

The path to becoming a National Merit Finalist can be confusing, we are here to help. Contact us via email at nationalmerit@UTDallas.edu or by phone at (972) 883-4295.

1

TAKE THE PSAT

In your junior year, you will take the PSAT. This junior year PSAT is the only qualifying entrance exam into the National Merit competition. Cutoff scores to achieve Semifinalist standing vary by state.

3

APPLY FOR FINALIST STANDING

By October 8, Semifinalists apply for Finalist standing. Approximately 90% of Semifinalists will advance to become Finalist in the competition.

5

FINALISTS ANNOUNCED

On February 10, NMSC will mail notification letters to the list of Finalists. Permanent Semifinalists (those who do not advance to Finalist standing) are notified in January. Through April 30, you may change your “school of choice” as many times as you like at osa.nationalmerit.org.

7

AWARD LETTERS MAILED

All Scholars receive one of three awards. Those receiving the Corporate or National awards will be notified after March 11. On May 1, the College Sponsor award letters from partnering institutions will be mailed to Finalist recipients. UT Dallas is a partnering institution (not all universities are partnering institutions).

2

SEMIFINALISTS ANNOUNCED

On September 10 of your senior year, National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) announces approximately 16,000 Semifinalists who score in the top one-half of one percent of those who tested.

4

SEND SAT SCORE TO NMSC

NMSC will accept your best score through the December 6 test date. Update or send new scores through the College Board at sat.collegeboard.org.

6

DESIGNATE “SCHOOL OF CHOICE”

By April 30, Finalists must designate their final “school of choice” or list “undecided” with NMSC. On this deadline, the school you choose is the only school who may sponsor you, so if you’re not sure, list “undecided.” To receive the UT Dallas package, by April 30 you must list UT Dallas as your school of choice, or list “undecided” and select UT Dallas before the final May 31 deadline.

8

ACCEPT AWARD OFFER

Somewhere between late April and late May, students are designated as National Merit Scholars upon accepting the award offer and naming UT Dallas their “school of choice.” The official Scholar announcement by NMSC is not made until the summer.