

# **Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of South Carolina Free & Accepted Masons**



## **Annual Scholarship Program for 2024**

### **Guidelines for the Awarding of Scholarships**

### **Writing Prompt and Instructions for Preparing the Essay**

## GUIDELINES FOR THE AWARDING OF SCHOLARSHIPS

1. The Grand Lodge will award three (3) four-year scholarships, to be paid in annual installments of \$1000.00 each, to the three finalists who have competed on a statewide level and have satisfied, all requirements as set forth by the official Scholarship Committee of the Grand Lodge.
2. All monies will be paid directly to the colleges of the winners' choices.
3. The funds will be disbursed over a four-year academic period.
4. Each winner must give his or her chosen college or university permission to send periodic grading reports to the Chairman of the Scholarship Committee.
5. The scholarship will be terminated if the student fails to maintain passing grades suitable to remain in school.
6. One of the main criteria for the awarding of a scholarship will be on the basis of a written essay, with a minimum of five (5) paragraphs and a maximum of eight (8). The topic will be based on a research question chosen by the Scholarship Committee. **THE ESSAY MUST BE ORIGINAL.** Detailed guidelines for the preparation of the essay will be given to each participant.
7. The essay must be typed and prepared in MLA (Modern Language Association) format.
8. The following items must also be included in each contestant's scholarship packet:
  - a. Scholastic rank in present graduating class
  - b. Written comments from at least three (3) character witnesses, which should include leadership qualities
  - c. A statement of contestant's academic achievement
  - d. A list of school, church, and community activities in which the contestant has participated
  - e. A letter of recommendation by a school official where contestant is presently attending or last attended school
  - f. SAT or ACT score
  - g. A copy of high school transcript
9. **ALL DISTRICT FINALISTS MUST APPEAR IN PERSON AT THE STATEWIDE LEVEL BEFORE A PANEL OF JUDGES FOR AN ORAL INTERVIEW.**
10. Each of the Masonic Districts may present one finalist only to appear as one of the statewide finalists.
11. **District finalists' complete scholarship packets must be in the hands of the Chairman of the State Scholarship Committee not later than MONDAY, APRIL 15, 2024.**
12. District Deputies will secure their own judges to judge their essays. Further, all deputies must ensure that all other required items in #8 are submitted to them, along with the essays.
13. The State Scholarship Committee selects the judges for the state elimination.
14. Contestants may be male or female.

15. The final (state) elimination will be held on Saturday, May 18, 2024, 10:00 a.m., at the Grand Lodge Masonic Temple, 2324 Gervais Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29202.

16. The rating for the state elimination of each district finalist will be divided into three equal parts:

- a. One-third-content of essay
- b. One-third-oral interview
- c. One-third-other criterial guidelines

17. In the case of a scholarship winner (at the state level) not accepting the initial scholarship award by September 15, or the year in which the scholarship was won, or if a winner fails to use the total amount of the scholarship award due to dropping out of school because of failure, the unused money will be prorated among all eligible winners presently enrolled in a college or university.

18. Only high school seniors are eligible to participate in the Grand Lodge Scholarship Contest.

## Argumentative Writing Prompt and Instructions for Preparing the Essay

### Do Schools Need to Do More to Hold Students Accountable?\*

Teachers are reporting that pressure from snowplow parents and bad district policies are making their jobs harder. Is it too easy for students to get by at your school?

Do you think your school does enough to hold all students accountable academically and behaviorally? For example, what happens if you miss several days of school? Are you required to make them up somehow? Are your grades affected? Do you risk being held back if you are absent too many times? What about if you don't turn in an assignment? Do you get a zero? Are you expected to redo the work? Or can you still easily pass without completing all of your tasks?

In the Opinion essay "Teachers Can't Hold Students Accountable. It's Making the Job Miserable," Jessica Grose writes about responses to a questionnaire in which she asked teachers and parents what they thought had changed about teaching. She writes: I mostly heard back from teachers, and one of their consistent themes was that they felt they could no longer hold students accountable academically or behaviorally because of pressure from snowplow parents and bad district policies.

Ms. Grose continues:

A typical response came from Russell, a public high school teacher on the East Coast. He said that when a big chunk of the graduating class "has a 4.0, grades are meaningless," adding: *Failure is a bad word — and the kids know it. It takes way more work to hold a student accountable than to simply pass him/her. Even if a kid does nothing all year, we are encouraged to find a way to pass him/her. And then, of course, when a student does not perform, parents often want to know what we are going to do about it — not what their child can do.*

Read the *New York Times* essay, dated October 23, 2023, by Jessica Grose in its entirety, and in a detailed argumentative essay of at least five (5) complete paragraphs, answer the following questions:

- How does your school experience compare with what you read about in the essay in terms of issues like grade inflation, policies that require all students to pass a class regardless of missing assignments, parents questioning teachers and absences not counting against students?
- Laura Warren, a retired reading specialist, describes her mixed feelings about the 50 percent policy. Does anything that she says resonate with you? Do you think this requirement is fair? In what ways does it have the potential to help? In what ways could it hurt?
- Later on in the essay, Ms. Grose presents evidence that shows that even as chronic absentee rates are rising, high school graduation rates are increasing. Thomas Dee, a professor at Stanford's Graduate School of Education, says that one explanation could be "shifting, post-pandemic norms around grade inflation, classroom discipline and academic standards." Do you think this is a plausible explanation? Does your classroom experience today feel different than it did before the coronavirus pandemic? If so, how? What ideas do you have for why school might feel different post-Covid?
- Do you think schools need to do more to hold students accountable behaviorally and academically? If so, why, and what changes do you think need to be made? If not, why not?
- Many teachers say policies like the 50 percent requirement have made their jobs miserable. Do you think your teachers would agree? Would you consider teaching as a career? Why or why not? If not, what could make it more appealing to you?

Use this source and at least two (2) other current or previous sources that you choose to support your argument presented in your thesis statement. Remember that your thesis statement should be the last sentence in your first paragraph, and be sure to underline it. One of your other sources can also be an interview with a credible resource such as a retired educator (teacher, principal, or superintendent), or a former school board member. Be sure to cite the sources, according to MLA format, in the body of the paper and on a Works Cited page at the end of your essay.

\*This writing prompt and instructions were paraphrased and taken from *The Learning Network: The New York Times*.

### Grading Rubric for Written Assignments

Levels of Assessment				
Criteria	Inadequate=D (Below Standard)	Adequate=C (Meets Standard)	Above Average=B (Exceeds Standard)	Exemplary=A (Far Exceeds Standard)
<b>Organization</b>	Writing lacks logical organization. It shows some coherence but ideas lack unity. Serious errors.	Writing is coherent and logically organized. Some points remain misplaced and stray from the topic. Transitions evident but not used throughout essay.	Writing is coherent and logically organized with transitions used between ideas and paragraphs to create coherence. Overall unity of ideas is present.	Writing shows high degree of attention to logic and reasoning of points. Unity clearly leads the reader to the conclusion and stays thought regarding the topic.
<b>Level of Content</b>	Shows some thinking and reasoning but most ideas are underdeveloped and unoriginal.	Content indicates thinking and reasoning applied with original thought on a few ideas.	Content indicates original thinking and develops ideas with sufficient and firm evidence.	Content indicates synthesis of ideas in-depth analysis and evidence of original thought and support for the topic.
<b>Development</b>	Main points lack detailed development. Ideas are vague with little evidence of critical thinking.	Main points are present with limited detail and development. Some critical thinking is present.	Main points well developed with quality supporting details and quantity. Critical thinking is weaved into points.	Main points well developed with high quality and quantity support. Reveals high degree of critical thinking.
<b>Grammar &amp; Mechanics</b>	Spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors create distraction, making reading difficult. Fragments, comma splices, run-ons evident. Errors are frequent.	Most spelling, punctuation, and grammar correct allowing reader to progress through essay. Some errors remain.	Essay has few spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors allowing reader to follow ideas clearly. Very few fragments or run-ons.	Essay is free of distracting spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors. Absent of fragments, comma splices and run-ons.
<b>Style</b>	Mostly in elementary form with little or no variety in sentence structure, diction, rhetorical devices or emphasis.	Approaches college level usage of some variety in sentence patterns, diction, and rhetorical devices.	Attains college level style. Tone is appropriate and rhetorical devices used to enhance content, sentence variety used effectively.	Shows outstanding style going beyond usual college level. Rhetorical devices and tone used effectively. Creative use of sentence structure and coordination.
<b>Format</b>	Fails to follow format and assignment requirements. Unclear margins, spacing and indentation. Neatness of essay needs attention.	Meets format and assignment requirements, generally correct margins, spacing and indentation. Essay is neat but may have some assembly errors.	Meets format and assignment requirements, margins, spacing, and indentations are correct. Essay is neat and correctly assembled.	Meets all format and assignment requirements and evidence attention to detail. All margins, spacing and indentations are correct. Essay is neat and correctly assembled with professional look.

More help on getting better grades: <http://home.smu.edu/~hculbert/cwrtwrte.pdf>

## Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of South Carolina

Student \_\_\_\_\_ District # \_\_\_\_\_

District Deputy's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Address and Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Total Points \_\_\_\_\_ /100

### Essay Grading Rubric for 2024 Levels of Assessment

Criteria	Inadequate	Adequate	Above Average	Exemplary
<b>Content (24)</b>	(1-6)	(7-12)	(13-18)	(19-24)
<b>Development (20)</b>	(1-5)	(6-10)	(11-15)	(16-20)
<b>Grammar &amp; Mechanics (12)</b>	(1-3)	(4-6)	(7-9)	(10-12)
<b>Style (20)</b>	(1-5)	(6-10)	(11-15)	(16-20)
<b>Format** (24)</b>	(1-6)	(7-12)	(13-18)	(19-24)

**\*\*BE SURE THAT THE STUDENT SHOWS EVIDENCE OF HAVING USED THE  
REQUIRED SOURCES FROM THE INSTRUCTIONS, AND THAT THE ESSAY IS  
PREPARED IN MLA FORMAT.**

**IMPORTANT: DISTRICT LEVEL PARTICIPANTS**

**RETURN COMPLETED SCHOLARSHIP PACKET TO:**

District Deputy D. Vincent Wright

Masonic District # 3

Address 110 Rockhouse Circle

Abbeville, SC 29620

**DEADLINE DATE**

**MONDAY, MARCH 25, 2024**

**Thank you kindly for participating!**



## MWPHGL OF SC SCHOLARSHIP 2024

### THINGS TO REMEMBER:

1. Only high school seniors are eligible to participate
2. Winner at district level must attend final state elimination at the grand lodge in Columbia, SC on Saturday, May 18, 2024, 10:00 a.m. District finalist will meet a panel of judges for an oral interview.
3. Scholarship packet must be turned in no later than March 25, 2024.
4. GIVE YOUR COMPLETED SCHOLARSHIP PACKET TO COMMITTEE CHAIR KENNETH GAUSE.
5. Kenneth Gause's contact information 520-440-9565 or [kennygause1177@gmail.com](mailto:kennygause1177@gmail.com).
6. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Kenneth Gause.

