



2026 Best & Brightest Awards Application

Section 1: Personal Info

Full Name

Preferred Name

Pronouns

School

Category

Applicant Contact Info

Email (please do not use school email address)

Phone

Parent/Guardian Contact Info

Email

Phone

May we text you with important updates and reminders about your application and interview?

Yes, I consent to receive text messages from the Best & Brightest team.

No, please contact me by email only.

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Section 2: Academic Achievement

Judges will use this section to evaluate your academic strength and commitment in your category.

- **Unofficial Transcript**

Ask your guidance counselor for assistance. A copy will be uploaded with your application. Your unofficial transcript does not count towards your number of supporting documents.

- **Category Alignment (200 words max):**

Explain how your academic interests or coursework relate to your chosen category. How do they reflect your passion, talent, or future goals? Include academic achievements, awards, or recognitions that best demonstrate your academic strengths.

Section 3: Leadership

Judges will use this section to evaluate how you have influenced, motivated, and guided others.

- **Leadership Roles:**

List any formal leadership positions (school, community, work, extracurricular). Include role, dates, and responsibilities.

- **Leadership Highlight (200 words max):**

Choose one leadership role and describe how you guided others, influenced change, or accomplished goals. Describe your responsibilities and the specific actions you took in this role. What goals did you accomplish, and what did you learn about yourself as a leader?

Section 4: Service

Judges will use this section to evaluate your service contributions to school and community.

- **Community Service Hours**

Attach a copy of your community service hours log. This may be formatted as a list or as a spreadsheet. Include dates (month and year), hours served, organization, brief description of work, and contact info of the supervisor.

- **Impact Essay (200 words max):**

Which service role has been most meaningful to you or had the greatest impact on your school or community? Describe your responsibilities, what motivated you to get involved, and how you contributed to shaping the experience. Include what you learned, the time you dedicated, and whether this was a new initiative or part of an existing program.

Section 5: Supporting Documents

Applicants may include supporting materials that help judges better understand their achievements, service, leadership, and excellence in their selected category. Please follow the guidelines below.

General Supporting Materials (required):

- One faculty letter of recommendation focused on community or school service
- One-page résumé summarizing awards, leadership roles, and extracurricular involvement including work experience if applicable.
- Up to 8 pages of supporting documents (such as award certificates, photos, news articles, etc.). Additional uploads will not be reviewed.

Examples of Supporting Documents

- One additional Letter of Recommendation (can be academic, category-specific, or character-based)
- Work sample or portfolio related to your category (PDF, images, or links to media). Examples include:
 - Art: photos of artwork or design
 - Athletics: certificates of athletic recognition, awards, written reflection on teamwork and discipline
 - Business: examples of fundraising, internship project summaries or work samples
 - Career/Technical: certification documents, project photos, competition materials
 - Drama & Performance: script excerpts, stage plans
 - English & Language Arts: essays, short stories, poetry, or creative writing samples (published or classroom pieces)
 - Journalism & Media Production: published articles, yearbook spreads, layout samples, or digital media links
 - Leadership: event plans, project summaries, or organizational materials
 - Mathematics: competition solutions, research write-ups, statistical analyses, or problem-solving projects
 - Music: audio or sheet music samples
 - Public Speaking: written speech samples
 - Social Studies: research papers, civic project summaries, debate briefs, or Model UN resolutions
 - Technology: screenshots, code samples, robotics project documentation, or digital design work
 - Science/Math: research summaries, science fair posters, lab reports, or competition results

Note: Video submissions are not required and will not be considered as part of the judging process. All applicants will participate in a formal interview as part of the Best & Brightest judging process. You'll have the opportunity to express yourself in person with the judges at that time.

Section 6: Certification

I certify that this application represents my own original work and that all information provided is true and accurate. I understand that the details submitted may be used for publication or broadcast. I agree to participate in an interview on **Saturday, February 28, 2026**, and the Best & Brightest Ceremony on **Wednesday, May 13, 2026**, and acknowledge that failure to attend will forfeit my eligibility to be selected as one of the top three winners in my category.

By completing this application and participating in the Best & Brightest Awards, I grant permission for my name and likeness to be used in any related news coverage, promotional materials, or broadcast programs.

Student/Applicant Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date