WashingtonTechnology Student Association

*PO Box 1635*

*Goldendale, WA 98620*

Parents,

Your Washington TSA Student has indicated an interest in applying for a position as a Washington TSA State Officer. You are probably asking yourself what this means, both for the student, and your family.

Washington TSA is a student-led organization in which your student currently participates. They must have already served for at least a year as a WTSA Chapter Officer prior to applying for a State Officer position.

Being a WTSA State Officer is a large commitment of time. Students will be expected to work on their own, at home and at school, on projects and assignments. There will be late nights, and stressful days, meeting deadlines. Some months are much busier than others. October-December are fairly crazy, as are January-March. There will also be summer planning time.

They will also be required to miss quite a few days of school, normally between 10-15 days. They must be able to keep their grades up, and stay caught up with school work. Missing those days also means that if they play sports, or participate in other clubs or activities, they may miss some of those events while they are at required WTSA events.

State Officers must attend Joint State Officer training in May, which means missing 2-3 days of school. It is recommended that they attend the TSA National Conference. In August, they may attend the WA-ACTE conference in Spokane for 2-3 days, and definitely will attend an officer retreat, at which they do a lot of the planning for the year.

WTSA covers the costs of attending most of the WTSA activities, but you are responsible for all of the costs of the National Conference. You also may be required to transport your student to/from WTSA events, although your transportation costs will be reimbursed by WTSA.

In October-December, they will host 3-6 separate Fall Leadership training days around the state for hundreds of middle and high school students. From May-November, the State Officers plan these days, including all activities, materials lists, ordering, writing scripts, practicing, etc. It is a huge production to put on these Leadership training sessions, and it is the responsibility of the State Officers, with oversight from me as the Executive Director. Again, WTSA covers all of the travel costs, but you may need to transport your student to/from the events, or at least to a meeting point.

In January or February, there is a legislative event in Olympia. In March, they will attend the WITEA Spring Conference in Wenatchee, missing 2-3 days of school. They also will attend the State Conference. It is a very large benefit to you that their State Conference costs are covered, but they will do a lot of work on planning and organizing the State Conference.

So what does this mean for your student, and your family? It means they will be even busier than they are now. It means they will be required to do quite a bit of traveling, and some of it you will have to drive them, or figure out how to carpool them, to the events. If I am going past your area, I am happy to transport students, but that isn’t always the case. It means that they may need to be studying for a test, and putting on a WTSA event, at the same time. It means they have to be organized, and figure out how to get things done, on their own time at home.

It also means that when we put on an all-day event, we travel to it the night before, so that we have time to get all of the supplies, and have the students work together. It means that after the event, we clean up before we head home, so while the event might end at 2:00, it will be 3:00 or so before the student is done. It means that if their responsibility is putting together the materials lists for the icebreaker activities, they will need to be figuring out what they will need for each student, how many we will need total, how the supplies will be organized for ease of use at the event, and how they will be split into groups.

As a parent, that means you will be checking in with them to make sure they are doing what they need to be doing, and encouraging them to communicate with me if they don’t know what they should be doing. It means you will have to make sure you are communicating with them about schedules, so that you know when the WTSA events are, and when they need to be traveling.

So given the amount of work that being a WTSA State Officer involves, why would you encourage them to apply? Being a State Officer will change their life. It will improve their writing and public speaking skills. It will teach them event organization skills. It will give them a bond with the other State Officers, often students from other areas of the state, and different backgrounds. They will participate in the Joint State Officer training, which teaches skills they will use in the classroom and in life. Being a State Officer puts them in situations where they are interacting with adults, teens, legislators, and influential people from business and industry. It gives them access to colleges, and scholarships. A recommendation as a WTSA State Officer carries a lot of weight, because it is understood how many hours of commitment go into being a State Officer. They will participate in event organization for multiple events, and hopefully go away with a much better understanding of what it takes to put on events, and the skills to do so. They will also realize that events don’t just happen without all of the hours of work ahead of time, and behind the scenes. They will be more comfortable with managing large groups of people, including their peers, and they will have experience with making changes to schedules under pressure, and learning to adapt to situations.

If you think your student would make a good State Officer, and that they are willing to put in the time and effort, and you are willing to support them, then I encourage you to have them apply.

If you ever have questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me, by email at jsmith@washingtontsa.org, or by phone at 541-490-8466.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Smith

PARENT CONSENT AGREEMENT

I have read the above letter to the parents of WTSA State Officer candidates. I understand the level of commitment required from being a WTSA State Officer, and travel requirements, and agree to support my student throughout the year to ensure that they perform their job well, and benefit from the experience. I understand that serving as a WTSA State Officer is a privilege, not a right.

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Parent Signature Date