

## Important PSAT Information for Seton Juniors

- On **October 14<sup>th</sup>**, you'll take a PSAT for the third time. As in previous years, we'll begin in the Corpus Christi Building that day at 8:20. Please arrive by 8:15 with your **#2 non-mechanical pencils with erasers and an approved calculator** (see "Acceptable Calculators" on page 36 of the Student Guide). Seton juniors will be entered into the National Merit Scholarship Competition for scholarships.
- **If you are planning on applying to a 4-year college or university after high school and would like to increase your chances for admission and/or merit-based financial aid, it's in your best interest to take the PSAT seriously and set aside time to prepare for it.** Regarding SAT prep, College Board states, "When it comes to improving scores, a little practice goes a long way. A study of 250,000 students from the class of 2017 showed that Official SAT Practice can help any student improve their scores—regardless of gender, race, income, or high school GPA. In fact, 20 hours on Khan Academy® was associated with an average 115-point increase from the PSAT/NMSQT to the SAT." If you prepare for the PSAT, it will give you even more of an advantage!
- **Ways to prepare and study:**
  - 1) See the tips for the different sections (beginning on page 10) and take the sample test included in the Student Guide.
  - 2) Access Khan Academy for personalized online practice ([satpractice.org](https://satpractice.org)). This practice is tailored to your strengths and areas where you might need a little more help.
  - 3) 2 more practice PSAT tests are available online at [psat.org/practice](https://psat.org/practice).
  - 4) PSAT prep books with multiple tests and scoring guidelines are available to borrow from libraries or for sale online for \$10-\$25.
- PSAT scores are **NOT** sent to colleges. The only situation where a college may know how well you performed is if you are recognized as a National Merit Scholar based on your Selection Index (SI) score your junior year. Information about the 2022 National Merit Scholarship Program is in the Student Guide on page 4. For the Class of 2021, the National Commended Scholar SI cut-off score was a 209. Semi-Finalist and Finalist status is based on the student's state of residence and this year Virginia students needed a 221 or higher to be named a Semi-Finalist or Finalist. Only DC and 4 other states had a cut-off that was the same or higher as Virginia's. (The higher cut-off was 222.) In the past 5 years, Seton has had 1-5 Commended Scholar(s) per class, but no Semi-Finalists or Finalists. It's *extremely* competitive to be a Semi-Finalist or Finalist in Virginia!
- If you know ahead of time that you will be absent from school on October 14<sup>th</sup>, please request your parent to contact Guidance as soon as possible in addition to calling the attendance line. It is important for us to be informed who will be present and absent on test day.
- **Remain peaceful and don't worry! Just do your best.** "For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." Jeremiah 29:11