



marigold prep

PARENT ACADEMY

What are the **PSAT & National Merit Scholarship**?

What is the PSAT, anyway?

- **The PSAT is essentially a practice run at the SAT**, especially for freshmen and sophomores.
- For juniors, it's an **opportunity to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship**, depending on their score.
- For younger students, it can be used in an application for competitive summer programs.
- The PSAT is **not a college admissions test** like the SAT and ACT.
- The PSAT is **extremely similar to the SAT** but with fewer potential points because it is slightly less difficult.
- Still, a PSAT score is universally considered an **accurate indicator of an SAT score**.
- The PSAT is offered in **October every year**, typically through a student's school.

Does the PSAT **matter?**

PSAT 8/9

Some selective high schools will use a student's **8th-grade PSAT as a placement test.**

Otherwise, this is an opportunity to get familiar with the test and **assess your strengths and weaknesses** going into high school.

PSAT 10

Some selective **summer and pre-college programs will consider a student's 10th-grade PSAT** when making admissions decisions.

Otherwise, this is another practice opportunity and can **gauge a student's ability to achieve National Merit** Qualifying Scores.

PSAT / NMSQT

Students who score in the **top 1% in their state are eligible for the National Merit Scholarship.**

For everyone else, this is an opportunity to establish a baseline score before **taking an official SAT/ACT in Junior year.**

What is the **National Merit Scholarship**?

- Initial eligibility **based on a junior's PSAT** score.
- **Cutoff varies from state to state.**
- Semi-finalists need to take several additional steps, including a "**confirmation score**" on a national ACT or SAT, to move on as finalists.
- Several colleges give away **automatic scholarships**, including full-rides, to semi-finalists, finalists, and winners.

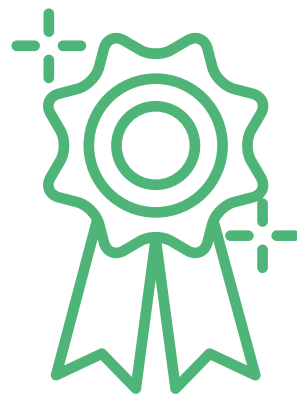


HOW TO BECOME A NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLAR



PSAT

Take the PSAT in October of Junior year and **score in the top 1% in the state.**



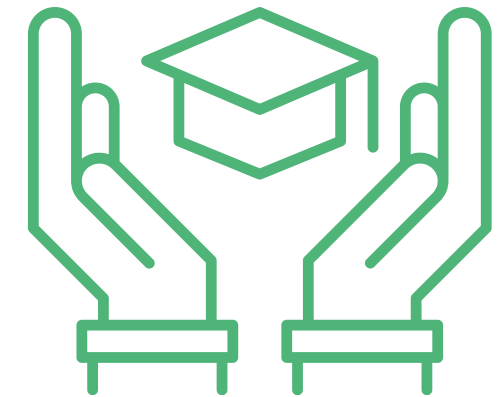
Semi-finalist

Students find out if they qualify as semi-finalists in September of their senior year. If they qualify, they must **apply for finalist status.**



SAT/ACT

Students must take the SAT or ACT and **send their scores** to the National Merit Organization.



Scholarship

Students are **awarded the status of "Finalist"** and can then receive scholarships.