A Parent Tutorial for Understanding 2012 PSAT/NMSQT® Results

PSAT/NMSQT Score Report *Plus*
Take a look at your student's PSAT/NMSQT® Score Report. Notice that each section of the test — critical reading, mathematics and writing skills — has its own column. Within each section is a great deal of information that provides a thorough review of performance.

1 Your Scores:

- Each PSAT/NMSQT score — critical reading, mathematics and writing skills — is based on a scale of 20 to 80.
- The **score ranges** show how much scores might vary if students were to take the PSAT/NMSQT repeatedly without learning additional skills. In other words, the scores within this range are considered "equal" statistically.
- **Percentiles** compare your student's performance with that of other students. Eleventh-graders are compared to all 11th-graders who took the test last year; 10th-graders and younger students are compared to all 10th-graders who took the test last year.

2 Your Skills: Students can see how they performed on each of the skills measured by the PSAT/NMSQT. After reviewing this section, students can then go online and log in to My College QuickStart™ to access suggestions for improving each of these skills and also sample questions to use for additional practice. Share this information with teachers, as these skills affect classroom performance and are important for success in college.

3 Your Answers: This section shows the correct answer, the student's response and the difficulty level of the question. Students should have received their test book along with their score report. Encourage your child to go over questions she or he got wrong. Did she or he really not know the answer? Make a careless error? Guess instead of leaving the question blank? My College QuickStart provides complete answer explanations to help students learn from their mistakes.

4 National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) Programs: NMSC cosponsors the PSAT/NMSQT, which stands for Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. High school students enter NMSC programs, usually as 11th-graders, by taking the PSAT/NMSQT and meeting other published entry requirements. NMSC uses the Selection Index score — the sum of the critical reading, mathematics and writing skills scores — as an initial screen of students who enter its programs and to designate groups of students to be honored. If the Selection Index has an asterisk, refer to the NMSC section on the back of the score report. NMSC will notify principals of students whose Selection Index scores qualify them for recognition. For more information about NMSC scholarship programs, visit **www.nationalmerit.org**.

5 Next Steps: Before the test, each student provided the college major she or he is considering pursuing. In My College QuickStart, the College Board provides important information about the indicated major, including recommended high school courses that will help prepare students for college-level work.

6 Information About Your Student's My College QuickStart. See the reverse side to learn about this free online resource.

Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test
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CollegeBoard / NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP CORPORATION

My College QuickStart™

My College QuickStart is an online college- and career-planning kit available free of charge to all students who take the PSAT/NMSQT. It is powered by their responses to the test and provides personalized information that helps students take their next steps toward college:

- **My Online Score Report** — an enhanced score report that allows students to review each test question, their answers and the correct answers with answer explanations
- **My SAT Study Plan™** — a customized SAT® study plan based on students' PSAT/NMSQT test performance, highlighting skills for review and practice
- **My Personality** — a detailed personality test that helps students learn about themselves and discover majors and careers that fit their strengths and interests
- **My Major & Career Matches** — extensive information about majors and careers, including insights about what to expect and what courses to take now
- **My College Matches** — a starter list of colleges based on students' home state and indicated choice of major

Students can sign in to My College QuickStart with the access code printed on their paper score report. The tool is available in mid-December and can be used throughout high school.

Use www.collegeboard.org to help your student reach his or her education and career goals:

Visiting **www.collegeboard.org** makes it easier for you to help your student have a successful experience preparing for and applying to college. You'll find expert advice to keep you informed throughout the college planning process, including:

- Ways to encourage your student to start thinking about life after high school
- Strategies for financing your student's education
- Help with curriculum planning to realize your student's specific career goals
- Information and resources you need to help your student prepare to perform his or her best on the SAT
- Practical advice and online tools to find the right college for your student's needs and goals

What happens now?

With the help of teachers and counselors, students should use the information provided on the PSAT/NMSQT Score Report *Plus* and in My College QuickStart to improve their academic skills and plan for their postsecondary goals. Here are some other suggestions for students:

- Review high school transcripts and select courses for upcoming semesters that will prepare for education and career goals.
- Take challenging courses: Consider honors and AP® courses.
- Tenth-graders and younger students should take the PSAT/NMSQT again in 11th grade to enter competitions conducted by National Merit Scholarship Corporation.
- Eleventh-graders should register for the SAT, and possibly SAT Subject Tests™, this spring. (Online at **www.collegeboard.org** or "express register" in My College QuickStart.)
- Get involved in extracurricular and community activities. College admission officials look for academic competence and preparation (types/levels of academic courses taken and grades received), and they also look for how a student will contribute to the college community. What do students do outside of the school day? Are they involved in music, art, athletics, student government, volunteer work, employment, etc.? The quality of students' involvement is important. What is the depth of their commitment? Are they assuming leadership roles? Are they making a contribution to the school or community?

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