

For Immediate Release

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Media Release

CCSD has 25 National Merit Scholarship semifinalists for 2025

Office of Communications

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Charleston, SC - The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) announced the Class of 2025 semifinalists for the 70th annual National Merit Scholarship Program last week, and 25 Charleston County School District (CCSD) students are on the list. They are part of more than 16,000 seniors competing for prestigious National Merit scholarships.

The following CCSD students are 2025 semifinalists:

Academic Magnet High School

Helin Bilgis
William Brodsky
Garrett Davis
Brian Fang
Emma Fang
Joseph Gaddy
Julian Gillum
Finn Hayes
Forrest Norvell
Jack Oakman
Lucas Oppett
Maxwell Peters
Beatrice Vaught
Nikki Wu

Charleston County School of the Arts

Maya Bundy
Trowbridge Weeks
Brooks Wetmore

James Island Charter High School

Noah Doughty
Madison Wade

Lucy Beckham High School

Charles Graham

Jadyn Rene
Ian Rutledge

Wando High School

Smith Mefford
Aiden Norman

West Ashley High School

Brennalyn Javier

These CCSD high school seniors will compete for some 6,870 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly \$26 million, which will be awarded in the spring. About 95 percent of the semifinalists are expected to earn recognition as a finalist, and approximately half of the finalists will win a National Merit Scholarship.

High school juniors entered the 2025 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2023 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. The nationwide pool of semifinalists, representing less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors, includes the highest-scoring entrants in each state. The number of semifinalists in a state is proportional to the state's percentage of the national total of graduating seniors.

To become a finalist, the semifinalist and a high school official must submit a detailed scholarship application that includes the student's academic record, participation in school and community activities, demonstrated leadership abilities, employment, and honors and awards received. A semifinalist must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay, and earn SAT or ACT scores that confirm the student's earlier performance on the qualifying test.

2025 National Merit Scholarship winners will be announced in four nationwide news releases beginning in April and concluding in July. These scholarship recipients will join more than 382,000 other distinguished young people who have the title of Merit Scholar.

For more information, contact CCSD's Office of Communications at (843) 937-6303.

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is a nationally accredited school district committed to providing equitable and quality educational opportunities for all of its students. CCSD is the second-largest school system in South Carolina and represents a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves approximately 50,000 students in 88 schools and specialized programs.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), Montessori, and charter schools. Options include programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military.