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**An 'A-rated' District**

*Mission Statement: We are committed to the success of every student!*

## NEWS RELEASE

For more information, contact:  
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For Immediate Release  
September 15, 2021



**Congratulations to our EHS Rams!**

***Forty-one district high school students named National Merit semifinalists; largest group in at least 15 years***

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation has released the list of semifinalists in the prestigious 2022 National Merit Scholarship program, and it includes 41 Alachua County Public School students. That's up from 29 semifinalists last year, and is the highest number in at least 17 years. It's likely that it's the highest number in the district's history.

Earning semifinalist status has long been recognized as a strong indicator of academic excellence. To qualify, students must earn among the nation's highest scores on the Preliminary SAT/National Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). About 1.5 million students took the exam to qualify this year, and about 16,000 have been named semifinalists.

The students now have the opportunity earn finalist status. In addition to earning high scores on the SAT, they will have to submit applications highlighting their other academic achievements, awards and honors earned, leadership activities, teacher recommendations and an essay.

Buchholz High School has the largest group of semifinalists this year, with 21. Gainesville High and Eastside High School both have 10 semifinalists.

Students will learn in early spring of 2022 if they have reached finalist status. Finalists are eligible for thousands of dollars in scholarships provided by businesses, colleges and universities and other organizations.

This year's semifinalists are: Buchholz High School--Anjana Balachandar, Angela Chen, Eric Diao, Michael Fahn, Rena Feng, Guarav Gajavelli, Christopher Han, Kevin He, Jacob Islam, Edward Jeong, Erick Jiang, Devika Kumar, Timmy Li, Aidan Linebarger, Angela Lou, Dominic Robinson, Aditi Shukla, John Sin, Jeffrey Xue, Albert Yang and Xiya Zhou; Eastside High School--Hyungjun Choi, Avery Colon, Richard Jiang, Vedant Karalkar, Ronan Morris, Rachel Parks, Atharva Pathak, Ahmik Paul, Sukhman Sidhu and William Wang; Gainesville High School--Aidan Block, Grant Gravlee, Janani Kumaran, Nickolas Lloyd, Eleanor Parks-Church, Gayathry Prabhakaran, Robert Ryan, Katherine Sammy, Holly Snow and Rachel Young.

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