

Open DOORS

Your Student May Have Earned a National Award—Here's How to Claim it

The College Board National Recognition Program gives high-achieving 10th and 11th graders an official academic award they can list on college applications—completely free.



What is College Board's National Recognition Program?

College Board (the organization behind the SAT® and AP® courses) offers a free award to recognize students who have shown strong academic performance. It's an official credential your student can add to college applications to help them stand out—and it can even lead to being recruited by colleges and considered for scholarships. There are three award types, and students may qualify for more than one.



First-Generation Recognition Award

Student will be the first in their family to earn a bachelor's degree.



Rural & Small-Town Recognition Award

Based on the location of the high school the student attends.



School Recognition Award

Demonstrated academic excellence within their school community.

Does your Student Qualify?

Students must meet all three of the following to be eligible:



Grade level

Currently in 10th or 11th grade



Strong Grades

Cumulative GPA of B+ or higher—at least 3.3 or 87%–89% minimum.



PSAT-related assessment score — Option A

Scored in the top 10% on a PSAT-related assessment taken in 10th or 11th grade.

Students take PSAT-related assessments to prepare for the SAT®. The PSAT/NMSQT® offers entry to the National Merit® Scholarship Program



AP scores — Option B

Scored 3 or higher on two or more AP® Exams before or during 10th grade.

AP (Advanced Placement®) Exams are college-level tests students can take in high school, scored 1–5.

Award Process Timeline

- 1. Spring**
Log in/Create College Board account
- 2. Before advertised deadline**
Verify GPA & scores; submit application
- 3. By fall**
Students notified by email if awarded
- 4. Fall**
Download certificate; add to applications

How You Can Help

1. Encourage your student to look up their GPA and scores—GPA is usually available by logging in to the school's student information system, and PSAT-related assessment scores or AP scores can be found in their College Board account at collegeboard.org.
2. Help your student log in or create their College Board account at collegeboard.org—they likely already have one from taking the PSAT-related assessments or AP Exams.
3. Remind them of the deadline—the verification form closes by early summer.
4. Encourage them to submit the verification form—it only takes a few minutes and costs nothing to try.



Learn more at
bigfuture.org/NPR