



Northwest Guilford High School 2026 Scholarship Guidelines

Purpose

To provide financial assistance for college to a Northwest Guilford High School graduate who has demonstrated outstanding academic and personal achievements, and who shows promise of becoming an effective business or community leader.

Award

One scholarship of \$5,000 will be awarded to a 2026 graduate of Northwest Guilford High School. The Scholarship winner will be announced at Northwest's annual Senior Awards Day event. Funds will be directed to the college or university the student will attend in Fall 2026 and credited to the student's account.

Eligibility

Applicants must be graduating seniors in good standing at Northwest Guilford High School.

Application Forms

Application forms are available from the Northwest Guilford High School Counseling Office via Canvas and online at www.merchantsofoakridgenc.com/scholarship.

Deadline

Completed applications and transcripts must be received by the Merchants of Oak Ridge by **Tuesday, April 7, 2026**. Early applications are encouraged.

Terms of the Scholarship

The Merchants of Oak Ridge 2026 Scholarship Award will be paid, on behalf of the scholarship recipient, directly to his or her college or university to cover eligible educational costs. These educational costs must be approved in advance by the Merchants of Oak Ridge Scholarship Committee. Eligible costs may include tuition, university-provided room and board, required educational textbooks purchased through the university or its bookstore, and student activity or course fees charged by the university.

To facilitate payment of the scholarship award, the scholarship recipient must submit the following to the Committee by July 1, 2026:

1. Final official high school transcripts consistent with past record of achievement
2. Proof of enrollment at an accredited four-year college or university

3. Description of eligible educational costs at the student's college or university to which the scholarship award should be applied
4. Student's college or university account number

The Merchants of Oak Ridge reserve the right to select an alternate scholarship recipient in the event the original recipient cannot meet the terms of the Merchants of Oak Ridge Scholarship, as detailed in the official scholarship award letter.

Application Review Process

1. Application Review: The Merchants of Oak Ridge Scholarship Committee will review all eligible applications and select up to three finalists, each of whom will be contacted by phone or email.
2. Interviews with Finalists
Up to three finalists will be selected to meet individually with the Merchants of Oak Ridge Scholarship Committee. Following introductions, each finalist will be invited to:
 - Provide a brief summary of educational and career interests (2-3 minutes)
 - Ask questions of Scholarship Committee members regarding their careers, educational preparation, and leadership experience (5 minutes)Committee members will then interview each finalist (20 minutes)
3. Selection of Award Recipient
One scholarship recipient will be selected from among the finalists, based on the following:
 - Academic achievement
 - Personal, non-academic achievements
 - Quality of essay
 - Interview evaluation (overall professionalism, ability to articulate meaningful questions as well as thoughtful answers)
 - Letters of recommendation
 - Potential to serve as an effective business or community leader

Questions

Students may submit questions regarding the scholarship and application process to aschneider.nc@gmail.com. Please allow up to two days for a response; include your telephone number if you would prefer a response by phone. Applications will not be accepted by email.



Northwest Guilford High School 2026 Scholarship Application

I. Applicant Information

First Name: _____ Middle: _____ Last: _____

Address: _____

Mobile Phone: _____

Email address: _____

II. Letters of Recommendations

Provide the names of one teacher and one other adult, neither of whom is related to you, who can address your academic and personal achievements, as described below. Letters of recommendation must be received by mail or hand-delivery (see address information, below) in a sealed envelope by **4 p.m. on Tuesday, April 7, 2026.**

- Recommendation Letter #1: Must be a current or former high school teacher familiar with your academic record and classroom abilities.

Teacher's Name: _____

School: _____

Email Address: _____

Courses applicant has taken from this individual: _____

- Recommendation Letter #2: May be a teacher, school counselor, coach, community or group leader, employer, or other adult who is familiar with your achievements outside the classroom.

Name: _____

Email address: _____

Role/Relationship to applicant: _____

III. Transcripts

Transcripts through junior year, plus a senior mid-year report, must be received by the Merchants of Oak Ridge, at the address below, by **4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 7, 2026**. (Unofficial transcripts are acceptable, although official transcripts will be required for finalists, and a final official transcript will be required by July 1 for the scholarship recipient.) Transcripts must be submitted in a sealed envelope provided by the NWHS Counseling Department. Students should request these documents as instructed by the Counseling Department.

IV. Essay

Submit an essay of up to 500 words, double-spaced, on the following topic:

Many people believe in the importance of leading by personal example. Describe an adult leader that you know. How has this person led by personal example? What character traits are central to his or her leadership, and how are they demonstrated? Then, looking at yourself, describe how you believe your college experience will strengthen your leadership abilities.

V. Résumé

Provide a current high school résumé that follows the template provided by the Northwest Guilford High School English Department and includes information on class rank and grade point average (as of January 2026), academic accomplishments, extra-curricular activities, volunteer/service activities, athletic activities, and employment experience.

VI. Deadline

All application materials, including letters of recommendation and mid-year transcripts, must be received by mail or hand-delivery by **4:00 pm on Tuesday, April 7, 2026**.

Mailing address: Merchants of Oak Ridge c/o Town of Oak Ridge
Attention: Scholarship Committee
8315 Linville Road
Oak Ridge, NC 27290

Hand-delivery: Oak Ridge Town Hall (*open 8:30am-4:30pm, M-F, holidays excepted*)
8315 Linville Road
Oak Ridge, NC 27310