Summer Programs Night

Things to know about GSP, GSA, GSE and CHA



Governor's Scholars Program

GSP

A 5- week residential summer program for out-standing up coming seniors.

Governor's School for the Arts

GSA

A **3-week immersive** summer arts program for sophomores and juniors in 9 disciplines

Governor's School for Entrepreneurs

GSE

A **3-week residential program** for grades 10 & 11 focused on innovation, business modeling, and pitching

Commonwealth Honors Academy

CHA

A **3-week honors program** at Murray State University for rising seniors

What is GSP?

- A 5-week summer residential program for outstanding high school students
- Scholars attend the program free of charge, needing only “pocket money” for personal and incidental expenses
- There are no credits or grades given

Where is GSP?

- Murray State University in Murray
- Centre College in Danville
- Morehead State University in Morehead

Eligibility & Requirements

- Be in 11th grade (early grads…juniors graduating early in the KDE EGP… are not eligible)
- Be a current resident of Kentucky
- Have taken the ACT, PSAT, or SAT in the 9th, 10th, or 11th grade

Scholarships Offered to GSP Scholars

- GSP is not a scholarship program and does not offer any scholarships.
- Individual Kentucky colleges do offer scholarships to students who have completed the GSP program.
- For the most up-to-date information, please contact the specific colleges.

How to Apply

- Applications may be found at www.gsp.ky.gov. First year online. Do not hit FINAL SUBMISSION until you are done!
- Each student must submit his/her application online no later than Monday, December 1st by 2:10.
- Only those students selected as district candidates will be sent on to compete in the statewide selection process.
- MCHS can send 13-16 applications to the statewide scoring. Approximately 2000 applications are received statewide and approximately 1020 students are selected to attend.

Requirements

- One essay
- One Teacher Recommendation Form
- One Community Recommendation Form–Must not have a connection to or work for the school system at any level
- Completed Student Profile (Extracurriculars, Service, Honors/Awards)
- ACT, SAT, or PSAT score–Please provide a copy of your most recent score report if using the ACT or SAT exam. Counselors can verify PSAT scores
- Application must be typed on the GSP form and recommendations must be on the GSP Recommender forms

Submitting Your Application

All applications are due :

Tuesday, December 1st

by 2:10PM

No late applications will be accepted. Make sure both the parent/guardian and student sign the Consent Form!

Scoring Process in Frankfort

- The student demographic information is filed separately and tied to the rest of the sections through a journal number. This allows each application to be read blindly.
- The remaining sections are divided among members of the selection committee. Each committee member reads only one of the seven sections.

Focus Areas

Agribusiness/Biotechnology (1)

Architectural Design (2)

Astronomy (3)

Biological & Environmental Issues (4)

Business, Accounting & Entrepreneurship (5)

Communication & Social Theory (6)

Creative Writing & Literary Studies (7)

Cultural Anthropology (8)

Dramatic Expression (9)

Engineering (10)

Film Studies (11)

Forensic Science (12)

Healthcare Industry (13)

Historical Analysis (14)

International Relations (15)

Japanese Language & Culture (16)

Journalism & Mass Media (17)

Modes of Mathematical Thinking (18)

Music Theory & Performance (19)

Philosophy (20)

Physical Science (21)

Political & Legal Issues (22)

Psychology & Behavioral Studies (23)

Public Policy & Administration (24)

Spanish Language & Culture (25)
(Requires a minimum of one-year of previous study.)

Focus Areas

- Students will indicate their top 3 choices from among a variety of interest areas. GSP staff will assign students to one of the top 3 choices.

- Focus areas meet weekly for a minimum of 12 hours per week.

- Class size will vary from 18-22 students.

- You can request specific sessions if you submit your reason in writing and there is space available.

Counselor Page: Academic Achievement (30 Points)

- Consists of ACT, PSAT, or SAT test score (15 Points), GPA (10 Points), and difficulty of course load (5 Points).

- Your counselor will fill this page out.

- We will need to provide a copy of the ACT or SAT score report you want to use. If your PSAT score results in higher points, counselors will pull that report.

Student Profile (30 Points)

- Extracurricular Activities (10 Points)
- Service-Voluntary or Paid (10 Points)
- Honors and Awards (10 Points)
- Each section of the Student Profile is ranked by 3 selection committee teams. It may be necessary to list duplicate information. For example, if a student is captain of the basketball team, the information could be listed in both Extracurricular Activities and Honors/Awards categories.

Helpful Hints: Student Profile

- If you have done it, say it! This is not the time to be humble. Only include information since your freshman year–no middle school information
- Anything that takes up your time should be mentioned and described in detail. Who, what, where, when…details, details, details!
- Readers are looking for leadership and versatility.
- **Try to write at least 3 sentences/bullet points for each entry.**
- Put in multiple sections if needed. Scorers do not see the same sections, so they have no idea what you have already mentioned.
- One extra description can give one more point over another applicant.

Helpful Hints: Extracurricular Profile

- Extracurricular is anything you have done that is extra-clubs, sports, church related groups, ect.
- Many of these will fit in multiple categories.
- Be descriptive–were you an officer or leader in the group, what did you do or the group do? Try to include at least 3 sentences.

Helpful Hints: Service Profile

- Use good verbiage such as led, organized, created, etc. Try to use at least 3 sentences.
- If you had one big service project that lasted a long period time, explain everything about it (how did it make you grow as a leader, did it make you a stronger member or your community, did it make you grow as an individual).
- Don’t forget about paid service. For example, a cashier…you can talk about how it has helped build character or how it has helped your family.

Helpful Hints: Honors/Awards Profile

- Anything you have been selected or chosen for-things you have won, been awarded, selected to participate in, etc.

- Be as descriptive as possible. Try to provide at least 3 sentences

Teacher Recommendation (10 Points)

- This must be completed by a teacher who has had the student in class for a core (math, English, social studies, science, foreign language) academic subject in 9th, 10th, or 11th grade.

- This section is scored by multiple selection committee members. The scores are then averaged together for a final score.
- Ask for recommendations early! It doesn't hurt to ask for more than one and chose the best recommendation. Teachers can submit these to your counselor if they don't want to return to the student.

Helpful Hints: Teacher Recommendation

- Be sure you pick core content teachers
- Be sure the teachers knows what GSP is. This is not a college application or scholarship letter.
- Ask your teachers NOW! You will need their email address to enter to your application. You will be notified on the portal when they complete it.
- Provide them with recommendation examples.
- Ask a teacher who knows you well and can provide a unique recommendation.

Community Recommendation (10 Points)

- This must be completed by a member of the community in a role not associated with the applicant's school system.
- The recommender cannot be a member of the applicant's immediate family.
- This section is scored by multiple committee members. The scores are then averaged for a final score.

Helpful Hints: Community Recommendation

- Ask NOW! You will need their email address to enter to your application. You will be notified on the portal when they complete it.
- Provide them with recommendation examples.
- It might be helpful to provide a resume.
- Choose someone who knows you well and can provide a unique recommendation.

Writing Entry (20 Points)

- Committee members, trained in using the Kentucky Holistic Scoring Guide, score the writing entry.

- Entry should not exceed 500 words

Helpful Hints: Writing Entry

- Follow directions! Do not restate the question! They already have a copy of the prompt.
- Try to write about something unique. Scorers will be reading approximately 2000 entries. Make yours stand out!
- Make sure your entry answers the question.
- Check your grammar!
- Catch their attention!
- Ask an English teacher to proofread your essay!
- What scorers are looking for:
  - What is this person like?
  - Who is this person (not how many big words can you use)?
  - Make them “see” you in their minds.
  - What is your personality? This should show through in your writing.

Helpful Hints: General

- Talk to former GSP scholars. They are a wealth of knowledge.
- GSP is based on merit, not on political influence or who you know.
- GSP is looking for well-rounded individuals.
  - Quantity
  - Quality
  - Diverse Approach
  - Pace/Frequency
  - Versatility

After School GSP Help Sessions/suggested timelines

October 22: Tips & Tricks Session

October 29th: Recommendation Sent

November 5th: Essays Completed

November 12th: Essay & Student Profile Edits

November 19th: Final Questions/Edits

December 1st: Application Final Submission

Timeline

December 1: Applications due online for final submission

December: District GSP committee will score applications

January 14: Notification letters will be sent to students

January 15: Last day to mail applications to GSP

April 12: Students are notified if they were selected at the state level

April 30: Student must submit requests for session

By May 18: All information to be mailed to students

Website Links

GSP Website
https://gsp.ky.gov

Application Link:
https://gsp.ky.gov/applicants/Pages/Applications-and-Forms.aspx

Helpful Hint Packet
https://gsp.ky.gov/applicants/Documents/Helpful%20Hints%20Packet%202026-2027.pdf

Helpful Hints/Videos
https://gsp.ky.gov/applicants/Pages/Helpful%20Hints%20and%20Videos.aspx

Governor's School for the Arts

- Looking for students with skills in their artform, passion for creativity, an open mind, collaborative spirit, and an eagerness for learning
- 3-week summer residential program for outstanding high school students
- Scholars attend the program free of charge, however there is a fee to apply: $35 for one art form, $50 for two forms
- There are no credits or grades given
- Website: www.kentuckygsa.org
- Must complete/prepare a portfolio

Where and When is GSA?

- GSA is changing to one session in a new location this year.
  - Session dates:
    - **JUNE 6TH-26TH, 2026**
  - Location: Northern Kentucky University

GSA Focus Areas

- Nine different arts disciplines:
  - Creative Writing
  - Dance
  - Design
  - Drama
  - Film & Photography
  - Instrumental Music
  - Musical Theater
  - Visual Art
  - Vocal Music
- Focus Area Guides will be released October 4 on their website:

Scholarships Offered to GSA Scholars

- GSA is not a scholarship program and does not offer any scholarships.
- Individual Kentucky colleges do offer scholarships to students who have completed the GSA program.
- For the most up-to-date information, please contact the specific colleges.

Webinars(Click Here to sign up/recordings)

- GSA 101 Webinars:
  - Monday, November 9th @ 4:00PM CST
  - Wednesday, December 2nd @ 4:00PM CST
- Creative Writing
- Dance
- Drama
- Flim+Photography
- Graphic Design
- Instrumental Music
- Musical Theater
- Visual Art
- Vocal Music

GSA Application Process

- Young artists are looked at holistically, not just their product/performance
- No incomplete applications will be reviewed
- Over 500 sophomores and juniors are selected to participate
- Complete the online application and upload all required performance videos
  - read the Applicant Guides for more information and watch the Walkthrough video on how to navigate through GSA's application portal, Acceptd for step-by-step instructions
- Recommendation Process
  - Identify two people who will complete the recommendation forms in support of your application
    - Teachers, school administrators, mentors, people involved in the student's personal or artistic development such as a coach, youth minister, or staff at an organization they work at or volunteer with
  - Recommenders will receive a link in their email to complete and submit the recommendation form–**make sure you have the CORRECT email address for your recommender**

GSA Timeline

Applications are open NOW!

January 17,2027: Application are due

February 12, 2027: GSA 2027 Finalist are announced

March 11-13, 2027: Final Round Auditions

April 9,2027: Finalists will be notified

Governor's School for Entrepreneurs

- Looking for students who are:
  - Scrappy, Resilient, Curious
  - Comfortable with risk and failure
  - Okay with chaos
  - Collaborative teammates
  - Flexible and open to ideas
  - Courageous
- 3-week summer residential program for outstanding high school students held at UK and St. Thomas Moore
- There are no credits or grades given
- Website: https://kentuckygse.com/summer-startup/#
- Free program for students, only money for incidentals is needed

Scholarships Offered to GSE Scholars

- Individual Kentucky colleges do offer scholarships to students who have completed the GSE program. You will find a page on the GSE page that recommends contacting any University you are interested in attending and asking what scholarships they offer.
- For the most up-to-date information, please contact the specific colleges.

GSE Virtual Info Sessions

- Sign up to attend one of the GSE Virtual Info Sessions for information about the program and applying(CLICK HERE TO LINKS)
  - November 5th @5PM
  - November 16th@ 6PM
  - December 8th@ 7PM
  - January 9th@9AM
  - January 15th@5PM
  - January 20th@6PM

Do I have to already have a business?

- No, GSE focuses on skills and experience. The first two days of the program will be an idea generation and analysis workshop, where your team collaboratively comes up with a viable solution to a problem through a product or service. In your application you can tell us if you have an idea or are already running your own business. We'd love to know about it, but you and your team will start with a fresh new idea at GSE.
- Families are invited to attend Demo Day on the last day of Summer Startup. This is an inspirational and thrilling event when the teams pitch their business ideas to judges and an audience full of loved ones and supporters

GSE Application Timeline

- Applications **are open NOW!**
  - **February 1,2027**: Applications are due
  - **February 8,2027**: Recommendations are due
  - **April 16,2027**: Acceptance Notification
  - **June 20-July 11, 2027**: Start up will take place @ UK
    -

Application Information

- Video: In 90 seconds, pitch yourself as a future member of a Summer Startup team.
- Short answers questions. Some examples:
  - Convince us in 300 characters or less that you're applying to this program because you're passionate about entrepreneurship.
  - What's your story? (900 characters max)
  - If you currently have your own business or something similar, tell us all about it. (600 characters max)
  - Please describe the classes, experiences, activities, accomplishments, and goals that have helped shape you as a team member and leader.

GSE Outcomes

- Think Like an Entrepreneur–become a problem solver by authentic immersion into real-world entrepreneurship
- Learn How to Lean Into Failure–taking risks and learning from failure aren't just part of running a business, they are part of life
- Start or Improve Your Business–learn how to make your existing business better or leave with a solid understanding of how to make a dream concept happen
- Connections and Friendships–surround yourself with others who share your passion for entrepreneurship and make lifelong connections-both professionally and personally

MSU Commonwealth Honors Academy

- The Commonwealth Honors Academy is a three-week academic enrichment experience held June 12 - July 2, 2027 on Murray State University's main campus in Murray, KY.
- Participates will live on campus
- Take college-level honors classes
- Engage in fun activities and seminars to help you grow personally and socially
- Website: https://www.murraystate.edu/cha/index.html
- Free program, students only need money for personal purchases, laundry, snacks or incidentals; there is a $250 tuition processing fee

Who is Eligible for CHA

- are or will be at least 16 years old
- be a current high school junior
- have a 3.5 or higher GPA
- have a 25 Composite ACT (or the equivalent)
- eager to grow - academically and personally

Scholarships Offered to CHA Scholars

- If meeting eligibility requirements upon high school graduation, students are eligible to receive full in-state tuition for 4 years
  - 3.5 GPA
  - 25 ACT Composite Score

If requirements are not met, students are still eligible for other Murray State Academic First-time Freshman scholarships

CHA Application Process

- Typically applications are due online March 1; the Summer 2027 application opens December 1st
- Student portion of the application
- Teacher Recommendation Form–will need to know Teacher's email to send link to the Google Form
- Counselor Recommendation Form–will need to know Counselor's email to send link to the Google Form
- $250 Tuition processing fee(optional upon acceptance)

Why CHA?

- Students can earn 3 hours of college credits; credits are transferable to other universities
- If meeting eligibility requirements upon graduation, students are eligible to receive in-state full tuition for 4 years
- Students will get a taste of what life will be like as a college student–live in a residence hall with a roommate, eat at campus dining halls, navigate campus, take honors classes at the college level, learn to complete homework and manage time wisely
- College classes will fulfill seminar courses in the Honors Program Curriculum; courses depend on faculty available to teach courses; students will be able to select their preferences for available courses and MSU will match you with your top choices to the best of their ability

GSP

No Cost/No College Credit

Length: 5 weeks
Program Start Dates:
June 13 or 14 or 21
Application Due Date:
Tuesday Dec. 2nd, 2025
Scholarships vary by schools

APPLICATION CHECKLIST:

- ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS
- STUDENT PROFILE
  - EXTRACURRICULAR
  - SERVICE
  - HONORS & AWARDS
- WRTING ENTRY
- TEACHER RECOMMENDATION
- COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATION

GSA

App fee $35($50 for 2)/No College Credit

Length: 3 weeks
Program Dates:
June 7-27, 2026
Application Due Date:
January 18, 2026
Scholarships vary by schools

APPLICATION CHECKLIST:
Online-Create an account

- Part 1:
  - Basic Info
  - 2 recommenders by email
- Part 2: Specific art form info
  - Headshot
  - Guardian Info
  - Art form videos/images
  - Art form questions

CHA

No Cost/3 hours($250 Tution Processing Fee)

Length: 3 weeks
Program Dates:
June 6-27,2025
Application Due Date:
Typically March 1st
4 free years at Murray if eligibility requirements are met

APPLICATION CHECKLIST:

- APPLICATION(ONLINE)
- TEACHER RECOMMENDATION
- CONSELOR FORM

NOT YET POSTED FOR 2026

GSE

No Cost/No College Credit

Length: 3 weeks
Program Dates: not released yet
Application Due Date:
Typically mid Jan. (not released yet)
Scholarships vary by schools

APPLICATIONS DO NOT OPEN UNTIL THE END OF SEPTEMBER

APPLICATION CHECKLIST:

- 90 SECOND VIDEO
- TEACHER RECOMMENDATION (MUST USE FORM SENT AFTER APPLICATION IS SUBMITTED)
- HAVE PARENT PERMISSION
- KNOW THE TRUE DESIRE TO "BE AN E"

Form for any Students interested in applying for these programs

Google Form

CONTACT INFORMATION

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