

Local seventh-graders earn national honors for top scores on college entrance exams

A record number of Alachua County Public School seventh-graders have earned national recognition this year for their high scores on college entrance exams.



Eighteen students from six district middle schools have qualified for Grand Level recognition in the annual Duke University Talent Identification Program (TIP), while a total of 53 earned State Level recognition. The prestigious program identifies and honors high-achieving middle school students from across the nation. More than 46,500 seventh-grade students took part in the Duke TIP this year.

All of the students took either the ACT or SAT, tests usually taken by college-bound high school students. To earn State Level recognition, students had to earn scores that were as high as the top-performing 50% of high school students who took the tests. Grand Level students earned scores equal to or higher than 90% of high school test-takers.

The number of local Grand Level students has been increasing steadily over the last few years. In 2015 the district had five such students. In 2018 there were 17 students who earned Grand Level status.

“Our students continue to shine on the national stage,” said Superintendent Clarke. “It’s a wonderful tribute to their hard work and to the support from their teachers and families.”

This month the program will recognize the State Level students at ceremonies to be held at the University of South Florida and Florida Atlantic University. Grand Level students will be honored May 20 at the Grand Recognition Ceremony on the Duke University Campus in Durham, North Carolina.

Grand Recognition level students this year include: Nolan Gao, William Guan, Melissa Li, Kelsey Morey, Aryaman Sriram, Daniel Wang, William Wang, Nathan Wei, Christopher Wu and Ruiwen Xiong of Lincoln Middle School; Ryan Frazer of Bishop Middle School; Alessandra Deleon of Kanapaha Middle School; Maximiliano Probert, Greyson Roberts and Samuel Wiggins of Oak View Middle School; Daniel Brown of Ft. Clarke Middle School; Kyle Choe and Isaac Savin of Westwood Middle School.

Two other students from Alachua County Public Schools have also been recognized by Duke TIP for their performance in the 4th-6th Grade Talent Search. Williams Elementary 5th-grader Pranay Gadikota and Bishop Middle 6th-grader Henry Bostock have both been named honorees in the 2018-19 program. Both scored in the top 10% on the PSAT 8/9 when compared to national test takers four grades above their current grade level.

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