

KATHLEEN MURPHY SCHOLARS PROGRAM



The Kathleen Murphy Scholars Program is designed for our highest performing students. Participants pursue a demanding course of study supported through cultural enrichment experiences and co-curricular participation.

The Scholars Program honors Ms. Kathleen Murphy who served as principal of Totino-Grace High School from 1979-2001. Ms. Murphy was instrumental in establishing an honors program for gifted students while also developing a program to offer special learning services to students most in need. This program honors Ms. Murphy for her creativity, love of literature, and commitment to academic rigor.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Provide an environment, curriculum, and the academic expectations that will encourage Scholars to fully develop their intellectual talents
- Provide additional opportunities for students to explore various areas of interest through outside seminars
- Assist the Scholars in pursuing a specific area of interest through an independent project
- Provide additional guidance to Scholars as they choose their course of study and prepare for their post-high school endeavors

PROGRAM BENEFITS

- Intellectual development opportunities provided by field experiences not generally available to students
- Support of a peer group committed to similar academic goals
- Recognition of Capstone Project on high school transcript
- Access to the program director who acts as an additional academic advisor while in the program
- Designation as a Scholar at graduation commencement
- Identification of the program and its requirements on all college applications

ACT SCORES

MINNESOTA
AVERAGE

21.5 

TOTINO-GRACE
AVERAGE

25 

MURPHY SCHOLARS
AVERAGE

29

SIXTEEN

HONORS COURSES OFFERED

FIFTEEN

AP COURSES OFFERED

CANDIDATES

Candidates must be students with intellectual curiosity, high academic achievement, and motivation to learn outside of the classroom. Students who have demonstrated these characteristics, and have at least a 3.8 GPA during the first quarter of their freshman year, will be invited to apply to the program.

Students applying to the Scholars program must meet three of the following criteria in order to be eligible for an interview:

1. GPA of 3.8 or above at the end of first quarter during freshman year
2. Enrollment in a minimum of two honors courses during freshman year
3. Study of a world language during freshman year
4. Three teacher recommendations

REQUIREMENTS

- Enroll in a minimum number of honors or AP level courses: 10th grade-2 honors or AP courses; 11th and 12th grade- 3 honors or AP courses
- Maintain a 3.8 cumulative GPA
- Participate in a summer seminar prior to sophomore year that emphasizes intellectual curiosity and leadership training
- Participate in four cultural enrichment seminars during the school year
- Attend two Capstone presentations during sophomore year
- Plan and execute a Capstone project designed by the scholar during junior year

SAMPLE CAPSTONE PROJECTS

- How do different directors and actors interpret the character of Hamlet differently while remaining true to Shakespeare's text?
- What techniques and systems are used in the development process for an unmanned aerial vehicle?
- Gene therapy: the history, methods, and ethical questions regarding the manipulations of human genes.
- Why go on a mission trip: the key to solidarity with the poor.
- How does an artist create alternative pottery kilns and firing methods?
- How do you compose an opera piece in the style of Mozart?
- Do therapy dogs have a positive physical and mental effect on people who are ill?
- Epigenetics: Why DNA isn't set in stone.
- Do students who study music perform above average in math during standardized tests?
- How is research, protocol, and treatment regarding concussions in high school athletes evolving?

SAMPLE CULTURAL ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- University of St. Thomas Broadcast and Journalism Series
- University of Minnesota Lecture Series
- Minnesota Opera
- Theater Performances
- Arts Experiences

