
PSAT/ NMSQT

Preliminary SAT

National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test

PSAT/NMSQT

- Impressive performance on this test may lead to a “full ride” for four years of college.
- Impressive performance on this test may result in inclusion in prestigious programs.
- Impressive performance on this test may result in lucrative scholarships.

When is this test given?

- Testing takes place at Harrison High School. Students should arrive by 7:45am, park in the staff lot and enter through the west doors.
- Alternate date testing spots are limited. Email vicki.palmer@farmington.k12.mi.us for more information regarding availability.
- Watch for registration announcements on listserv.
- Unlike SAT or ACT the test, this exam has only ONE testing window each year!!!

What's on the test?

FORMAT

- The PSAT/NMSQT includes five sections:
 - Two 25-minute critical reading sections
 - Two 25-minute math sections
 - One 30-minute writing skills section
- The whole test requires two hours and 10 minutes.

What does the PSAT measure?

- Critical Reading Skills
- Math problem-solving skills
- Writing skills

Critical Reading

- Two 25-minute critical reading sections totaling 48 questions
- 13 Sentence Completions
- 35 Critical Reading

Math

- Two 25-minute math sections = 38 questions
- 28 multiple-choice math questions
- 10 Student-produced responses or grid-ins
- Students are advised to bring a calculator with which they are comfortable. Students should have basic knowledge of 4 math categories:
 - Numbers and Operation
 - Algebra and Functions (but not 3rd year level math that may appear on the new SAT)
 - Geometry and Measurement
 - Data Analysis, Statistics and Probability

Writing Skills

- One 30-minute writing section = 39 questions
- 14 Identifying sentence errors
- 20 Improving sentences
- 5 Improving paragraph questions
- These multiple-choice questions on writing skills measure a student's ability to express ideas effectively in standard-written English, to recognize faults in usage and structure, and to use language with sensitivity to meaning.

National Merit Rewards

- Yes, performance for those students in the top 1 % will yield a National Merit ranking.
- Yes, those students may receive a renewable stipend of \$500-\$2,000 a year
- Those students may receive a single payment ranging between \$2,500-\$5,000

Student Award Notification

The official notification will occur early in September the following year after testing.

The students who have earned the requisite scores will be notified by their counselors and will begin the application process.

Behind the scenes, many colleges have purchased the list of PSAT scores and are sending offers to qualifying students.

What happens next?

- Students must complete an application that includes an in-depth autobiographical essay.
- Students must have a follow-up SAT score that documents that the PSAT score was valid.
- Students must have a GPA that reflects sustained high school academic success.

PERKS

- In between the time when the student took the test until Achievement Finalist status is reached, the student will receive NUMEROUS scholarship offers.
- The actual National Achievement award amount is typically \$2,500 dollars.
- The most lucrative college scholarships are the schools' Presidential Scholarships.
- Very often, those Presidential Scholarships are tied to PSAT performance.
- Students may be invited to prestigious summer programs free of charge!

Little known PSAT Benefits

- Students of color, not in the top 1 % may also be eligible to garner some PSAT dividends!!!
- If a student scored between the 90th and the 97th percentile, he/she may become part of a National Achievement applicant pool.
- A student may achieve Commended National Achievement Scholar status with an 88th or 89th percentile score.

Please Remember To Do This!

- If you are a Black American and wish to enter the National Achievement Program, as well as the National Merit Program, fill in the appropriate oval on the answer document.
- Fill in the ovals in order to be considered for Student Search Services.

How would I determine my PSAT ranking?

- Typically, students receive their PSAT score report just before Christmas/winter break.
- Students may earn 80 points for each section of the test: 80 math/80 reading/ 80 writing=240 total points.
- Students' selection index number is the composite of the point-totals from those three sections.
- Their percentile ranking is written next to the selection index number.

Good news for parents!!!

This scholarship consideration has NO connection to income level!!!

Yes, your parents may have to fill out a FAFSA form, but your parent's income will not eliminate you from scholarship consideration.

PSAT Preparation

- Use the College Board's website for test prep
<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/prep.html>
- Purchase commercially produced PSAT preparation materials and work in the books or CDs consistently.
- Utilize any online preparation services.
- Check with students who have had previous PSAT success and ask them to identify effective tutors and preparation programs.

Additional information

- The only year that a student's score COUNTS for National Merit, National Hispanic or National Achievement Recognition is during 11th grade.
- Students may take the test BEFORE 11th grade; taking the test before 11th grade will give students and parents a way to assess what skills need to be worked on before the 11th grade test date.
- Early testing in 10th grade will also give students and parents a realistic gauge to assess students' performance in comparison to students across the country.