

Board of Education

INFORMATION

TITLE: Superintendent Scholars Program

DATE: October 8, 2018

RESPONSIBLE ADMINISTRATOR: Barry Owen
Chief Academic Officer

BACKGROUND/CONSIDERATIONS:

In an effort to reach underrepresented students in Fort Smith Public Schools and underrepresented colleges, we looked to see what other districts are doing to meet the needs of students with National Merit Scholar potential. Currently, the PSAT is given in grade 10 to each sophomore at our high schools. The PSAT is a preliminary screener used to predict performance on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). While Arkansas is considered an "ACT state", the SAT is recognized nationally by many colleges and universities. Students who perform well among high school peers on the SAT are distinguished as National Merit Scholars. We believe we are missing many students who would otherwise qualify for this distinction if provided testing strategies to improve their performance.

We are planning to identify the top seventy performers on the PSAT test given this month. These students and their parents will then be invited to a reception in March to be designated Superintendent Scholars. Students will also receive an invitation to participate in a PSAT Academy for four days in June. As a follow up to the June training, a six week window of preparation will be provided in the fall semester of their junior year. Our goal is to provide testing tips and strategies needed to raise the scores of these students on the PSAT, thus qualifying them as National Merit Scholars.

RECOMMENDATION:

This is an information item and comes with no administrative recommendation.