Department of Higher Education

Governor's Merit Scholarship (GMS) Do's and Don'ts

To help you prepare for the upcoming Governor's Merit Scholarship nomination period, we've put together a few simple reminders that can make the submission process clearer and more efficient. These guidelines are intended to support you as you identify eligible students and complete the nomination steps with confidence.

Do's

- **DO: Check for Accuracy.** The information you submit to the GMS portal will be what the student uses to log in. If inaccurate data is entered, or any additional characters are included, it will impede your students' ability to successfully log in to the portal and accept.
- **DO: Review the instructions carefully.** There are some updates from last year and although there is a lot of information included in the instruction document, it's all relevant and important to ensure the correct students are being selected, and they can access the portal.
- **DO: Include the student's personal email address.** This is how we will continue to communicate with the students even after they graduate from high school. It's important to submit an address the students can access regularly without assistance from another person (like their parents). Please only provide one email address per student.
- **DO: Submit your nominations in a timely manner.** The deadline to submit your nominations is **October 16th**. The GMS portal will be closed for any additional nominations or changes after this date.
- **DO: Ask questions.** If you are having issues logging in to the GMS portal or have questions about the GMS program. Please contact us and we will be happy to help!

Don'ts

- **DON'T: Ask students about their college plans.** One goal of the Governor's Merit Scholarship is to sway a student's decision to stay in Ohio for college. It is important that all students within the top 5% are given the opportunity to make that decision regardless of their current plans.
- **DON'T: Communicate with the students about their GMS nomination before they receive their award letter from the Governor.** The Governor's Award letter should be the first communication students receive about this award. After the communication is sent, you will receive a copy of the award letter along with a scholarship certificate template. At that time, you are encouraged to reach out to your nominated students and their families to ensure they take advantage of this opportunity.
- **DON'T: Provide a school district email address for the student.** District email domains have strict firewalls to protect student privacy. These firewalls prevent us from sending important communications to students.
- **DON'T: Wait for the last minute to submit your nominations.** The submission deadline is firm to ensure we can ingest all student information and send out their scholarship offers before the early decision date for most colleges and universities. Please log in to the GMS portal as soon as you can to submit your nominations.