

Scholars of Distinction: Leadership Program Overview

Program Criteria

Leadership, for purposes of the Minnesota Scholars of Distinction, is defined by the traits that must be exhibited by the applicant. Students must exhibit excellence in the ability to formulate a vision, motivate and inspire others to act, listen to others, identify and respond to a need, and demonstrate a pattern of acting in the interest of others. They must also persevere through setbacks, encourage others and demonstrate long-term commitment to solving a difficult problem.

Each applicant is expected to pursue the study of leadership to develop a strong knowledge basis for informed leadership, and then articulate a definition and a personal philosophy of leadership by synthesizing that knowledge. Applicants who demonstrate excellent leadership knowledge and skills, and exceptional leadership for the common good shall be recognized as a Minnesota Scholar of Distinction in Leadership.

Assessment Elements

The assessment process will involve three reviewers: a leader reviewer, a stakeholder reviewer, and an academic reviewer. The leader reviewer will evaluate evidence of leadership in action. The stakeholder reviewer will evaluate the project's impact. The education reviewer will assess the academic foundations of leadership the applicant has acquired. (See rubric at end of document.)

Project Specifics

Applicants must submit a research-based leadership project demonstrating scholarly excellence and personal experience.

The project is to be submitted electronically in a format that is clearly organized. The content must include all of the following items:

1. Personal Statement of one to two pages

- Include a personal description of leadership and the importance of this area of study in terms of the scholar's past experience, present studies and future goals.
- Include a clear explanation of how and why the scholar chose the project goal(s) and the research and actions taken to accomplish the goal(s).
- Use a word processor and double space.

2. Annotated K-12 Resume

- Describe the pathways and experiences that have led the scholar to qualify as a Scholar of Distinction in Leadership.
- List the educational experiences that prepared the scholar for excellence in leadership. Examples may include specific coursework or training and independent studies.
- Identify the scholar's leadership experiences in school, community, state or national organizations/club(s). List the positions and responsibilities the scholar has held.
- Use a word processor and follow a resume format.

3. Annotated Bibliography and one page essay

- Prepare an annotated bibliography with a substantial number of readings that provide a historical look at leaders and styles of leadership.
- Reflect on the readings and prepare a one-page essay on their influence on the scholar.
- Use a word processor and follow a structured format.

4. Project Narrative

Narrative will include:

- A survey of leadership theory to develop a strong knowledge base for informed leadership.
- A definition and a personal philosophy of leadership articulated by synthesizing knowledge.
- Evidence of the scholar's ability to formulate a vision, motivate and inspire others to act, and listen to others.
- A pattern of recognizing and responding to a need and acting with the best interest of others in mind.
- How the scholar has persevered through setbacks, encourage others and have a long-term commitment to solving a difficult problem.

Narrative will display:

- Introduction identifying scholar's significant commitment, project's goal(s) and objective(s), challenges and successes.
- Key project components are clearly organized and labeled.
- Leadership skills and methods developed and used within the project.
- Sources and vocabulary (if using a specific process or organization's approach).
- A review of personal growth as well as a description of the project's impact on others.
- Support material within narrative or referenced and used as addendum(s). Examples may include PowerPoint presentations, photos, press notices, event programs and Web addresses that link the reviewer to student-prepared material.
- A project log, journal or report including self-evaluation.
- Conclusion with recommendations for others seeking to replicate the project.

5. Presentation(s)

- Document public presentation(s) to audience(s) beyond the classroom or school. Examples may include organizations with an interest or stake in the project, a civic group, or peer education. Documentation may include PowerPoint presentations, scripts, outlines, photos, programs and videos.
- Include evidence of feedback, review or evaluation and personal reflection.

6. Testimonials

- Identify two individuals familiar with the scholar's research and actions related to the project.
- Obtain permission and submit the individuals' names, positions or titles, telephone numbers and a sentence on why each person was identified.
- Contact may be made with these individuals at the discretion of the reviewers.

Consultation

Consultation regarding program expectations and the criteria used to judge projects as provided in the rubric is available on request. Leadership Scholars of Distinction consultants are available by contacting [Wendy Behrens](#), (651) 582-8786 and through the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), contact [Wendy Ambrose](#), (651) 382-8750.

Submission Process

1. Complete the Intent to Apply.
2. View the Scholars of Distinction Important Dates document for the current award cycle timeline.
3. Submit an official transcript via U.S. Mail to Wendy Behrens, Minnesota Department of Education, 1500 Highway 36 West, Roseville, MN 55113. Transcript must be a certified copy sent directly from the applicant's school and must be received by the project deadline.
4. If a transcript is not available, contact [Wendy Behrens](#), (651) 582-8786 regarding alternative evidence that demonstrates the required knowledge base.
5. Complete the elements listed under "Project Specifics," label each document clearly and send in PDF format to [Wendy Behrens](#).

Scholars of Distinction Leadership Scoring Rubric follows this document.



Rubric for Evaluation of Applicants for the Minnesota Scholars of Distinction in Leadership

Criterion	Components reflect a level of DISTINCTION	Components reflect a level of HONORABLE MENTION	Components reflect a level of AVERAGE	Components do not qualify
<p style="text-align: center;">Personal Statement</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(1 to 2 pages)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10 points</p>	<p>Clear and convincing articulation of importance of leadership in terms of past experience, present studies and future goals.</p> <p>Scholar clearly and strongly demonstrates the development of skills over time. The work is articulate and shows a longstanding commitment to research in and application of leadership knowledge and skills.</p>	<p>Substantial evidence of importance of leadership in terms of past experience, present studies and future goals.</p> <p>Scholar clearly demonstrates development of skills over time. The work is well-written, and shows a longstanding commitment to research in and application of leadership knowledge and skills.</p>	<p>Average and predictable evidence of importance of leadership in terms of past experience, present studies and future goals.</p> <p>Scholar demonstrates the development of some skills over time. The work shows commitment to a weak or small research project.</p>	<p>Sketchy or undeveloped overview of importance of leadership in terms of past experience, present studies and future goals.</p> <p>Scholar has not demonstrated the development of some skills over time. The work does not show commitment to researching the project or the skills to do so.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Annotated K-12 Resume</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10 points</p>	<p>Resume reflects education and experiences that have led the student to excel in leadership research and application.</p> <p>Academic studies and activities have contributed to significant growth of leadership knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Resume preparation demonstrates superior quality for a high school student.</p>	<p>Resume reflects education and experiences that have led the student to succeed in leadership research and application.</p> <p>Academic studies and activities have contributed to substantial growth of leadership knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Resume preparation demonstrates satisfactory quality for a high school student.</p>	<p>Resume reflects education and experiences that have led the student to engage in leadership research and application.</p> <p>Academic studies and activities have contributed to leadership knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Resume preparation demonstrates average quality for a high school student.</p>	<p>Resume reflects education and experiences that have led to leadership research and application.</p> <p>Academic studies and activities have limited contribution to leadership knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Resume preparation demonstrates poor quality for a high school student.</p>

Criterion	Components reflect a level of DISTINCTION	Components reflect a level of HONORABLE MENTION	Components reflect a level of AVERAGE	Components do not qualify
<p align="center">Annotated Bibliography and one page Essay</p> <p align="center">10 points</p>	<p>Extensive annotated bibliography of readings that support a broad and comprehensive study of project components.</p> <p>The essay shows a superior understanding of the impact the research has had on scholar and others.</p> <p>The writing reflects superior quality for a high school student.</p>	<p>Substantial annotated bibliography of readings showing a broad and comprehensive study of project components.</p> <p>The essay shows a positive understanding of the impact the research has had on scholar and others.</p> <p>The writing reflects high quality for a high school student.</p>	<p>Average annotated bibliography of readings that shows a limited study of project components.</p> <p>The essay shows some understanding of the impact the research has had on scholar and others.</p> <p>The writing reflects average quality for a high school student.</p>	<p>Undeveloped annotated bibliography of readings that show a cursory study of project components.</p> <p>The essay shows a weak connection of the impact the research has had on scholar and others.</p> <p>The writing reflects poor quality for a high school student.</p>
<p align="center">Project Narrative</p> <p align="center">40 points</p>	<p>Significant evidence presented that the scholar knows and is able to use key concepts and apply leadership as identified in the Project Narrative component of the Project Specifics.</p> <p>Clear and convincing evidence the scholar conducted a valid study including a comprehensive and concise summary of research and activities.</p>	<p>Strong evidence presented that the scholar knows and is able to use concepts and apply leadership as identified in the Project Narrative component of the Project Specifics.</p> <p>Substantial evidence the scholar conducted a valid study including a comprehensive and concise summary of research and activities.</p>	<p>Evidence presented that the scholar knows and is able to use key concepts and apply leadership as identified in the Project Narrative component of the Project Specifics.</p> <p>Some evidence of scholarly research and activities is provided and process is unclear.</p>	<p>Lack of evidence that the scholar knows and is able to use key concepts and apply leadership as identified in the Project Narrative component of the Project Specifics.</p> <p>Evidence of research and activities provided were not organized to inform the reader.</p>
<p align="center">Project Narrative</p> <p align="center">10 points</p> <p>Project Narrative</p> <p align="center">(Continue</p>	<p>A superior approach to the project over an appropriate period of time.</p> <p>An innovative or creative project approach, content and methodology.</p> <p>Only relevant information and supporting materials were included and reliability was assessed.</p>	<p>A valid approach to the project over an appropriate period of time.</p> <p>An innovative or creative project approach, content and methodology.</p> <p>Relevant information and materials were included and reliability was assessed.</p>	<p>A limited approach to the project over a short period of time.</p> <p>A narrow project approach, content and methodology.</p> <p>Limited relevant information and materials were included, but reliability may be an issue.</p>	<p>A sketchy approach to the project over a short period of time.</p> <p>An ordinary project approach, content and methodology.</p> <p>Relevance of information and supporting materials was not apparent.</p>

Criterion	Components reflect a level of DISTINCTION	Components reflect a level of HONORABLE MENTION	Components reflect a level of AVERAGE	Components do not qualify
10 point Value)	Thoughtful reflection on the process, future research and recommendations for others seeking to replicate are included. Organization and writing reflects superior quality for a high school student.	Reflection on the process, future research and recommendations for others seeking to replicate are included. Organization and writing reflects high quality for a high school student.	Limited reflection and recommendations for others seeking to replicate the process are included. Organization and writing reflects average quality for a high school student.	Reflection and recommendations for others seeking to replicate were not included . Organization and writing reflects poor quality for a high school student.
Project Presentation 15 points	Scholar made a public presentation , created a strong method to assess feedback received, and has reflected on the process with maturity and objectivity.	Scholar made a public presentation , created a satisfactory method to assess feedback received, and has reflected on the process with maturity and objectivity	Scholar made a public presentation , created a weak method to assess feedback received. Little reflection on the process was evident.	Scholar made a presentation with limited feedback. Little or no reflection on the presentation was evident.
Testimonials 5 points	Identification and contact information provided.	Identification and contact information provided	Identification and contact information was limited.	Identification and contact information was not provided.

Reviewer's Comments:

Level of Recommendation:

_____ Project reflects a level of **DISTINCTION**

_____ Project reflects a level of **HONORABLE MENTION**

_____ Project reflects a level of **AVERAGE**

_____ Project does not qualify for recognition