

Board Recognition

October 14, 2025

Denton ISD Students Named 2026 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists

Denton ISD proudly celebrates three outstanding students who have been named Semifinalists in the 2026 National Merit Scholarship Program, an honor awarded to fewer than one percent of high school seniors nationwide.

These students are among more than 16,000 Semifinalists across the country who were selected from a pool of over 1.3 million juniors who entered the 2026 competition by taking the 2024 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®). As Semifinalists, they will now continue in the competition for nearly 7,000 scholarships valued at almost \$26 million.

To advance as Finalists, students must submit an application that includes academic records, leadership experiences, community service, employment, and honors. They must also meet additional requirements including qualifying SAT or ACT scores and a personal essay. Roughly 95 percent of Semifinalists are expected to progress, with about half ultimately earning the Merit Scholar® title when scholarships are awarded beginning in April 2026.

The 2026 National Merit Semifinalists from Denton ISD are:

- Denton High School: Andersen Trachsel
- Guyer High School: Maximus Huang, Zimin Kwon, Cody Rosengren

Denton ISD Earns 23rd Consecutive Superior Rating in School FIRST

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has awarded Denton ISD an “A,” Superior rating in the School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST). This marks the district’s 23rd consecutive year earning the state’s highest fiscal accountability rating, recognizing strong and transparent financial management practices.

The School FIRST accountability system is based on 20 financial indicators designed to ensure that public tax dollars are managed responsibly, efficiently, and with transparency. The Superior rating reflects Denton ISD’s ongoing commitment to responsible fiscal stewardship and effective resource management that directly supports students, staff, and the community.

The School FIRST system was created to encourage and reinforce sound financial practices in Texas public schools. Denton ISD’s continued achievement of this distinction highlights the district’s culture of accountability and its commitment to long-term financial sustainability.

The district also recognizes the hard work of its budget and financial operations teams—including payroll, purchasing, and finance departments—whose efforts were instrumental in achieving this year’s Superior rating.