

The National Merit Scholarship Program

Covenant Christian School

August 2011

Goals of the National Merit Program

- Identify and honor academically talented U.S. high school students and encourage them to pursue rigorous college studies
- Provide professional services for corporations, company foundations, colleges and universities, and other organizations that wish to sponsor scholarships for outstanding participants in the competition
- Promote a broader and deeper respect for learning in general and for exceptionally talented individuals in particular

Goals of the National Merit Scholarship Program

- Stimulate increased support for the education of scholastically able students
- Encourage the pursuit of academic excellence at all levels of education

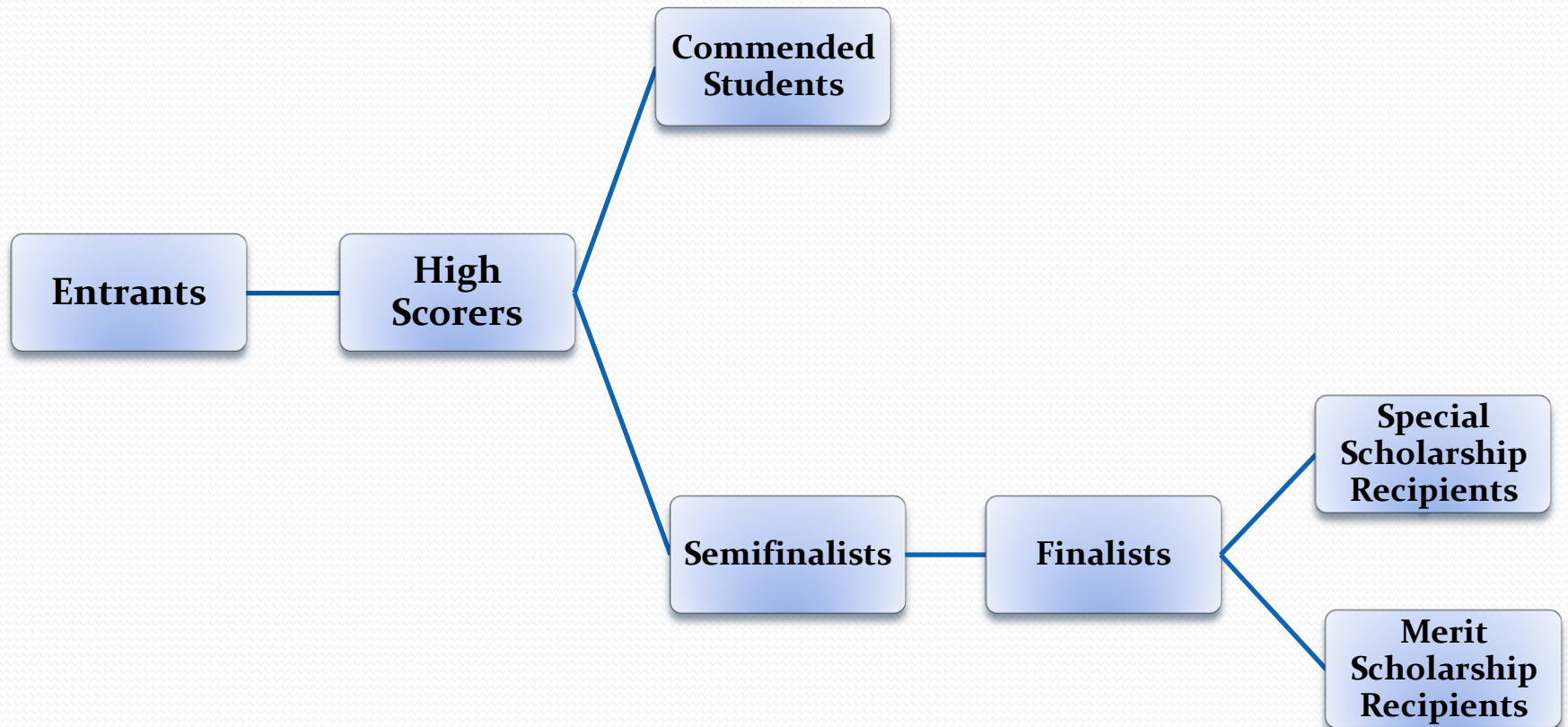
Entry to the National Merit Program

- Students enter the program by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT)
 - The PSAT/NMSQT will be given at Covenant on Wednesday, October 12
- Each year, approximately 1.5 million high school students enter the National Merit Scholarship Program
 - About 50,000 high-scoring students qualify for program recognition
 - Some 9,600 academically talented students receive scholarships for college undergraduate studies

Entry to the National Merit Program

- A particular year's test is the entry vehicle for a specific year's competition
 - The October 2011 PSAT/NMSQT is used for entry to the 2013 National Merit Program
 - Each competition cycle spans about one and a half years
- In other words, this year's junior class will enter the competition for 2013 National Merit Program through the October 12 PSAT/NMSQT
- All Covenant students are eligible for the National Merit Program

Student Standings of the National Merit Program



Student Standings of the National Merit Program

- Entrants—these are U.S. high school students who take the PSAT/NMSQT and meet other program requirements
 - There was approximately 1,500,000 entrants in October 2010 who took the PSAT/NMSQT
- High Scorers—these are the high-scoring students from every state who are offered the College Plan Reporting Service
 - There were approximately 50,000 high scorers from the October 2010 PSAT/NMSQT, or about 3 % of the entrants
 - These students were invited to name two colleges or universities to which they wanted to be referred by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation

Student Standings of the National Merit Program

- Commended Students—these are students named on the basis of a nationally applied Selection Index score
 - They will not continue in the competition for National Merit Scholarships
 - Some may be candidates for Special Scholarships provided by corporate sponsors
 - Of the 50,000 high scorers from the October 2010 PSAT/NMSQT, approximately 34,000 students, or more than two-thirds, are recognized as commended students
 - They will receive Letters of Commendation in recognition of their outstanding academic promise

Student Standings of the National Merit Program

- Semifinalists—these are students named on a state representational basis
 - They are the highest-scoring program participants in each state
 - Of the 50,000 high scorers from the October 2010 PSAT/NMSQT, approximately 16,000 students, or about one-third, are named as semifinalists
 - NMSC will provide application materials explaining requirements to advance in the competition for National Merit Scholarships

Student Standings of the National Merit Program

- Finalists—these are semifinalists who meet academic and other requirements
 - These students will be notified that they have advanced to the Finalist standings
 - All Merit Scholarship winners will be chosen from this group of Finalists based on their abilities, skills, and accomplishments
 - Of the 16,000 semifinalists, approximately 15,000 students are named as finalists

Student Standings of the National Merit Program

- Special Scholarship Recipients—these are students who may receive Special Scholarships from corporate sponsors
 - These students are outstanding students, though not finalists, who meet their sponsor's eligibility requirements
 - Approximately 1300 students will be chosen for this standing in 2011

Student Standings of the National Merit Program

- Merit Scholarship Recipients—these students are the selectees of the three types of National Merit Scholarships
 - National Merit \$2500 Scholarships
 - College-sponsored scholarships
 - Corporate-sponsored awards
 - Approximately 8,300 winners will be announced in the spring of 2012

Key Dates for the 2013 National Merit Scholarship Program

- 2011

- October 12—PSAT/NMSQT administered
- Early December—PSAT/NMSQT Score Reports are mailed to high school principals

- 2012

- Mid-April—50,000 entrants with the highest PSAT/NMSQT Selection Index Scores are contacted through the school and offered NMSC's College Plans Reporting Service
- Late July—information about 2011 PSAT/NMSQT high scorers is sent to the colleges and universities specified by the student
- Early September—principals are notified of their semifinalists in the 2013 National Merit Scholarship competition

For Further Information

- Visit the National Merit Scholarship website
 - nationalmerit.org
- See Mr. McManus to view the National Merit Scholarship Program Guide of September 2011

For Juniors

- Start preparing now for the PSAT/NMSQT scheduled for October 12