



October 5, 2018

Dear Students and Parents,

On Wednesday, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018, we will be administering PSAT related assessments to our students at no cost to families. Our freshman students will be taking the PSAT 8/9 while our sophomores and juniors will begin taking the the PSAT/NMSQT exam. These preliminary SAT assessments, which test reading, writing and math skills, are important to your child and our school. Read on to find out why.

All too often, students across the country take PSAT related assessments without doing anything to prepare. Even worse, some students choose not to take the exams seriously. This may be because they assume the exam is just a practice test that doesn't have any real value. However, that notion couldn't be any further from the truth. A good performance on the PSAT remains highly significant for four key reasons:

1. PSAT assessments are used to evaluate your child's progress toward nationally recognized academic benchmarks
2. PSAT assessments are used to appraise teacher and curriculum efficiency
3. The PSAT, when taken in junior year, is the qualifying test for the National Merit Scholarship (NMSQT). The National Merit Scholarship is a prestigious award that recognizes the PSAT's top scoring 11<sup>th</sup> grade students across the nation. You can read more at <http://www.nationalmerit.org>
4. A student's performance on the PSAT is the best predictor of how he/she will perform on the SAT. Exam results should be used to help students identify weak academic areas when preparing for the SAT. \*\*\*Students should never take the SAT to simply to establish a "baseline performance." This is because some colleges require students to report SAT scores from all sittings, which could potentially hurt your child when it comes time for admissions.\*\*\*

PSAT student guides, which include practice questions and additional information, were distributed to students in homeroom in September. Students can use these booklets to help prepare for the exams over the next week or so. However, the best way to prepare for any standardized test is to take challenging classes, study hard, and do well in school.

With this information in mind, it is our hope that everyone will arrive on the 10th well-rested and ready to test. Keep in mind that there is **no make-up day** for the PSAT, so students must attend school that day and arrive on time. Exams will begin promptly after homeroom. Students will be dismissed at 12pm following the conclusion of the assessments.

Sincerely,

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