



Jana Panos
Principal

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Date: September 9, 2026

To: C E Byrd High School Seniors and Parents of Seniors

Re: Student of the Year

Dear Byrd Seniors and Guardians,

C.E. Byrd High School is proud to begin the process of selecting our Student of the Year! This honor celebrates a senior who exemplifies the best of what it means to be a Byrd Yellow Jacket, including strong academic achievement, leadership, character, and service to our school and community. We are thrilled to begin this process and want to make sure every senior has the necessary information.

Per Caddo Parish Schools Policy, "all seniors and parents of seniors are to be notified of the Student of the Year Program, the selection process, and the procedures for resolving issues and disputes related to the selection of candidates." Please find attached a copy of the guidelines, selection process and grievance procedures for Caddo Parish. Contact Amanda Byrd, 12th Grade Counselor, at 318-364-5469 if you have any questions.

Jana Panos, M.Ed.

Principal

C.E. Byrd High School

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Caddo Parish 2026-2027 Student of the Year Guidelines and Selection Procedures

School-Level Selection

- Read carefully through all information provided pertaining to state and district Student of the Year packets. Please contact Mary Nash-Wood at mwood@caddoschools.org if you did not receive a packet or if you have any questions.
- Consult and follow the Guidelines for Selecting Candidates. Only fifth, eighth and twelfth grade students may be considered as Students of the Year. Every attempt has been made to keep district guidelines closely aligned with Louisiana Department of Education-approved procedures. Students are evaluated at the school, district, zone, regional and state levels, using the same criteria. While grades and test scores are important, especially for initial screenings, they represent between six and 12 percent of the overall evaluation. Candidates should have the most recent test scores accepted by the Louisiana Department of Education and accurately represent each school's highest level of students.
- **Prior to the selection at the school level, all parents and students are to be notified by letter of the program, selection process, and the procedures for resolving issues and disputes related to the selection of candidates no later than September 25, 2026. A copy of the Student of the Year Grievance Procedures is included. Please send this information at one time to avoid confusion.**
- At minimum, candidates for Student of the Year must have a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 on a four-point scale. The grade point average is calculated on semester grades in the following fashion:
 - **Grade 5 Candidates:** Use the GPA from grades 2, 3, and 4.
 - **Grade 8 Candidates:** Use the GPA from grades 5, 6, and 7.
 - **Grade 12 Candidates:** Use the unweighted GPA from grades 9, 10, and 11.

- After the names of all students who meet the academic requirements of a 3.5 GPA or above have been gathered, evaluate all scores from statewide or non-public annual assessments. Such assessments include LEAP, AP scores, ACT score, PSAT score, SAT Score, Work Keys Scores, High School Jump Start certifications, TOPS-aligned Dual Enrollment Coursework, TOPS/TOPS Tech eligibility status, work-based experience documentation from employer, Associates Degree coursework/status and/or other pertinent academic test results or other pertinent test results. The top 25 percent of qualified students will determine the names to be placed on the Finalist Nomination Form.
- **Finalists Nomination Form:** Utilizing the “Teacher Rubric for Student of the Year Form,” instruct teachers to evaluate the students they teach or have taught (4th and 5th grade for elementary school nominees; 7th and 8th grade for middle school nominees; and 11th and 12th grade for high school nominees). The Teacher Rubric will be given to teachers who have direct knowledge of the student. If a teacher has not taught or worked with the student directly, no score will be taken for that particular student. The lowest Teacher Rubric score will be thrown out and the final results will be averaged. The results of the basic information (GPA, assessments, and Teacher Rubric) will be used to determine the top five students at the school level.
- The top five students will proceed in the school selection process. If there is a tie, please allow the persons in the tie to be judged at the school level for school student of the year.

**FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS IN THE STATE GUIDELINES FOR THE SELECTION OF CANDIDATES
APPLICATION PACKET**

FOR WRITING SAMPLES AND INTERVIEWS

(Please be sure to have a diverse committee of five or more people.)

1. The school will construct interview questions to be used with the top 5 students who meet district requirements. The committee will score interviews on the attached scoring rubric. Students should all be asked the same questions on the appropriate age level form provided by the Louisiana Department of Education.
2. Candidates will write an autobiographical sketch in narrative form (appropriate to their grade levels.) The writing sample must be completed at school in **TWO HOURS** in the same monitored setting, and the students should write to the same prompt. To reiterate, the writing sample will be assigned and completed at the school in two hours. The initial writing sample includes information such as family history, interests, career aspirations, etc. The students should be encouraged to address at least three or more issues that are important to them and that have had influence on their lives. At the fifth grade level, the teachers/committee may want to pose

specific questions for the students to address. The committee will score the writing sample according to the attached rubric.

3. The school student of the year coordinator is responsible for tallying the interview rubrics and the writing sample rubrics for a total. The school student of the year will be determined by the highest rubric total from the interview and writing sample. The student of the year will complete a portfolio in alignment with state guidelines.

BE SURE TO KEEP ALL DOCUMENTATION AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL AND A COPY OF ALL DOCUMENTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DISTRICT STUDENT OF THE YEAR COORDINATOR, MARY NASH WOOD IN THE EVENT OF A GRIEVANCE.

District-Level Competition

Application Portfolio Requirements

- Maximum length: 50 pages (8.5 x 11 inches) in total
- Format: [Submitted Electronically](#)
- Minimum font size: 11-point **legible** font
- Video submissions and zipped folders are not permitted.

Student Application Portfolio Overview

The nominee's application portfolio serves as the primary basis for the selection process throughout all levels. As such, the School System-Level Selection Committee should ensure that the nominee's portfolios include all required application materials and do not exceed 50 electronic pages. The portfolio requirements include the following:

- LDOE application form
- Academic records and state assessments
- Autobiographical sketch
- Leadership, service, citizenship, and awards forms
- Additional artifacts (ex: photos, certificates, etc.). These pages can be created in Canva.
- Student Media Consent Form
- Student photo
 - Student photos must be submitted as JPG or PNG. Do not submit a PDF.

Note: Nominees should use the Portfolio Checklist to assist with preparing the materials needed for the portfolio. Portfolios should be submitted no later than October 23, 2026 via the portal found [here](#).

Portfolio Guidance

- **Student Photo**
- **Student Consent Form**
 - Ensures the student is eligible and able to participate in the Student of the Year process
- **Application (In the application portal as “Upload Student's Application”)**
 - The basic data sheet must be completed and attached to the application portfolio. Parents must sign an authorization for the release of pertinent information relative to the program and the Student Media Consent form. School system coordinators will enter/upload application information into the online portal.
 - Nominees must submit information about themselves in narrative form. This autobiographical sketch provides additional information about the nominee, but it is not scored. The autobiographical sketch should include information such as family history, interests, and career aspirations. The students should be encouraged to address at least three issues that are important to them and have influenced their lives.
- **Academic Achievement (In the Application portal as “Upload Student Academic Record and/or Transcript”)**

A copy of the cumulative card, report cards, and /or high school transcripts reflecting academic performance in previous years must accompany the application portfolio
- **Student Annual Assessment Performance “In the Application portal as “Upload Student's Scores on Statewide Annual Assessments”)**
 - Also, scores for all statewide or non-public school annual assessments taken prior to the current school year are to be included. Candidates should include their AP, CLEP, ACT, PSAT, SAT, High School Jump Start certifications, TOPS-aligned Dual Enrollment coursework, TOPS/TOPS Tech eligibility status, and/or other pertinent academic test results.
- All candidates (5th, 8th, and 12th grades) will complete the Leaders/Activities/Service/Citizenship and Recognitions and Awards sections of the portfolio (the written part is included in the application).

- Supporting photos, certificates, etc. should be submitted in the application portal under “Photo Pages, Letters of Recommendation, Certificates, and/or Other Memorabilia”.
- Principal Required Signature for Selection Document (In the application portal as “Upload Principal Required Signature for Selection Document”)
 - Verifies the student is the school’s selected Student of the Year honoree

Completed portfolios should be submitted to the application portal no later than 11:59 p.m. October 23, 2026.



Grievance Procedures for 2026-2027 Student of the Year

In the event the results of the Student of the Year selection are contested, the following steps will be taken:

Phase I

- The person contesting or disputing the results of the school's student selection will meet informally with the principal within 24 hours immediately following the student selection to discuss the reasons for the dispute. At this time, the principal will review selection procedures.

Phase II (If dispute is not resolved at Phase I)

- The person contesting or disputing the results of the school's student selection must place in writing to the principal the reasons for the dispute within 24 hours immediately following the informal meeting with the principal.
- The Principal and School Student of the Year Coordinator will investigate the procedures to see if the selection was done in accordance with the Caddo Parish Public Schools Student of the Year Selection Procedures and the Louisiana Department of Education Student of the Year Guidelines. The principal will submit a written report on the school's selection, judging and scoring to the District Student of the Year Coordinator and the School's Director within five school days immediately following the investigation.
- The District Student of the Year Coordinator and the School's Director will convene to review the selection process and to discuss the written report submitted by the principal to make a determination. A written report of the termination will be given to the principal and the grievant.

Phase III (If dispute is not resolved at Phase II)

- The Chief of Academic Officer will review all phases of the grievance process and make a final determination.