

# Application Submission Requirements

**Any application not in compliance with the following requirements will be disqualified:**

1. The application **RECEIPT** deadline is 5:00 p.m. central time, February 25, 2016. **All application materials** are due by that **RECEIPT** deadline. Materials received after February 25 will not be accepted, regardless of when they were mailed. **The only exception to this requirement is:** application materials shipped via special service (e.g., an overnight courier service) with a *guaranteed, scheduled delivery date\* on or before February 25* will be accepted even if they are received after the deadline.

\* **IMPORTANT NOTE:** If you wish to send your materials via the U.S. Postal Service, note that Priority Mail **does not guarantee** a specific delivery date; Express Mail will guarantee date of delivery. If you use Express Mail, or any other courier service (such as FedEx or UPS), be sure to verify the guaranteed date for delivery. Be aware that mail brought to the U.S. Post Office or to the courier office late in the day may not go out until the following day. Application materials **will not be accepted** if they have a guaranteed delivery date **after February 25, regardless of when they were mailed.**

## Address for sending materials

U.S. Presidential Scholars Program  
One Scholarship Way  
Saint Peter, MN 56082  
507.931.8345

**DO NOT SEND ANY PORTION OF YOUR APPLICATION TO WASHINGTON, DC.** To do so risks missing the deadline for receipt of all materials in the Minnesota office and the disqualification of your application.

**TIMELY SUBMISSION OF ALL APPLICATION MATERIALS IS ULTIMATELY THE CANDIDATE'S RESPONSIBILITY.** Candidates must ensure that school officials submit their portions in time to be received by the deadline. Start early, and make sure your school submits early and uses a courier that guarantees arrival date. You will be disqualified if your transcripts and SSR are not received on time with the appropriate signatures.

2. **All components** of the application must be received by the stated deadline. **This includes the photograph for your essay, as well as the information from your school.** Even if your school sends the transcript and Secondary School Report separately from the rest of the application package you mailed, it is you, the candidate, who is responsible for ensuring that your school submits their materials on time. **Candidates who have submitted their applications on time but whose schools have missed the deadline must be disqualified.**

For **any application materials** that will be submitted in hard copy, whether by you or your school, the use of a courier mail service (such as FedEx or UPS) with a *guaranteed* delivery date\* on or before February 25 is strongly encouraged. **The receipt deadline as described in #1 above will be strictly enforced.** Even if the materials were mailed “in plenty of time,” if they are not received by the deadline, your application will be disqualified.

3. No part of the application will be accepted via email. All pieces must be submitted either online or in hard copy. Note that **transcripts must be sent in hard copy and received by the deadline**. They will not be accepted by email or fax. Be sure your school is aware of this in plenty of time to comply with the deadline requirement.
4. The candidate **may not submit additional pages or supplemental materials** of any kind (e.g., extra pages for the essays, student resume/list of activities, letter(s) of recommendation, slides, etc.). **Candidates who do so must be disqualified**. If you cannot fit your activities, etc., in the space provided, you must choose what is most important to you to include.

*Please note* that any supplemental materials about the candidate that are submitted by the school will **not** disqualify your application; however, those materials will be removed from your file.

5. Do not alter any aspect of this application (e.g., amount of space provided for responses). **Applications that have been altered in any way will be disqualified.**
6. To be eligible, the candidate must receive either a diploma or GED between January 1, 2016, and August 31, 2016.
7. To be eligible, the candidate must have U.S. citizenship or permanent legal residency by February 25, 2016.

## PSAonline Form-Specific Instructions

**Receipt Deadline: 5:00 p.m., Central Time, February 25, 2016**

### **FOR STUDENTS:**

**Required Signatures** – The first page you will see when you log in is the Required Signatures page. You must provide your signature on this page before the system will allow you to submit your application. If you are under 18, your parent is also required to sign this page and will need to log in using the Parent User ID and password (provided in your PSAonline Instructions) to do so. This page will continue to be the first page you see until you (and your parent, if required) have provided the required signature(s). **Again, the system will not allow you to submit your application until all required signatures have been provided on this page.**

**Candidate Control Form** – After you have provided your signature on the Required Signatures page, the system will automatically take you to the Candidate Control Form. This form contains information we'll use to verify your eligibility as a candidate. When you access this form, you will see your data in "initial caps" format – the first letter of every word, and only the first letter, will be capitalized. The information provided on this page was obtained from nomination source. Please review this information for accuracy and **correct any capitalization errors**. If you need to make any changes other than capitalization to the data we have on file for you, the system will verify your eligibility and prompt you with further directions if needed. You will only be able to access the other parts of the application after you complete the CCF and pass the automated eligibility check.

**Candidate Essay Form and Supporting Information Form** – You may cut and paste your answers to the long and short essay questions from a word processor. If you choose to do this, **proof your work carefully AFTER you paste it into the form, paying close attention to special characters such as apostrophes and double quotes**. You may find a string of characters and/or boxes in place of any special characters you may have used in your response. If this happens, simply delete the invalid characters and type the correct character directly in the online form. **Note that character counting is not consistent across all applications**. You may find the character counting in PSAonline is different from that of your word processor, so leave yourself plenty of time to make any edits that might be necessary.

**Secondary School Report** – Choose someone from your school who knows you well, such as a teacher, counselor, or principal, and ask him or her to complete this form on your behalf. Do this as soon as possible to allow that person adequate time to complete the form and send your transcript. The form may be submitted on paper or online. If the person you choose wishes to complete the form online, he or she will need to get the password and user ID from the head of your Guidance Office. Note that, just like the other application materials, the SSR and your transcripts must also be **RECEIVED** by the deadline, regardless of who sends them, or else your application will be disqualified. Transcripts must be sent in **hard copy**. They will not be accepted online or via email.

### **FOR TEACHERS & SCHOOL OFFICIALS:**

**Secondary School Report** – The student is to select **one** person to complete the Secondary School Report. Please be sure to answer questions A-G. You may need to get this information from your Guidance or Counseling office. You may cut and paste your answers to questions H-

O from a word processor. If you choose to do this, **proof your work carefully AFTER you paste it into the form, paying close attention to special characters such as apostrophes and double quotes.** You may find a string of characters and/or boxes in place of any special characters you may have used in your response. If this happens, simply delete the invalid characters and type the correct character directly in the online form. Also note that the **character counting in PSAonline may not be the same as your word processor**, so if you cut and paste your responses, you may need to do some editing afterward.

**Required Signatures** – Authorization to submit the Secondary School Report must be provided online before your principal will be allowed to submit the SSR. This important step is also explained in the student's PSAonline Instructions. Students who are 18 can provide the signature online themselves. If the student is under 18, the student's parent must provide his/her signature online. Parents are provided with a unique User ID and password (along with the student's User ID and password) to log in and perform this required task. You will see a message at the end of the Secondary School Report to alert you if the required signature has not yet been provided; if you see the message, you are encouraged to follow up with the student to let him/her know this requirement has not been completed. **The required signature must be provided before the SSR can be submitted. The student's application will be disqualified if the SSR is not provided either online or in hard copy.**

**Transcripts** – Please note that **the SSR and the student's transcripts must be RECEIVED by the deadline**, regardless of who sends them, or else the student's application will be disqualified. Transcripts must be sent in **hard copy**; we cannot accept them via fax or e-mail.

## General Guidelines

1. **Save your work frequently.** This application will automatically log you out after **30 minutes** of no communication with the server. Note that “communication with the server” means clicking on “Save” or “Save-Proceed,” or moving between pages in the application. Simply typing text into a response field **IS NOT** communicating with the server. There is a “Save” button at the bottom of every page, to save your work while working on that page. Use the “Save and Proceed” button to save your work before moving to the next section of the application.
2. In order to display the most current information when you are working on or viewing a page, **be sure your browser’s “Check for newer versions of stored pages” setting is at “Automatically.”** If you don’t seem to be seeing current information on your screen and you cannot set this option for your browser, you will need to refresh the screen in order to see any updated information.
3. **Signatures on application** – You will need to use your User ID and password to sign your application on the Required Signatures page. This page includes the authorization for your school to submit your Secondary School Report. **Note that your school will not be able to submit your Secondary School Report, and your application will be disqualified, if the required signature has not been provided.** If you are 18 or older, only your signature is required on this page. If you are under 18, your parent is required to sign the release using the Parent User ID and password. Your parent’s User ID and password can be found in the PSAonline Instructions that came with your letter of invitation. If you have misplaced the instructions, you can contact us at [www.ed.gov/psp](http://www.ed.gov/psp) or call 507.931.8345 for assistance. Phone calls and emails are answered from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., central time, Monday – Friday (excluding holidays).
4. **Printing a copy of your completed application** – Students may print a copy of the completed application from the Submit Application page. Recommenders may print a copy of the completed Secondary School Report at the end of that form. *Recommenders note: if you wish to print the completed SSR, you must do so **BEFORE** you click on Finish Form. Once you have clicked Finish Form, you will no longer have access to the SSR.*
5. **Changes to the Receipt Deadline** – Extensions in the receipt deadline are **extremely rare** and have occurred in the past only in cases of natural disaster. If, however, the deadline should be extended, a notice will be posted on this website. If you think there might be cause for an extension, check back frequently.
6. **Don’t procrastinate!** There are over 4,000 students who have been invited to submit applications to become Presidential Scholars, which also involved their parents, recommenders and principals using the online application system. While this system has been developed to accommodate a high volume of users, you could experience delays as the deadline approaches. Give yourself *and your recommender and principal* plenty of time to complete your application, review it, and submit it by the deadline!
7. **Confirmation of receipt** – If you provided a valid e-mail address on your Candidate Control Form, after you submit your application online you will receive an e-mail confirming receipt of your submission. If you submit your application on paper, you will receive a confirmation postcard via U.S. mail.

8. **Please note that these confirmations are NOT an indication that we have received all of the materials required for a complete application, so track your submission carefully.**
9. ***Corrections*** – Take time to proof your work carefully before you submit it. You may make changes to your application materials until the deadline. After the deadline, we will **not** accept any changes or additions to your application.
10. ***Be sure to close your browser after you log out.*** Your browser could contain a memory of the information you entered and/or viewed during your session. In order to protect the privacy of your information, you should close the browser, which will clear its memory.
11. ***Help is always available!*** If you have questions or need help while you are working on your application, you can use the contact us page at [www.ed.gov/psp](http://www.ed.gov/psp) to send an e-mail any time, or call 507.931.8345 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Central Time, Monday through Friday. You can also check the FAQs at [www.ed.gov/psp](http://www.ed.gov/psp) for answers to frequently asked questions.  
**NOTE: Our offices will be closed on Monday, February 15, in honor of Presidents' Day.**

## **PSAonline Rules of Behavior**

These rules of behavior are designed to protect your safety and that of all system users, and to ensure that PSAonline and all resources and data related to it are used only for their legal and intended purposes.

**As an authorized user of PSAonline, I agree to:**

1. Exercise due care in the protection of the operating software on computers that are used to connect to the PSAonline System, including installing virus-scanning software and frequently updating virus definitions;
2. Maintain the confidentiality of PSAonline system data at all times;
3. Never share my PSAonline system user ID and/or password with anyone else under any circumstance;
4. Never keep my user ID and password in a place where they may be found and used without my knowledge;
5. Either log off PSAonline or lock my workstation if I am logged into PSAonline and must leave my workstation;
6. Change my PSAonline system password every 90 days if I will be using the system for more than one application cycle\*;
7. Contact the PSAonline System Administrator immediately to reset my password if I feel my password has been compromised, and then immediately login and follow the system prompts to change my password to one known only to myself;
8. Use a password that is at least eight characters in length, is difficult to guess, and is a mix of characters, numbers and/or symbols;
9. Understand that personal use of Government information resources and equipment is not authorized, and use the system only for authorized purposes; and
10. Maintain copyright licenses and comply with all copyright license requirements associated with the PSAonline PC-based and LAN-based software.

**\*In other words, if I am a U.S. Presidential Scholars Program staff member rather than a student, parent, recommender or principal.**

**I understand that failure to abide by these rules of behavior may result in losing access to the PSAonline System.**