to the current school year are to be included. If grades/scores are unavailable, please include an explanation of why they are not accessible.** Candidates should include their AP, CLEP, ACT, PSAT, SAT, WorkKeys scores, High School Jump Start Certifications, TOPS-aligned dual enrollment coursework, TOPS/TOPS Tech eligibility status, work-based experience documentation from employer, Associates Degree coursework/status and/or other pertinent academic test results.

4. LEADERSHIP, ACTIVITIES, RECOGNITIONS, SERVICE/CITIZENSHIP

All sections are to be completed by all students. Students should include leadership they have had at their school, church or in their community. Forms provided in the application are to be completed listing specific evidence of the student's leadership ability, participation in school and community activities, citizenship and service involvement, high school pathways accomplishments, work-based learning experiences/honors and recognitions and awards.

APPENDIX C: WRITING SAMPLE & INTERVIEW

In addition to the autobiographical sketch submitted at the school level, the regional and state candidates will be asked to write a short essay. School coordinators will submit an electronic version of the essay directly to the regional coordinators per the guidelines provided. In reviewing the composition, the committee considers the following points:

- Clarity and continuity of thought
- Originality of ideas
- Interest appeal
- Use of words
- Correctness of sentence structure
- Correctness of capitalization, punctuation, spelling and usage

Candidates will also be interviewed by a selection panel at the regional and state levels. These interviews are structured around questions and topics appropriate to the academic level of the students. The following are some factors that are considered during the interview:

- Poise/confidence
- Ability to relate his/her ideas
- Fluency in speaking
- Good voice projection
- Clear focus on the topic
- Use of facts to support a position
- Flexibility in response to questions
- Use of correct grammar
- Relevance of answers or explanations
- Appropriate body language and eye contact

APPENDIX D

EVALUATION FORMS

Students are evaluated on all three components: the application portfolio, the writing sample and the interview. The organization, format, writing sample topics and questions used in the interviews will be consistent across all regions. A copy of the evaluation form that will be used at each grade level in the program is found on the following pages. These forms have been developed to give structure and consistency to the evaluations at the local, regional and state level.

STUDENT EVALUATION SHEET: **5TH GRADE**

1.	**ACADEMIC EVALUATION**	
A.	Grade Point Average	/5 possible points
B.	Assessments	/5 possible points
	SUBTOTAL	/10 possible points
2.	**APPLICATION PORTFOLIO**	
A.	Leadership/Activities/Services/Citizenship	/10 possible points
B.	Recognitions/Awards	/10 possible points
	SUBTOTAL	/20 possible points
3.	**WRITING SAMPLE**	
A.	Clarity/Continuity of Thought & Response to the Prompt	/6 possible points
B.	Originality of Ideas/Interest Appeal	/6 possible points
C.	Support, Elaboration, Organization	/6 possible points
D.	Correctness of Sentence Structure	/6 possible points
E.	Correctness of Capitalization, Punctuation & Spelling	/6 possible points
	SUBTOTAL	/30 possible points
4.	**INTERVIEW**	
A.	Poise/Confidence	/3 possible points
B.	Ability to Convey Ideas	/3 possible points
C.	Fluency in Speaking	/3 possible points
D.	Good Voice Projection	/3 possible points
E.	Clear Focus on Topic	/3 possible points
F.	Use of Facts to Support Position	/3 possible points
G.	Flexibility in Response to Questions	/3 possible points
H.	Use of Correct Grammar	/3 possible points
I.	Relevance of Answers/Explanations	/3 possible points
J.	Appropriate Body Language & Eye Contact	/3 possible points
K.	Scope & Breadth of the Response to the Posed Questions	/10 possible points
	SUBTOTAL	/40 possible points
		TOTAL POINTS: /100

STUDENT EVALUATION SHEET: **8TH GRADE**

1.	**ACADEMIC EVALUATION**	
A.	Grade Point Average	/7 possible points
B.	Assessments	/7 possible points
	SUBTOTAL	/14 possible points
2.	**APPLICATION PORTFOLIO**	
A.	Leadership	/7 possible points
B.	Activities/Services/Citizenship	/7 possible points
C.	Recognitions/Awards	/7 possible points
	SUBTOTAL	/21 possible points
3.	**WRITING SAMPLE**	
A.	Clarity/Continuity of Thought & Response to the Prompt	/5 possible points
B.	Originality of Ideas/Interest Appeal	/5 possible points
C.	Support, Elaboration, Organization	/5 possible points
D.	Correctness of Sentence Structure	/5 possible points
E.	Correctness of Capitalization, Punctuation & Spelling	/5 possible points
	SUBTOTAL	/25 possible points
4.	**INTERVIEW**	
A.	Poise/Confidence	/3 possible points
B.	Ability to Convey Ideas	/3 possible points
C.	Fluency in Speaking	/3 possible points
D.	Good Voice Projection	/3 possible points
E.	Clear Focus on Topic	/3 possible points
F.	Use of Facts to Support Position	/3 possible points
G.	Flexibility in Response to Questions	/3 possible points
H.	Use of Correct Grammar	/3 possible points
I.	Relevance of Answers/Explanations	/3 possible points
J.	Appropriate Body Language & Eye Contact	/3 possible points
K.	Scope & Breadth of the Response to the Posed Questions	/10 possible points
	SUBTOTAL	/40 possible points
		TOTAL POINTS: /100

STUDENT EVALUATION SHEET: **12TH GRADE**

1.	**ACADEMIC EVALUATION**	
A.	Grade Point Average	/3 possible points
B.	Difficulty Level of Courses	/3 possible points
C.	Assessments	/2 possible points
D.	Credentials	/2 possible points
E.	Technical/Associates Degree/Work-based Experience	/3 possible points
	SUBTOTAL	/14 possible points
2.	**APPLICATION PORTFOLIO**	
A.	Leadership	/7 possible points
B.	Activities/Services/Citizenship	/7 possible points
C.	Recognitions/Awards	/7 possible points
	SUBTOTAL	/21 possible points
3.	**WRITING SAMPLE**	
A.	Clarity/Continuity of Thought & Response to the Prompt	/5 possible points
B.	Originality of Ideas/Interest Appeal	/5 possible points
C.	Support, Elaboration, Organization	/5 possible points
D.	Correctness of Sentence Structure	/5 possible points
E.	Correctness of Capitalization, Punctuation & Spelling	/5 possible points
	SUBTOTAL	/25 possible points
4.	**INTERVIEW**	
A.	Poise/Confidence	/3 possible points
B.	Ability to Convey Ideas	/3 possible points
C.	Fluency in Speaking	/3 possible points
D.	Good Voice Projection	/3 possible points
E.	Clear Focus on Topic	/3 possible points
F.	Use of Facts to Support Position	/3 possible points
G.	Flexibility in Response to Questions	/3 possible points
H.	Use of Correct Grammar	/3 possible points
I.	Relevance of Answers/Explanations	/3 possible points
J.	Appropriate Body Language & Eye Contact	/3 possible points
K.	Scope & Breadth of the Response to the Posed Questions	/10 possible points
	SUBTOTAL	/40 possible points
		TOTAL POINTS: /100

Students of the Year 2021 APPLICATION

Type required information into each field of this form and include it in the application portfolio.

1. Attach the following:
   a. A photocopy of the academic and attendance record, report cards and/or high school transcripts reflecting academic performance in previous years--including the first semester grades of the current grade level; scores for **all required statewide or nonpublic school annual assessments** taken prior to the current school year; scores for any regional and national tests (AP, CLEP, ACT, PSAT, SAT, IBCs); TOPS-aligned dual enrollment coursework; TOPS/TOPS Tech eligibility status; work-based experience documentation; associate degree coursework/status; other pertinent artifacts that document academic and CTE accomplishments. If scores are not available, please indicate the reason.
   b. An autobiographical sketch, according to the guidelines
   c. Electronic current school photograph or similar kind of print
   d. A parent/guardian and candidate signatures on this page
2. Submit the completed application portfolio to the local student Selection Committee.

APPLICANT'S NAME: *(First Middle Last)*		**GRADE:** *(5, 8, or 12)*
HOME ADDRESS:		
CITY:	**STATE:** Louisiana	**ZIP:**
PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME(S):		
HOME PHONE:	**PARENT CELL PHONE:**	**PARENT WORK PHONE:**
PARENT EMAIL:		
SCHOOL NAME:		
PRINCIPAL'S NAME:	**PRINCIPAL'S EMAIL:**	
SCHOOL MAILING ADDRESS:		**SCHOOL PHONE:**
CITY:	**STATE:** Louisiana	**ZIP:**
SCHOOL SYSTEM:	**SCHOOL SYSTEM SUPERINTENDENT/CEO NAME:**	

PARENT OR GUARDIAN'S STATEMENT: In accordance with La. R.S. 17:3914 (Louisiana Student Privacy Act), I hereby grant permission for my child to participate in the Louisiana Students of the Year Awards Program. I further authorize access and use of any school records and demographic information necessary for this competition and the subsequent press release information about this competition concerning my child to the universities and to the news media.

PARENT OR GUARDIAN'S NAME TYPED:	**PARENT OR GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE:** X

STUDENT'S STATEMENT: I certify that the information on this application is correct and that all work submitted by me during this competition is indeed mine.

DATE:	**APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE:** X

Students of the Year 2021

LIST OF LEADERSHIP, ACTIVITIES, RECOGNITION, & AWARDS

LEADERSHIP: List all elected or appointed leadership positions held in the school and community. Only those positions in which you were directly responsible for directing or motivating others should be included (e.g. elected student body, class or organization officer [BETA, NHS, FFA, Skills USA, JAG, FBLA, FCA, Drama, etc.], committee chairperson, team captain, community leader, etc.)

All students must complete this section, if applicable.

SCHOOL ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP POSITION	YEAR	ACTIVITY OR ORGANIZATION

EXTRA-CURRICULAR LEADERSHIP POSITION	YEAR	ACTIVITY OR ORGANIZATION

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP POSITION	YEAR	ACTIVITY OR ORGANIZATION

LIST OF LEADERSHIP, ACTIVITIES, RECOGNITION, & AWARDS

ACTIVITIES/SERVICE/CITIZENSHIP: List all activities in which you have participated that demonstrate a contribution to the school, church or community: for example, Boy or Girl Scouts, work-based leadership internship or experience, volunteer groups, school organizations, library or clerical volunteer without credit, peer model or leader in a substance abuse prevention program, clubs, teams, musical groups, etc., beginning with the most recent.

SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES/ORGANIZATIONS	YEAR	MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT

Students of the Year 2021

LIST OF LEADERSHIP, ACTIVITIES, RECOGNITION, & AWARDS

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	YEAR	MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT

Students of the Year 2021

LIST OF LEADERSHIP, ACTIVITIES, RECOGNITION, & AWARDS

COMMUNITY/CHURCH ACTIVITIES/ORGANIZATIONS	YEAR	MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT

LIST OF LEADERSHIP, ACTIVITIES, RECOGNITION, & AWARDS

RECOGNITIONS AND AWARDS: List below any honors or recognitions that you have received to support your application for Student of the Year, beginning with the most recent.

SCHOOL RECOGNITIONS/ HONORS/AWARDS	YEAR	ACTIVITY/ORGANIZATION

Students of the Year 2021

LIST OF LEADERSHIP, ACTIVITIES, RECOGNITION, & AWARDS

ACADEMIC COMPETION/AWARDS	YEAR	MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT

Students of the Year 2021

LIST OF LEADERSHIP, ACTIVITIES, RECOGNITION, & AWARDS

COMMUNITY RECOGNITIONS/ HONORS/AWARDS	YEAR	MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT