



The Governor's School OF NORTH CAROLINA

A Summer Program for Gifted and Talented High School Students

Announcement About the Governor's School In-Person Format - April 30, 2021

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and its Office of the North Carolina Governor's School are pleased to announce that this summer's Governor's School session will be held **in person**. Though the coronavirus pandemic continues to impact the state, the North Carolina Governor's School is collaborating strongly with its host institution partners (Meredith College for Governor's School East, and High Point University for Governor's School West) and the NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS), to develop a robust plan that will provide strong protections for all participants, while maintaining the innovative, creative, residential educational experience it has championed for nearly 60 years.

As public health conditions continue to evolve and plan details continue to be developed, the following features are being employed:

- **Guiding Principles** - Governor's School is a caring learning community that places primary importance on every community member's health and safety. The program will rely on sound scientific evidence and follow established local, state, and federal guidelines and regulations. In addition to the standard Student Handbook, this year there will also be additional required COVID-19 mitigation protocols in place to ensure the students, faculty and staff remain healthy and safe. Governor's School is a unique learning opportunity and is only for those who can commit to required protocols and to caring for the entire community.
- **Accepting/Declining** - All schools/school systems continue to have until **Friday, May 7** to declare their selected students' attendance intentions. Any undeclared student should immediately notify their local Governor's School Contact of their decision. The Contact can communicate with the Office if additional time is needed (e.g., pursuing a scholarship).
- **Forms/Handbooks** - In the coming days, handbooks, required forms and other resources will be shared with accepting students, via both email and the Governor's School website (www.ncgovschool.org). Students should regularly check the website and their inbox for updates.
- **Communications** - Typical in-person convocations and events (e.g., on Opening Day, Parents' Day, Closing Day) for parents and families will not commence, but other communication efforts will be employed, such as online parent convocations and regular electronic updates prior to, during, and after the session.
- **Preparations** - Based on CDC and NCDHHS guidance, NCDPI requests that students and their families follow [guidance for travelers](#) in the 14 days before Governor's School arrival to reduce exposure to COVID-19, as much as possible. Unvaccinated students are asked to engage in a two-week pre arrival quarantine to the extent possible; this includes physical distancing, mask-wearing when not at home, avoiding unnecessary travel, and refraining from indoor social gatherings with people outside of their households.
- **Vaccinations** - All students, faculty, and staff are *strongly encouraged* to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 prior to their Governor's School arrival. All students will be *required to report* on their vaccination status and plans. This is a critical part of mitigation efforts and will help with prevention, planning, and responding if a positive case unfortunately presents itself. In North Carolina, all 16 year-olds and older are now vaccine-eligible; 15 year-old students may soon be eligible. [Find your spot! Get your shot!](#)

- **Testing/Screening** - Governor's School will employ COVID-19 testing activities regularly throughout the session, both for community screening and for individual case identification. All students, faculty, and staff, regardless of vaccination status, must fully participate in testing efforts. A detailed testing plan, developed in consultation with NCDHHS, local health departments and the host institutions, will be shared with students and families. All students will be required to have a negative viral test no more than 1-3 days prior to arrival.
- **Campuswide Cohort** - Governor's School will establish a *campuswide cohort* so there is minimal interaction with outside parties and greater confidence in the entire community's health and safety. This includes **suspending several traditional features**, such as field trips, the mid-session break, temporary leave, family/friend visits to campus, off-campus travel, etc. *Students must commit to remain on campus without interruption or outside physical interaction for five consecutive weeks.*
- **Health Protocols** - Governor's School will employ and enforce the use of masks/face coverings, physical distancing, and hygiene/cleaning methods for all students, regardless of vaccination status, in accordance with regulations and guidelines. More specifics will be shared as the session approaches. Students must faithfully adhere to these protocols; lack of adherence will result in disciplinary measures up to, and including, dismissal.
- **Tuition** - As a result of NCDPI leadership's resourceful efforts, and the North Carolina Governor's School Foundation's (NCGSF) generous donations, the per-student tuition for the 2021 Governor's School **will remain at \$500**. An official Invoice will be sent to the Governor's School Contact of the nominating school/school system, which pays each student's tuition. The NCGSF wants to ensure that all selected students have access to Governor's School and is opening its need-based scholarship program to families whose school/school system requires them to locally pay those tuition funds. Visit <https://www.ncgsf.com/scholarships> to apply.
- **Other** - Finally, each North Carolina Governor's School campus offers a rich inclusive residential learning community led by a knowledgeable Site Director and 60+ outstanding faculty/staff. As noted, numerous protocols and supports will be in place to promote a safe environment for all students. However, the nature of the classes and the social fabric of the formal and informal activities require in-person attendance. While reasonable onsite accommodations will be implemented, *a remote online option will not be provided*, unlike the current K-12 school year. It is understood that some families may not yet be ready for this in-person opportunity. Please contact the Office of the North Carolina Governor's School with any questions.

Congratulations to all students selected for the 2021 North Carolina Governor's School! It will be an outstanding summer.