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September 21, 2011

## **Bellevue School District Tops National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist List**

Students from the Bellevue School District came out on top of the newly-released National Merit Scholarship semifinalist list for 2012. Interlake High School has more students on the prestigious list than any other public high school in Washington state. With 24 students on this year's list, Interlake finished second only to Lakeside School, a private school in Seattle. In all, this year's semifinalist list includes a record 45 students from Bellevue schools.

Newport High School also made a strong showing with 14 semifinalists. Five Bellevue High School seniors are on the semifinalist list, as well as two students from International High School. Semifinalists are eligible to compete for a \$2500 National Merit Scholarship.

In addition to the semifinalists, 82 students representing all five Bellevue high schools have received Letters of Commendation in recognition of their academic promise. These students will not compete for National Merit Scholarships, but may qualify for scholarships sponsored by private businesses.

"I am very pleased to see so many Bellevue students on this prestigious list. With dedication and hard work, they have proven once again that our students have the skills to succeed and compete with their peers from across the nation," said Bellevue Superintendent Dr. Amalia Cudeiro. "The impressive list of semifinalists also reflects the commitment of our teachers and staff to preparing our students for college, career and life."

For this year's competition, semifinalists needed to score a 220 on the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT) taken in October 2010. The minimum score for commended level is 202. A perfect PSAT score is 240.

The Class of 2012 made an impressive showing. This year's list includes the most-ever number of Bellevue students qualifying at both the semifinalist level and at the commended level. In addition, six Bellevue students scored a perfect 240 on their PSAT.

More than 1.5 million students take the PSAT each year. About 16,000 high scorers qualify as semifinalists. They will compete for 8,300 National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$34 million.

To be considered for a National Merit Scholarship, semifinalists must meet several requirements. They must have an outstanding academic record throughout all four years of high school. They must also receive a recommendation from their principal and earn high SAT scores.

National Merit Scholarship winners of 2012 will be announced in the spring.

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