

**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 70<sup>th</sup> 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.