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CONTACT: Communications

334-694-4688

comm@alsde.edu

Seven Alabama Elementary Students Selected as 2026 National Math Stars

30 Alabama finalists chosen from nearly 8,700 applicants nationwide

MONTGOMERY, AL – Seven exceptional young Alabama mathematicians have been selected as **2026 National Math Stars**, earning places in a highly selective, long-term enrichment program designed to identify and support students with extraordinary mathematical talent.

The Alabama students selected for the **2026 National Math Stars** cohort are from:

- **University Charter School Elementary (Sumter County)**
- **Huntington Place Elementary School (Tuscaloosa County)**
- **West Elementary School (Cullman City)**
- **Richland Elementary School (Auburn City)**
- **Thomasville Elementary School (Thomasville City)**
- **Green Valley Elementary School (Hoover City)**
- **Trace Crossings Elementary School (Hoover City)**

The students were selected from an impressive 30 Alabama finalists, who advanced from a national applicant pool of approximately **8,700 students**. This is impressive, since this year is **Alabama's first year participating** in the National Math Stars initiative.

"Alabama's young people continue to show that they can compete and excel at the highest levels," State Superintendent of Education, Eric Mackey said. "We are very proud of the students selected as National Math Stars and all **30 Alabama finalists** who reached this stage of a highly competitive national process," Mackey said. "Their success reflects their curiosity, determination and love of learning, as well as the encouragement they receive from their families, teachers, schools and communities."

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National Math Stars is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring that mathematically extraordinary students from all communities have access to the resources and opportunities needed to reach the frontiers of mathematics, science and technology. The organization identifies promising students early on and provides continuous enrichment and guidance through high school.

Cathy Jones, Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative State Director, said they are excited about the recognition and support that this designation brings to the state.

“We are thrilled to celebrate the Alabama students nominated for the National Math Stars program. AMSTI is proud to play a key role in elevating math teaching and learning across the state. The trajectory-changing support and resources these students and their families receive will open incredible doors, and we look forward to seeing all they accomplish,” Jones said.

The process began with Alabama school systems identifying second-grade students whose mathematics scores on the Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) placed them among the top 2 percent in their districts. School systems submitted the number of eligible students to National Math Stars, which supplied nomination packets containing medals, certificates, and information about the national program.

A total of 861 nomination packets were distributed to Alabama students. From those nominations, 307 Alabama students and their families submitted applications for the 2026 cohort. That response made **Alabama the most successful new participating state** in the program this year.

Following an extensive selection process that included a problem-solving assessment, additional screening and family interviews, 30 Alabama students advanced to the finalist round.

“Having 30 Alabama students reach the finalist stage in our first year of participation is an achievement worth celebrating,” Mackey said. “It tells us that remarkable mathematical talent can be found in communities throughout our state. It also reminds us of the importance of identifying that talent early, nurturing it and giving students opportunities to stretch beyond what they may have imagined for themselves.”

National Math Stars seeks students who exhibit mathematical ability at approximately the **99.9th percentile**, representing about one student in every 1,000. Selection is based not only on performance in mathematics, but also on a student’s interest in the subject, passion for solving problems and readiness to pursue advanced learning.

Students selected for National Math Stars may participate in one of the organization's two long-term enrichment programs:

- **Pathfinder Stars** provides advanced-coursework recommendations, mentoring, community connections and other support for mathematically extraordinary students.
- **Voyager Stars** provides a fully funded enrichment pathway for mathematically extraordinary students who are furthest from educational opportunities.

Depending on each student's individual needs, National Math Stars support may include weekly mathematics mentoring, advanced coursework, a dedicated family advisor, technology and educational resources, STEM summer experiences, academic and career guidance, family events and assistance locating additional enrichment opportunities. Students may receive support for as long as 10 years, through their high school years, with the value of the organization's investment potentially exceeding \$100,000 per student.

For students who were **nominated or applied but did not advance** to the final cohort, National Math Stars also makes enrichment resources available, including access to STEM learning platforms, advanced mathematics materials and other opportunities that families can use to continue developing their children's interests and abilities.

This announcement comes as Alabama continues building momentum in mathematics education and expanding opportunities for students to pursue advanced learning in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. By identifying exceptional mathematical ability early, Alabama educators and National Math Stars can help students develop their gifts, explore new challenges and envision futures in fields that will shape the state, nation and world.

Additional information about National Math Stars and its programs is available at www.nationalmathstars.org.

#AMSTI4all
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