



Garden State Scholars Program Overview

Parent Organization - New Jersey Advocates for Education (NJAE)

- NJAE offers scholarships up to \$25,000 to graduating seniors from inner city high schools in New Jersey entering a 4-year university.
- Scholarship recipients receive mentoring throughout college
- NJAE scholarship program started over 10 years ago.
- More than 200 students have received scholarships.
- Over 75% of NJAE students graduate from college, far exceeding the national avg. of 60% and less than 40% for students of color.
- To date, NJAE has privately funded over \$5,000,000 to support academic initiatives for inner city students.
- NJAE launched the Garden State Scholars (GSS) Program in 2014, focused on supporting underachieving rising freshman students.

Garden State Scholars Mission

The GSS mission has two objectives:

- Support underachieving, inner city high school males by providing services to improve the students' academic performance and increase internal motivation.
- Elevate the overall school culture by instilling a positive approach to academics in a critical mass of the underachieving male student population.

GSS Target Student Population

Beginning with the freshman class and continues, with each cohort, through the participants' senior year, targeting 20-30% of the male student population of each grade with the following academic performance:

- Academic GPA between 1.75 and 2.75; and/or
- NJ Ask Standardized Proficiency levels between 180-210.

GSS Key Components

- Four Years of academic support, social development and active monitoring.
- Tutoring in Math and English twice weekly.
- Monthly exposure activities.
- Team building/leadership development.
- Motivation/Participation incentives.
- Assigned Life Advisers for each school.
- GSS program apparel.

GSS Academic Tutoring

- Held on-campus during non-scholastic school hours.
- Each student must attend a minimum of three (3) hours of tutoring each week.
- Tutoring schedule arranged at the discretion of the school
- Teacher tutors are paid by GSS and may be either:
 - High energy, enthusiastic teachers from the host school or;
 - Third-party professional tutors from outside of the host school.
- * Volunteer tutors from local colleges will assist teacher tutors and work with students on a one-on-one basis.

Off-Campus Exposure Activities

- Starting in September and ending in June, GSS will conduct off-campus “exposure” activities, at least once per month, such as:
 - College visits
 - Museums
 - Job shadowing
 - Sporting events
 - Community service
 - Theater and the Art
 - Nature (hiking, farming, etc.)
- Students **must attend all off-campus exposure activities.**
- Students will be picked up and dropped off at their respective schools.
- GSS will cover the expenses for off-campus exposure activities.
- Students will be required to write a one-to-three page synopsis about the trip and what they learned.

GSS Team Building and Leadership Development

- GSS instills team building and leadership development by putting all students participating in the program into teams.
- Each team will have a student Team Leader.
- Each grade will have a student Grade Leader.
- The school will have an overall student leader:
 - Team Leader: Oversees a team and is responsible for maintaining attendance and participation within the group.
 - Grade Leader: All Team Leaders in that grade report to him. He also supports the In-School Managers and helps coordinate the competitions and off-campus events. Grade leaders will receive gifts/movie tickets.
 - School Leader: All Grade Leaders in that school report to him. He also supports the In-School Managers who run the GSS school program. The School Leader will receive gifts/movie tickets and be awarded a bonus if his school wins the semester competition.

Motivation and Participation Incentives

The GSS program uses competition and incentives to increase motivation and participation levels (subject to change):

- Students will be assigned to teams (5-6 members per team) and compete as follows:
 - By Team: Every month, GSS students will compete against other teams within their school.
 - By School: Every semester, each school will compete against other schools within the GSS program.
- GSS competitions will be based on the following criteria:
 - Grades (GPA, Tests, Quizzes, etc.) = 45%
 - Attendance (tutoring and exposure activities) = 35%
 - Activities and Projects (non-academic competitions and assignments) = 20%
- GSS will grant students awards and/or stipends every month and each semester based on competition winners and individual performances (all the numbers below are subject to change):
 - Monthly Team Competition Winners: The Team Leader will receive \$25 and the other team members will receive \$15 each.
 - Competition Winners: The winning school will go on an extra off-campus activity as their award.

Life Advisors

- Life Advisors are positive, adult male role models who “advise” students on practical life lessons by sharing their experiences and knowledge (i.e. personal finance, health, relationships, college, etc.) each month.
- Life Advisors represent a variety of professions such as finance, law, education, business, medicine, sales, consulting, teaching, engineering, sports, and more.
- Life Advisors are assigned to specific schools and will teach practical life lessons to students each month.
- Life Advisors attend off-campus exposure activities with the students.
- Life Advisors are encouraged to meet informally with the students in small groups to further broaden their exposure.

GSS Program Apparel

GSS will provide t-shirts and supplies to students to establish an identity and unity within the program.

- Based on student participation, performance, and growth, GSS may provide the following apparel:
 - T-Shirts and Sweatshirts
 - Blazers and Khaki Pants
 - Dress Shirts and Shoes
 - Baseball Caps and Accessories

GSS In-School Managers and Assistant Managers

- The In-School Manager is responsible for the operation and development of the GSS program within their respective school.
- The In-School Manager reports to the Director of the GSS program and the designated school administrator within their respective school.
- The In-School Assistant Manager assists in the operation and development of the GSS program within their respective school.
- The In-School Assistant Manager reports to the In-School Manager.
- GSS will pay the designated In-School Manager and Assistant Manager a stipend that will be paid twice yearly.
- * See In-School Manager and Assistant Manager Responsibilities Chart.

GSS Guardian Coordinator (Under development)

GSS recognizes the importance of parental/guardian support in the development of each student. A parent of a participant in the program at each grade level must agree to represent their cohort and work with GSS by:

- Representing the parents/guardians of GSS students.
- Contacting GSS parents/guardians on a regular basis.
- Assisting in the operation and development of the GSS program at the school level.
- Assisting in keeping parent/guardian information updated.
- Distributing and collecting parent forms.

GSS School Requirements and Responsibilities

Each school must agree to provide the following:

- Full Administrative Support, including a VP or other designated administrator to serve as an Active Sponsor of the GSS program.
- In-School Managers and Assistant Managers who will run the GSS Program.
- Physical Space within the School to operate the program.
- Equipment and Supplies.
- Access to Student Records to monitor academic progress.
- Nutritional Snacks/Meals for Students during In-School Tutoring Sessions.
- One Parent per grade level to be the Parent Coordinator.

GSS Responsibilities

The Garden State Scholars agrees to provide the following:

- Stipends for In-School Managers.
- Pay for Teacher tutors.
- Cover costs of Off-Campus Exposure Activities.
- Cover costs of GSS Apparel (T-shirts, sweaters, suits, etc.).
- Cover costs of Incentives and Awards for students.
- Life Advisers to encourage and guide student development.
- Overall guidance to ensure the success of the program at each school.
- Variety of activities and exposures to expand student development.