

## Overview of Holistic Admissions Process & Criteria

*\*For counselor purposes only.*

The mission of Thrive Scholars is to help high-achieving underrepresented students graduate from top colleges equipped with the skills they need to achieve their full potential in careers that will support them in their upward economic mobility. Thrive Scholars offers two programs:

The [Core Program](#) is our **6-year** college and career readiness program which admits students in the **11th grade**.

The new [On-Ramp Program](#) is our **10-month** initiative exclusively for **Black/Generational African-American males** (defined as the descendants of enslaved people in the United States) in the **10th grade**.

We are looking to admit students who will have consistently strong grades and will fully engage Thrive opportunities, especially our Summer Academy. We are looking for students who want to set themselves apart in the college admissions process and aspire to leaders in industry.

In reviewing students' applications, we consider the following factors:

### **1. Coursework and Grades (Most important factor):**

We review each student's academic record in the context provided by the high school profile and look for students that have challenged themselves by taking the most rigorous courses available to them. We understand that the most rigorous courses available will vary from one school to another. When possible, we look for students who have taken Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate courses. We also consider Dual Enrollment or other types of advanced coursework systems that schools have developed. When completing our

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Counselor Recommendation form, we ask counselors to provide context around the rigor of a students' course load.

Students should be taking 5+ core academic courses (i.e. courses in the following areas: math, natural sciences, social sciences, foreign language, and English) each year and should ideally be taking pre-calculus or more advanced math by their junior year. Strong quantitative skills are especially important for students that are interested in pursuing a STEM major.

Thrive Scholars is a competitive program that looks for top students across the country that have demonstrated strong academic achievement and intellectual curiosity within the context of their secondary school experience. If a school calculates a student's GPA, our average *unweighted* GPA for admitted students is 3.8 (out of 4.0). Students that are typically admitted to the Thrive Scholar program typically fall into the top 5% of their graduating class if their school provides a class rank.

Thrive Scholars uses a holistic reading model so there are no minimums or cutoffs when considering applicants. Students with a GPA slightly below our average may still be eligible if they demonstrate an upward grade trajectory, rigorous coursework, and compelling essay responses.

There is some flexibility when considering students that will help us reach our goal of recruiting a cohort that is 40% Black/African-American. Additional flexibility will be shown when reviewing sophomore applicants for the new 10th grade On-Ramp Program.

## 2. Test Scores/ Test Optional:

Thrive Scholars is mirroring the test-optional policies that the no-loan and low-loan colleges we encourage our students to apply to are using. Applicants that apply to Thrive Scholars without test scores will not be penalized. If an applicant applies with below average scores but has done very well academically in rigorous courses, has excellent writing abilities, and demonstrates strength in other areas (extracurricular, family responsibilities, leadership opportunities, very unique background, etc.), they may still be good candidates for our program.

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Scholars that apply with test scores will generally have scores at or above the 75th percentile:

- 10<sup>th</sup> grade PSAT of 1050 - 1520
- 11<sup>th</sup> grade PSAT of 1140 - 1520
- SAT of 1200 - 1600
  
- 10<sup>th</sup> grade Pre-ACT of 22 - 35
- 11<sup>th</sup> grade Pre-ACT of 24 - 35
- ACT of 26 - 36

### **3. Essays that Share Personal, Academic, and Career Insights:**

Ideal candidates will clearly and effectively share their story, background, and future goals through essays that demonstrate strong writing skills.

### **4. Extracurricular Leadership, Family Responsibilities, or Part-Time Work:**

The most compelling candidates in our application process will demonstrate an ability to balance their academic achievement with other responsibilities at school, home, or work. While we do not value one type of activity over another, we look to see how a student has remained consistently involved during their time in high school and grown to take on leadership roles. We understand that students may have different levels of access to extracurricular activities and will consider that context when making our decisions.

### **5. Investment in Thrive's 6 Year Program Model:**

Through their application essays and recommendations, students should demonstrate an investment in their education, in challenging themselves academically, and in achieving

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ambitious career goals that will support them in developing financial security and generational wealth. All Scholars are required to attend two six-week Summer Academy Programs to be held during the summer before their senior year and the summer before their first year of college. Scholars are also required to engage in monthly meetings with their Thrive relationship manager. We are seeking students who will want to actively engage with our resources and supports.

#### 6. **Demographic and Socioeconomic Fit:**

It is the mission of Thrive Scholars to serve underrepresented students, primarily those that are BIPOC and/or will be first generation college students (student's parents or guardians did not graduate from a 4 year college in the United States). Applicants must be from low income households (typically having a household income of under \$75,000); however, we take into consideration extenuating family circumstances when reviewing applicants from higher-income households, such as size of household, a parent with variable income, or a significant change in income or employment from one year to the next. It is exceedingly rare that a student with a family income above \$100,000 will be eligible for the program. In general, the middle 50% for family income of admitted students are \$24,000 - \$60,000.

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