

Transcript of Webinar “North Carolina Governor’s School – Selected Information for 2017-18”: September 2017

>>Announcer: The broadcast is now starting.

>> Hello. My name is Tom Winton, I'm the Coordinator of North Carolina's Governor's School, and I welcome you to this webinar on selected information for 2017 and '18 for the North Carolina Governor's School. Purpose of this webinar is to share basics about the Governor's School program and also to discuss how to apply for the 2018 session of Governor's School. This is meant to complement or in some respects, replace the informational meetings that are occurring across the state in September and October. Especially for those who cannot attend in person. Of course, they do not offer the opportunity for the question-and-answer and more direct and deep discussion, but we hope that this information will be helpful to students, to parents and to school staff as they prepare for this session of nominating students and then ultimately for those students who do get selected so they know what they are about to encounter. The North Carolina Governor's School is a program that started in 1963 here in North Carolina. And it is the first Governor's School in the country. It has been operated for over 50 years and administered by the North Carolina state board of education and the department of public instruction. It's one of the very few programs that these entities actually administer and it's one of those programs that we value greatly and really have the honor of sharing with students from throughout North Carolina and over the years. The information that you're about to receive is in a PowerPoint format, but also on the Governor's School website. As you can see here on this slide, that website is www.ncgovschool.org.

toggling over to that, and I hope you'll take a chance to review the information that's on this website. There's a great degree of depth that goes into talking about the curriculum, the enrichment opportunities students have when they attend, the application and nomination process and so on. The site is updated periodically for information that is pertinent at the time and as you see right here, the nomination packet and forms for 2018 Governor's School are uploaded and available to you. We'll be going over that information in this session.

But first, let's cover a little bit about what Governor's School is and why a student might be interested. We certainly hope that many students are interested in applying this year.

Governor's School is a program that's a bit unique in that it presents something different than what you get in your typical high school experience. In fact, it was designed that way. Designed to be something in addition to what students can get in their regular high school and also to be free of some of the structures of high school, such as tests, grades, credits, scores that are momentarily determined and bring on different pressures. We free up students from those more artificial constructs to focus on learning for its own sake. The importance of asking good questions, the importance of exploring topics more deeply than they generally have an opportunity to in other settings. So why should I be interested in Governor's School?

Well, it offers something for a lot of different students. The first thing it offers is the breadth of content that you don't find in many other programs. At Governor's School, we have ten different disciplines that are offered and these disciplines range from anything you see here on the screen, English, mathematics, natural science, social science, and two language programs. At Governor's School West we have a program in Spanish and Governor's School East, one in French. It also extends to the arts, dance and theater, visual art, choral music. We have a mixed chorus at Governor's School East this summer. That means sopranos, altos, tenors and basses and at Governor's School West, sopranos and altos in their chorus. Instrumental music, we have a full orchestra at Governor's School West and a wind ensemble with percussion at Governor's School East. These topics are broad and they appeal to many different students and that's part of the allure. But it's important that you understand that these-- these disciplines, which are called the Area I classes, focus on something quite different than what students typically get in

their regular classes of these titles. While many of those classes can focus on foundational, historical or traditional topics within those content areas, Governor's School goes a little bit differently in that the focus is on contemporary, new, emerging issues in each and every one of these disciplines, 20th and 21st century authors, 20th and 21st century composers, modern dance, new forms of literature, poetry, new theories in mathematics, new developments in social science and new discoveries in natural science. New ways of producing art, theater, language is immersion in the culture as much as the words and vocabulary of these countries and languages for which they are being studied. So there's this emphasis on contemporary and new ways of looking not necessarily for getting answers, but for exploring and asking good questions and learning how to do this together in a community of other students who are just as equally bright and talented and high achieving. Usually a very rich and active time of exploration in these particular disciplines. So students get an amazing amount of instruction, forward thinking in these particular disciplines. They attend one class in the morning for about an hour and 15 minutes. Another in the afternoon. Each day, Monday through Friday, and then once on Saturdays and there's usually additional times where there's work on projects, work on concerts and performances that are going to be produced and given to the rest of the student body. So it gives students this really very, very rich experience in their chosen discipline. That's called Area I and their Area I experience is the experience for which they are being nominated and ultimately selected. So this gives a little bit of overview of the basics, but it's not all of what Governor's School is about.

What makes Governor's School unique is that it takes off from the discipline-specific or siloed areas of a certain discipline, and aims deeper and more broadly into other topics, other concepts. We have a class called Area II, and Area II is a course that some have called philosophy, but it's really more about philosophical thinking and approaches to a variety of areas of study. Certainly philosophy but also epistemology, the study of knowledge, metaphysics, ethics, aesthetics, what is beauty? What is truth? What makes something real?

These are tools for thinking that students get to pursue, get to consider and ask deep questions. One other part about Area II that makes it unique is that you're not going to be with all the students from your discipline. You get to be with students from other disciplines all integrated into one class. So through that, you get the varied perspectives of the dancer, the English literature student, the mathematician, the choral musician and so on, and it offers the opportunity for wonderfully rich discussion and discovery.

Now, Area II is very much about that concept development, but what about the personal? How do we make that real and how do we apply that to our lives? Well, Area I and Area II inform us, but area III inspires us. Area III inspires us to have that connection between self and society. It talks about encountering values and approaching ethics. There's great opportunity for discussion, for sharing, for exploration, for seeing how your values and your consciously-arrived-at beliefs and values can inform your lifestyle and how you proceed as you step forward into these next parts of life. There's a lot of opportunity for reflection, for journaling and again, it's in the integrated classroom where you still have those perspectives from a variety of disciplines.

Now, Area I, Area II and Area III, all provide for a very rich curricular experience throughout the day. Usually from 9:00 in the morning until about 3:00 or 3:30 in the afternoon, but this is a residential program.

So what else does it offer? Well, there's much, much more at Governor's School. In addition to those classes, which are very enriching and interesting, there's other things, activities, every day that students have the opportunity to attend. We have speakers that come from across the country and throughout the world that speak on interesting topics from political, cultural, medical, scientific and so many other different topics, sociological. Very, very interesting speakers that come from all walks of life and they come solely to speak to Governor's School students because they know inquisitive nature that the students bring and their readiness for that high-level type of

discussion. There's also electives and seminars that students can take. Sometimes you get to take classes that you never thought you'd be able to. Maybe there would be an interesting scientific area, but you are in an arts area. Well, here's your opportunity to take and explore topics in those other areas of interest that you have.

There's a great deal of recreational activities with sports and games, and then also, just college campus living. What's fascinating about this is you actually get to live in a dorm with a roommate on a hall in a college, in a community campus environment. One of the most exciting parts of the Governor's School experience is getting to actually learn what it means to be in a community outside of your own family. For some students, this is their first opportunity in such- in such an environment. But it would be the first of many because many students are getting ready for that next step, meaning college and Governor's School can be one of the best places to prepare you in that direction. And all of that, we provide and students get immersed in this community without the pressures of tests, scores, grades, credits and the like, and instead, we infuse an excitement for learning for its own sake and for asking good questions and learning that the asking of the question is often more important than the answer.

That's Area I, -Area II, Area III and the rest of the program that makes Governor's School such a rich and exciting and warm and inviting environment. Now you can take our word for it, or you can certainly visit the campus websites that are available to you right now.

Let's take a look. Governor's School East, which is our campus at Meredith College in Raleigh. It has its own website, as you see here. Governor's School West is our campus at Salem College in Winston-Salem. Let's take a look at a couple of those websites. Here's the Governor's School West website, and you'll notice there's links at the top for events, for information for parents, for students. You can even get a view on what happens each day. For example, here's a list of electives that happened this past summer, and a few of these courses that are available in the late afternoons and evenings. You'll see a variety of topics with a host of interesting concepts to explore. Everything from Theater Masks to Performing with Electronics to the Golden Ratio Phi and Is The Universe Literally A Computer? There's so many different fascinating topics that are presented each and every day by our faculty and staff that everyone has access to regardless of your discipline. So you can see descriptions of those on the Governor's School session or on the campus websites, both for West and for East. Here's the East website. You can pull up their newsletter and read about it and all the happenings that were partaken in this past summer. It was an exciting time. There's a great photo gallery here where you can see exciting pictures of students, generally having a great time. So I encourage you to visit those things.

Let's take a look back at some other information here on the PowerPoint. One question that we often receive is what about money? Well, obviously, it costs quite a bit to run this program, and we do receive funding from the General Assembly. These are your tax dollars at work and we try to spend them as efficiently as we can to reach as many students as possible. Even with that, we do not have sufficient funds to operate the program and to reach as many students as we do now. Because of that, over the last several years, we have charged a \$500 per-student tuition, and that is-- that complements that partial funding to allow us to cover the expenses of housing, feeding, educating students for five and a half weeks. The tuition, the \$500 per-student tuition, is only assessed after students are selected and of course, that is later on, once decisions have been made in March and in April. We charge the entity that nominates students and, while parents and students can express interest and apply at the local level, ultimately, the official nominations after they're presented at the local level come to us from the school systems, from the charter schools, from the private schools, and because they're the ones that submit the nominations, they're call our Nominating Entity and those are the ones that are responsible for paying us the \$500 per-student tuition. So if four students from a particular school system attended, then late spring that school system would submit a check to the Department of Public Instruction for \$2,000, 500 times 4. With that, though, we do give

them the flexibility to collect that \$500 however they see fit. Some school systems already have it in their budget and are able to pay for students out of their own budget. Others may not be able to or may only be able to pay a portion. This is not a judgment statement. It's just the nature of the fiscal reality in that particular school or school system. Some parents are required by their school or school system to pay the \$500, and we want folks to know that if they are required to pay and that \$500 is a hardship, then there are opportunities for scholarships. The Governor's School Foundation is a 501(C)3 nonprofit charitable organization that is made of folks who went to Governor's School 5, 10, 20, 50 years ago, and they're very dedicated to this program. They offer a scholarship program, needs-based, to students who are required to pay tuition by their school system. We want you to know about this and they want you to know about this, so students are not persuaded to not apply just because of the finances. We want you to apply because the financial resources will be found, if needed. So please make sure you avail yourself of that information if you do get selected and you are required to pay. We will send that information out with selection letters in March.

So what else is happening? When do we need to move forward with Governor's School applications, nominations and the like? I'll go over some of these briefly, but a lot of these dates are already listed and available to you in the Nomination Packet. Speaking of the packet, the Nomination Packet was posted in early September and it's available on the Governor's School website. Let's take a look at that real quickly. We'll go back to the website. I have the Governor's School website pulled up, www.ncgovschool.org, and you'll notice here, it says the Nomination Packet and forms for the 2018 Governor's School. The entire pack set available for download and I certainly encourage to you do that. Let's take a look at it. This has all the information that you would need about everything happening with Governor's School, what it is, when it is, how you apply and so on, frequently asked questions, tips for how to apply in a better manner, information for schools and school systems. There's even sample forms on here so please avail yourself of this information. You'll see lots of good answers to questions that may crop up. So take your opportunities as you can to review this information and familiarize yourself, both with the content of the program and the process for applying. You will find some forms on here but they are sample in nature. I wanted to show those to you real quick. Further down, you'll see the student application. This is simply a picture of the student application and as you can note here on the watermark, it says, sample form only, see the website for fillable PDF forms. We put this up here for your reference but not for your direct use. So all this is in the Nomination Packet and we'll go back and look at the actual forms shortly.

The reason we're posting this webinar and the reason we're holding the informational meetings in September and October is because this is the time of application. Even though the session is not until next summer, this is the time when school systems are submitting nominations and students and parents are notifying their schools that they're interested in possibly attending. This date that you see here is November 14th. That is when nominations are due to the Department of Public Instruction from the schools themselves; students and parents cannot directly nominate to the state level, but they can submit local applications so that the school system or school or charter school or private school can consider that when deciding upon which students to nominate.

We do give some limits to the numbers of nominations that a school or school system can submit to us, so it's very important that they have full knowledge of everyone who is interested so they can make those informed decisions. So if you're in contact with your local school or school system, they will probably have earlier dates for you to turn in your application and for recommendations to be submitted. They will need that time to be able to process and prepare the nomination packet that they will send to the Department.

During November, December, and January, we will be processing all the information. Last year, we received about 1,800 nominations from across the state. So take some time to give those their due attention. In February, we have

student selections and the culmination of those processes. But also auditions. Students who are nominated in the performing and visual arts, while they do submit a complete application, they also participate in an audition. That audition will help complement that application so we know students-- we can rank students as to their readiness for that particular discipline. Students in academics, there is only the application. There is no audition for students who are being nominated in academic areas.

In March is when the notices go out to all the schools and school systems. So we notify schools first and then we notify students directly, both those who are selected and those who are not selected. After that, those who are selected can declare whether they are accepting and that is when tuition obligation begins. There's also a host of other forms and information that are sent to those students, health forms, contact information forms, a bunch of things that are necessary for anytime you're going to be going off away from home for a significant period of time. So during March, April, May, we are communicating with the selected students in getting all of their necessary information to our offices.

June 17th is when move-in day is. That's a Sunday, and so everyone descends on whichever campus they're assigned to. The parents bring them. They move in with all their clothes and other items and that's the beginning of Governor's School. It continues through July 25th which is a Wednesday. That's Closing Day and everyone moves back home. There is a three-day break in the middle. This year it will be July 5th through the 8th, I believe it is, and those details are in the Nomination Packet. The break is a very important time where students get to reconnect with their parents for a little bit of time, recharge their batteries, as do the faculty and staff, and get ready for the second half of Governor's School. So it's a wonderfully rich experience. It's about five and a half weeks of great education but it's a year-round administration. So that's why we start earlier in the year and go on all the way through.

For eligibility, it's important that students understand and parents understand that the difference between eligibility and selection criteria.

There are certainly some things that you have to be or status that you have, to be nominated for Governor's School. It was designed for residents of North Carolina attending North Carolina schools. So you have to be a resident of North Carolina and you have to be enrolled in a North Carolina school and nearly all students have to be enrolled in 11th grade. We do make an exception in the areas of Choral Music, Instrumental Music and Dance in which we will take nominations from both 10th and 11th grade. All other seven disciplines, we only take nominations from 11th graders. There's also an achievement test score and that is a score on a recognized achievement test or it could be an area within an achievement test of 92 percentile or above. It's very important, students and parents, that you speak with the school counselor to identify if that eligibility is already achieved. Some people achieve that through an End-of-Course Test score. Others through instruments. Let's take a look at the Student Eligibility Form so you understand more about that.

This Student Eligibility Form is one of forms that you can download from the Governor's School website, and actually, your school will be using it, but it does have pertinent information about what scores are allowed and deemed credible for eligibility purposes. It's also in your Nomination Packet. So you can refer to either the Nomination Packet or this form, but you'll notice that there's a small table here that speaks to the different nomination areas and the different tests that can be used. For English, if you choose to use an EOC. It can only be the English to EOC. In Math, only the NC Math 1. In Natural Science, only the Biology EOC. Those are the only EOCs that exist currently. But if you're nominated in any other of the nomination areas, those disciplines, you can use any EOC if you have a 92 percentile or both. Now EOCs, not everyone takes. Especially students in private schools, or you may not have a qualifying score. So there's a host of other tests that are available and those are listed down here on

this form. Everything from the ACT and the SAT, which many students have taken, the PSAT, the Iowa Assessments. It could be a PLAN that was recently taken, Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement, varieties of tests. So your school counselor would be able to analyze your files, your records and to see if you have a qualifying score. We can be a resource to schools or school systems if there are any questions about that, but all of this is, again, in your Nomination Packet and on the Student Eligibility Form.

I want to emphasize that this is solely for eligibility. It is not for selection. We do not look at a 29 and a 95 and a 98 score for eligibility any differently. So don't worry if you have a 92 that's listed but you know somewhere out there is floating a 95 or a 98. If you're eligible, you're eligible, and that is not one of the items for selection criteria. But let's look at what is being used.

I will let you know that at the local level, they can decide to do other things just to help them understand and better ascertain who their strongest candidates are. They may use additional tests. Some may use other auditions. They may have interviews. There may be a host of things that they use.

Once things come to the state level, there are generally four areas that we consider in the-- in the evaluation and ranking of students. First thing that we consider is the scholastic performance of the student. That is best shown on the transcript and the school will be able to submit that transcript. That shows us the courses in which that student has been enrolled and their performance, their grades. Sometimes it also includes things like class rank or if they have some other measures that tell us about the student's academic performance. That is important because we're looking for students who are intellectually and achievement-wise ready for this larger program. Not just your specialty. Not just your discipline, but for the larger program that Governor's School represents.

There's also personal data, and there's a Personal Readiness Form where you tell us more about yourself, about the activities in which you've been involved, about those activities that you've deemed important, any awards and honors that you received, a whole host of things that you can tell us about yourself, that's in addition to your-- your academic achievement. We also want to know about your perspectives on being away from home and what that's going to be like. We'll go over that form in just a moment.

Essays are hugely important and there are two that each student is required to submit, and we're going to go over those as well. If there's any one area that is most discriminating amongst students who apply, I would say it's essays. Most students who apply are very strong academically. They're very involved and they get good recommendations, but often the difference-maker is the essays and the quality of those so we'll take a look at those a little bit more closely and go over some tips on how they can be written well.

We also have two recommendations that are required. This gives us from the perspective, not from the student themselves, but from others who know the student and asks folks to rate students on their proficiency in a variety of areas, both in terms of their content knowledge and ability and also their character and maturity.

Now, all that is in the Application and we're going to go over that, but also know, as I mentioned before, that students in performing and visual arts participate in auditions, and those auditions, as I mentioned earlier are in February. Those auditions help complement the application, so we have that snapshot to be aware of the student's talent and their readiness to confirm what is being said on the application.

So how do you apply for Governor's School? Well, your first step really is to speak with someone. Speak with your counselor at your school. Most schools have at least one person who is familiar with the Governor's School process.

Every school system has one person who is definitely assigned to that task. They're our official Governor's School contact and often, they are in contact with families with students about the governor's school process and the application time lines that they set. So make sure you speak with that-- your school counselor first.

The Student Application is really your next step and it is a rigorous application. We're going to go over that in a moment. The two Recommendations that you have to get are important and again, there's a form for that and believe it or not, you're going to turn it in and that's sometimes the toughest thing, but it's real important that students get a head start and not wait until the last second because quality is really viewed in these applications.

So let's take a look at the Student Application. There are four main components in the Student Application. There's the Basic Info and Discipline page. There's Essay #1, Essay #2, and Personal Readiness. Now let's look at where we can get those-- get that application online. As you see here, where it says Nomination Packet and Forms for the 2018 Governor's School, there's links for different forms that different people can access. Students this is where you get your Student Application. Let me be clear about this. You can click on the student application right here and it will pop up. I'll go ahead and do that. Here's the Student Application online as a-- in another web browser. You can work on this. You can type in this and make changes. However, what we recommend to folks is that they download this first to their computer and then open it up, open that saved copy in Acrobat Reader. The reason for that is that you then really get to have access to all the features in the forms and your data gets saved. So what I've done is I've gone to Acrobat Reader and I have saved the Student Application and then I saved it on my desktop and then I pulled it up. So this is your application and this has all the information that need or at least your format for where you're going to insert your own information. Put your name, your other demographic info. It's also where you select your discipline. Let's say, you're going to apply in Social Science, you'd click there, and it will save it there or at least set it there. There's a bunch of different questions that are on here where you indicate what school system you're in. Let's say you're in Alamance-Burlington Schools and you attend Williams High School. That's one of several that are there in that school system, but you would indicate that there. There's a place for you to sign. You can print it out and then sign it, or you can sign it electronically as can your parent.

Let's talk about the next part that's really important, and that's the essays. As I mentioned on here, Essay #1 is the same for all students. There's a prompt. It is rigorous, and no matter the discipline in which you are being nominated, you're going to write to this same prompt. So let's take a look at it. It says, "Identify and discuss one or more of the most pressing questions you have about how the world works. How are you planning to pursue answers?"

We're looking for how you think about this particular prompt, this particular question. And you're given some instructions on how to proceed. You're instructed to use a separate word processor, such as Microsoft Word, to write and format your essay in response to that prompt. Use a size 10 point of a standard font, like Times New Roman or Helvetica, and then that entire essay, that includes the title, the body, your references, your footnotes that you make at the end must be no more than 3,500 characters, and that's about 500 to 550 words. So we're not talking about a long dissertation; we're talking about an essay that's relatively short. So you need to be thoughtful and to write clearly and concisely and to the point. So it takes time to plan that out and to do it well. Once you compose that, copy and paste that entire essay into the Essay #1 text box on page three. If it's more than 3,500 characters, it will not all fit or the box will not all take it. Here's the box, right here on page three. And this is where you will insert that text.

Essay #2 is the same but different. It's the same in that it is still 3,500 characters. We want you to format your essay, write your essay on a separate word processor, the 10-point font, the standard font, and then to copy and paste it,

but the prompt is what's different because that is discipline specific, and these are challenging prompts that we want you to read closely. English, French, Math, Natural Science, Social Science and Spanish, each have their own prompt. It's very important that you read it well, identify the correct one and write to it. Performing/visual arts, all disciplines within perform/visual arts have one part. Whether you're in Instrumental Music, Choral Music, Dance or Theater or Visual Art, you're going to be writing to that same prompt. But what you need to do is then take that prompt, we'll go down to page two, essay two, and put in the correct one. Since we've already declared social science on this one, we would insert the correct or type in the correct social science prompt and answer the essay here. These prompts are challenging. They are not easy, and they're meant to be helpful for us to differentiate students to get a better idea of your thoughts-- deeper thoughts on this particular nomination area on your discipline. This also has a purpose of preparing students. Many of you are soon going to be filling out college applications. Often, you'll have to do essays as well, and many times, those essays will have prompts similar to this. Maybe these are going to be tougher prompts, but we hope that you'll view this-- view this whole process as one that is a good preparation.

So that's the Basic Info, Essay #1 and Essay #2. Now Personal Readiness, that's also on here. This is a little bit farther down on pages five and six. Personal Readiness is where we get to know a little bit more about you, about your school and communities, activities and community activities in which you've been involved and any awards and honors that you received. Now this can be school clubs, sports, other groups that you've been involved in, leadership positions in those, officer positions, a variety of things, but it can also be community activities. It can be youth groups or civic organizations, one-time adventures that you've done that are more about community involvement, not just a vacation, but the things that you've done. It can be work. It could be a host of things that show us more about yourself as a person. It's not about a laundry list and trying to get as many things down there. We do emphasize quality over quantity. We're interested in leadership, dedication, the willingness to try new things. So make sure that you explore that and tell us what things you've done doing over these past three years. That helps us know about your readiness to participate in this community.

We also ask you to explain why any two of these activities, awards or honors are important to you. Again, we have space provided for that. Do not exceed that. Do not add on additional sheets or anything of the like. At the bottom of this page, we ask one more thing. We want you to describe your readiness to participate in a residential learning community, such as Governor's School. And include any experiences you have with being away from your family and local community for significant periods of time. We want to know that you're thoughtful about this process. Perhaps that you're ready for the experience that you're going to have. It is not uncommon for students to be homesick when they come to Governor's School especially if it's their first time away from home. That doesn't mean that they can't attend. They certainly can, but we want to make sure that students are aware and thoughtful as they approach this student. That description can give us confidence into whether that is actually the case.

So between the personal-- the Basic Info, the Essay #1, the Essay #2 and this Personal Readiness, you've got all the components of the Student Application. So it's a six-page document and it's available for download. Remember, download it to your computer first. Save it and then open up that form so any changes that you make in there, you'll be able to save and edit in the future if you need to before you turn in your final product.

There's also Recommendations and recommendations are very, very important because that tells us someone else's perspective about you. We're going to take a look at that form in a minute but generally, some tips are for you look at the form. Then decide who to ask to complete it. It's important that you understand what the form is asking before you decide who you're going to give it to. We do have some stipulations. One must be from a high school teacher, preferably in the area of nomination. If you're being nominated in Social Science, you definitely want to get

a recommendation from one of your history teachers, civic teachers, someone else in social science. We want that person's perspective and particularly if they know the content in which you're being nominated. There may be those rare situations in which you're being nominated in a discipline that is not offered at your school. For instance, dance. Sometimes our students are nominated in dance but they don't have a dance program at their school and they get all their instruction from a private tutor or private instructor. That's fine. Still, you should get a recommendation from another high school teacher, and then your second recommendation can be from that dance instructor. For those who do have a high school teacher in that area of nomination, your second recommendation can be from a teacher, another teacher, an administrator, a community member, and so on. However, no family members. That is not one of those things that we allow because we want someone from outside your family to give us that recommendation. And comments help, and what do I mean by comments?

Let's take a look at the form again. Remember that you can download the form from the website and your recommender can, so I encourage you to get your recommender to download the form themselves. I've already done that here. We'll take a look at the recommendation. It's a two-page recommendation. It asks for the basics about you, where you go to school, what you're being nominated in. It also asks what their relationship is to you. Have they taught you? What classes? How long have they known you?

Then it also asks them to rate you on a variety of things with regard to your strength as a student, your content knowledge, your ability to synthesize ideas and grasp principles, grasp underlying principles, your ability to do high-quality work. But the notes are what's really important. These additional comments, because there's a place where they can give that additional information that describes more why they rated you as they did. If we see ratings that are not supported with any comments, our reviewers will consider them with less confidence-- less confidently. It behooves you to get someone who will take time and elaborate on these ratings that they're going to give rather than just marking 4s and 5s or whatever the scores may be. Page two is more about your character, your maturity and your attitude. That's what we're looking for, and you'll see some words on here, cooperation, honesty, empathy, responsibility. We also want them to elaborate where they can and to give us that additional info. Then we finally ask if they're confident that you are inquisitive and serious and flexible enough for speculative questions and to push intellectual boundaries and if you can independently function at a high level for five and a half weeks away from home.

Once they complete this, their task is to print it, sign it, and put it in a sealed envelope and deliver it, either to you or to the appropriate school official and you can ask locally how they prefer to do that. You are not supposed to read that as a student. The only ones who are supposed to open those up are the school officials who will be adding those with the rest of the information for the nomination of you and the other students. So that's the Recommendation Form.

So here are some tips and I encourage you to follow these. Some of you are going to be motivated by more than one area, attracted by more than one discipline. Some of you may like English and you're also a musician and you also enjoy dance. So you have choices to make. You can only be nominated in one particular discipline. Of course, that drives which essay you're going to write. So I encourage you to choose wisely and the way to do that is to pick the area in which you are both competent and passionate. If you're competent at something but you're not passionate about it, it's probably going to show. It's probably going to show in the essays, perhaps in the recommendations and you might not be as competitive. If you're very passionate about something but not necessarily that competent, it's pretty obvious, you're going to be not as competitive. So find something that you are both competent and passionate about.

Read the prompts. Understand them and write to them. If you have any issues, it's fine to take your essays to someone to review. Many students will. It still needs to be your own work but it's not a problem to take it to an English teacher, a parent, someone else who can read your essay and give some helpful direction. If something is not spelled right, if you're not really writing to the prompt well, perhaps a sentence is not complete, those kinds of things can be certainly addressed and giving you some healthy feedback before you finalize your essays, but make sure that you read those prompts well.

Show that you're ready. Again, we're looking for leadership. We're looking for dedication and that new challenges that you're willing to take on. Again, that's in the Personal Readiness area, and that's going to-- please make sure that you share with us that information so we can see that those qualities are there.

Finally, the Recommendations, make sure that they are honest and that they speak well of you. If they are honest and they speak poorly of you, then, of course, you have a problem and those are not going to be very strong recommendations. If they speak well of you but they're dishonest, then we inherit a problem because we end up not getting the student that we thought. I hope that you really take the time to get good, strong recommendations and invest in those people that can speak well of you.

A lot of these other items are available for your review, again, on the Governor's School website. You can take a look at any information that you might deem necessary. You can look at descriptions here on the left side of the curriculum, enrichment, student life. You can see comments from the past. You can even see a list of this past year's students and it's nice to see the names of real students who just completed the program. We have a great track record with terrific students and we hope that maybe you'll consider to be part of that.

If you have questions, remember, you have both local and state resources. Your local resources, of course, your high school counselor and you may have a Governor's School contact who's overseeing the process for your local school or school system. At the state level, the website, as we mentioned before, but also you can write a generic email address which is ncgovschool@dpi.nc.gov. My name is Tom Winton. I'm the Coordinator of the program. You have my contact information here both in email and phone. Camilla Roberson is the Special Assistant and together, we comprise the complete office of the North Carolina Governor's School, and you have her contact there as well. So feel free to let us know if you have questions or need some guidance on particular things.

This completes the webinar for the special information. We will, again, have more informational meetings throughout the state in September and October. I hope you're able to partake in those. If not, I hope you found this information to be helpful. All the best of luck to you and we wish you the very best in your application for Governor's School and on in your schooling. Thanks so much.