

Prepare to be a Sterling Scholar

What is a Sterling Scholar?

A Sterling Scholar is a high school senior who is publicly recognized and awarded for the pursuit of excellence in scholarship, leadership and citizenship in the State of Utah. A potential Sterling Scholar presents an all-encompassing portfolio on their work in a specific category and is interviewed by judges in the category's field at various times. Sterling Scholars are awarded at the high school, semi-final and finals levels. At the awards ceremony, finalists in 14 categories are announced and then an overall Sterling Scholar winner is also announced. For more information click here. <http://www.sterlingscholar.org/>

How do I become a Sterling Scholar?

The Sterling Scholar Awards are open to Utah public high school seniors. It is expected that each school will nominate one candidate in any of the 14 categories. Each school may nominate only one nominee in each of the 14 categories and a nominee may be nominated in only one category. Olympus High School teachers in each department select the winners for Olympus High in each category.

Comments from the Sterling Scholar Coordinator

Students who have been named a state Sterling Scholar or runner up show several common threads:

1. Students have a high GPA and a high ACT score and take honors and advanced AP Courses. (Students with high GPA's and ACT scores may be invited to apply for Sterling Scholar. However, this does not mean that the student will automatically be chosen as the Sterling Scholar).
2. Students excel in their chosen category and show service not only within their category, but exhibit a record of service to school, community or other organizations. While service trips to foreign countries are recognized, greater emphasis, however, is placed on service done within one's own community.
3. Students demonstrate leadership in their classes, high school, and community.
4. A well-rounded student who shows excellence in many aspects of life takes precedence.
5. Students competing in CTE categories are members of their CTSO (club) and participate, compete and win in the CTSO competitions. (Business & Marketing, Computer Technology, Skilled & Technical, and FACS)
6. The performance (for those who perform) and the interview are most often the determining factor in who advances and is chosen to be the Sterling Scholar.

Please contact Parley Jacobs, Career Center Coordinator, in the career center for additional information. Students will be able to apply in three categories at Olympus High School but will only be selected in one category. Listed below are the categories and judging criteria.

Sterling Scholar Categories

CATEGORIES NOTE: Upon entering the building for semi-final or final interviews, any interview exhibits, displays and/or artwork MUST be limited to what can be carried in the arms of the nominee without the help of others. (Parents, fellow nominees, etc. may not assist in any way.) Nominees may not use carts or similar devices. Accompanists may only stay during the performance portion of the interview and must leave the room upon conclusion of the performance.

ENGLISH – For scholarship and achievement in one or more of the following areas: creative writing, English, journalism, literature and related subjects. Two examples of work either published or prepared as classroom assignments must be submitted. There will be an additional four portfolio pages allowed for this submission. The quality of thought, maturity, originality and technical skill will be considered.

MATHEMATICS – For scholarship and achievement in mathematics and related areas. Scholars may exhibit outstanding records in mathematics competitions and evidence of potential contributions to mathematical knowledge. Nominees should be prepared to calculate a mathematical equation(s) in the judging interviews. Nominees should submit state and national math scores and other standardized mathematics test scores.

SOCIAL SCIENCE – For scholarship and achievement in one or more of the following areas: American government, geography, history, economics, social issues, world affairs and/or related subjects. Scholars should have a broad background in the social sciences and demonstrate, exemplify and practice good citizenship. The nominees may have shown inventiveness in relating social studies to existing problems and in translating concepts into experiment.

SCIENCE – For scholarship and achievement in advanced work, inventiveness or outstanding service in one or more of the following areas: biology, chemistry, engineering, physics, health science, science and related subjects. Imagination, originality or special contributions will receive major consideration in judging.

WORLD LANGUAGES – For outstanding scholarship and persistence in the study of a world language. Nominees should have made unusual contributions to the field of world language study or demonstrated increasing interest in such studies at their school. Rankings received in world language festivals should be submitted. Nominees should also submit a brief resume of language projects or adventures in which they have participated. Nominees should be prepared to demonstrate their ability to communicate in the language by speaking, listening, reading and writing. For languages lacking a written component (for example American Sign Language and some native American languages) the written component may be replaced by a translation, interpretation or literature exercise that demonstrates skills in grammar, syntax, and artistic forms. **NOTE: World Language includes any language, other than English, offered for credit in the general curriculum (not as an independent study) of any high school, college or university within the state of Utah. A foreign-born nominee attending an English-speaking high school may not use English or their native tongue as a “foreign language.” CANDIDATES MAY NOT COMPETE IN A LANGUAGE SPOKEN IN THEIR HOME (NATIVE LANGUAGE). Deaf nominees, for whom ASL is their first language, are considered native language users. Children of Deaf Parents are considered in the same manner as children of first-generation native world language users.**

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY – For outstanding scholarship and achievement in one or more of the following areas: Computer programming, interfacing, networking, repair, construction, design and illustration, media and multi-media, or other related fields. The nominee may have won awards or recognitions, implemented their skills in behalf of their school and community or demonstrated innovative progress in their field. Nominees are not expected to have experience in all listed fields, but expertise in at least one discipline.

SKILLED AND TECHNICAL SCIENCES EDUCATION – For outstanding scholarship and achievement in one or more of the following areas: Agriculture sciences, automotive services, automotive collision repair, cabinetmaking/millwork, carpentry, cosmetology/barbering, drafting/CADD, graphics/printing technology, law enforcement, machinist technician/CNC, welding, film making and other related fields. The nominee may have won awards in competitions, devised equipment or materials for school use or shown unusual progress in this study. Nominees are not expected to have experience in all listed fields, but expertise in at least one discipline.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES – For outstanding scholarship and achievement in one or more of the following areas: child development and care, interior design, family living, food and nutrition, culinary arts, clothing and fashion and other life skills. Nominees are not expected to have experience in all listed fields, but expertise in at least one discipline. Nominees may have won awards in youth organizations, other competitions or may have used skills to render service to their school, church or other organizations.

BUSINESS AND MARKETING – Demonstrate a high level of scholarship and achievement in one or more of the following areas: Business management, non-profit management, accounting, entrepreneurship, sales, marketing and other fields related to business occupations. Nominees may have won awards in competitions or exhibited proficiency in working with or in small or large businesses. Nominees may have held elected offices, captainships, and other evidences of peer

acknowledged leadership. Nominees are also encouraged to provide evidence of successful outside activities that support business career development and interests. Evidence of excellence in standardized test scores, GPA, class ranking, IB classes and quantitative AP courses should be provided.

SPEECH/THEATRE ARTS/FORENSICS – For scholarship and achievement in one or more area of speech, theater arts and Forensics: debate, public speaking, oral interpretation, and/or (non-musical) theater. Nominees are not expected to have experience in all listed fields, just expertise in at least one discipline. Nominees should include in their portfolios two examples of their work or descriptions of their activities related to this category. Where possible, students are encouraged to submit their student record of accomplishments from the National Forensics League and/or International Thespian Society. They should also be prepared to give a brief demonstration of a past speech and theater arts performance, appropriate to their specialty, approximately two to three minutes in length. (Nominees should not be discouraged if judges interrupt the performance so that they can continue the interview.)

VOCAL PERFORMANCE – Nominees demonstrate outstanding scholarship and achievement in one or more of the areas of classical or musical theatre or vocal performance. Exceptional talent in composition will be considered, but service to school or community through this talent also will be among determining qualifications. Nominees are not expected to have experience in all listed fields, just expertise in at least one discipline. Nominees should include in their portfolios two examples of their work or descriptions of their activities related to this category. They should also be prepared to give a brief demonstration of their talent appropriate to their specialty, approximately two to three minutes in length. Nominees are allowed to bring pre-recorded accompaniment but must supply all the necessary equipment for playback purposes. (Nominees should not be discouraged if judges interrupt the performance so that they can continue the interview.)

VISUAL ARTS – For scholarship and achievement in creative expression in one or more of the following areas: drawing, artistic photography, commercial art, mixed media, graphic art, painting, sculpture and related fields. The nominee may have demonstrated professional potential in one or more disciplines, contributed outstanding service to the school and successfully completed in district and state art shows. Nominees are allowed to display actual artwork during judging but only if the piece can be carried without assistance of any kind. Visual arts nominees must show some examples of artwork in their portfolio.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC – Nominee demonstrates outstanding scholarship and achievement in one or more of the areas of music. Exceptional talent in composition will be considered, but service to school or community through this talent also will be among determining qualifications. Nominees should be prepared to demonstrate their musical talent during a period of two to three minutes by performing with an instrument. (Nominees should not be discouraged if judges interrupt the performance so that they can continue the interview.)

DANCE – For demonstrating exceptional skill, achievement and creative expression in artistic dance (ballroom dance included). Portfolios should include training received, dances choreographed, major performances and dance service rendered to the school or community. Nominees should be prepared to demonstrate their technique and choreographic skills by performing a self-choreographed solo composition, approximately two minutes in length. Nominees competing in ballroom dance may use a partner for the performance portion of the interview. The dance partner must leave the room upon conclusion of the performance. Nominees will also be asked to respond to an improvisational problem during part of the interview. No performance videos required – but should be included in the electronic portfolio. (Nominees should not be discouraged if judges interrupt the performance so that they can continue the interview.)

How Sterling Scholars are judged

SCHOLARSHIP- 20 Points (15%) A nominee's overall GPA, difficulty of class schedule, standardized test scores such as ACT and SAT, class ranking, and similar scholarship items attained during high school will be used to establish points for Scholarship.

CATEGORY EXPERTISE- 20 Points (15%) Emphasis is placed on the nominee’s ability and talent in their specific category. While judges seek evidence of growth and service in all activities, the nominee’s talent and aptitude within their category will receive particular emphasis.

LEADERSHIP- 20 Points (15%) The qualities of leadership in Utah public high schools can be measured in part by the responsibilities placed on a nominee by his/her teachers and fellow nominees. However, evidence of positive influence with fellow nominees also shall be considered an indication of leadership.

COMMUNITY SERVICE/CITIZENSHIP- 20 Points (15%). Each Sterling Scholar nominee should exhibit a record of high standards of citizenship throughout his/her high school years. Service to school, community or other organizations will be considered. The nominee’s attitude toward the acceptance of responsibility in contribution roles, as well as seeking out service opportunities, will be especially important. Evidence of a long-term commitment to service will also receive particular attention.

INTERVIEW- 20 Points (40%) – Semi-finalist and Finalist Judging. During the interview, judges will evaluate the nominee’s ability to answer questions pertaining to their category. Body language, technical knowledge, communication skills, professional appearance and plans for continued education in the category will all be included in the interview point assessment.

After the candidate is selected -- How to build a portfolio

When a nominee has been entered into the system by the coordinator, he/she will receive an email with their login information along with a temporary password (their individual email address is their unique User ID). The first portion of their portfolio contains their “Personal Information”, school transcripts and college entrance exam scores which have been entered by the school’s Sterling Scholar Coordinator.

Each nominee will begin preparing their portfolio with the upload of their “Letter of Recommendation”. For the remainder of your portfolio the acceptable file formats are .PDF, .TXT, .RTF, .JPG, .TIF, WAV, WMA, .MP4, .ACC, .MP3 and .MPG. External links to YouTube, Vimeo or other video sharing sites are the preferred path for videos. The nominee will have an opportunity to upload a supporting document within each section and more at the end of the portfolio.

Letter of Recommendation: A letter of recommendation by any teacher/instructor should include the teacher’s assessment of the individual with specific reasons for the recommendation plus examples of evidence as to why “This is an outstanding nominee,” etc.

Category Scholarship Activities: The nominee will have the opportunity to list six different *Category Scholarship Activities* using 20 words or less.

Category Scholarship Activity Description: Choosing one of the above listed activities, the nominee will write in detail about that activity (in 500 words or less). They will also be able to upload a supporting document (e.g., a pdf of the actual award, a picture of nominee receiving award, or an external link to a video of the activity itself highlighting the nominee’s participation).

Leadership Activities and Community Service/Citizenship: The previous two screens will be duplicated for these two-section list/essay requirements.

Unique Qualities (list & essay): Please describe two or three unique things about yourself while relating them to your competition category. The nominee should take this opportunity to relate the challenges they have had to overcome and describe any distinctive experiences they may have had and how they affected them.

Life Enrichment (essay): How do you think your involvement in this category will enrich your life?

STERLING SCHOLAR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Business | Mr. Stewart |
| Computer Technology | Mr. Ware |
| Dance | Ms. Siciliano |
| English | Ms. Turnbow |
| Family & Consumer Science | Ms. Bertagnolli |
| Foreign Language | Ms. Lopez |
| Mathematics | Mr. Stemle |
| Music-Instrumental | Ms. Schelble |
| Music-Vocal | Mr. Bingham |
| Science | Mr. Durham |
| Social Science | Mr. Bertot |
| Speech/Theater Arts/Forensics | Mr. McClellan |
| Trade and Tech. Education | Mr. Slade |
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