



JAMES BOWIE HIGH SCHOOL

September 21, 2021

Greetings, Bulldog Nation!

UIL ELIGIBILITY - You have likely heard that Austin ISD transitioned from a six, six weeks academic calendar to a nine weeks report card cycle for the 2021-22 school year. To calculate the semester average in a course, each of the two nine weeks report card grades will comprise 40% of the grade and the semester final exam will count 20% of the grade. The [University Interscholastic League \(UIL\)](#) establishes the rules for all UIL activities and standards of eligibility for students to earn the privilege of representing their schools in interschool contests. One important component of eligibility is a student's academic standing, meaning that in order to participate in UIL activities students must be passing their courses.

To ensure equity among students regardless if the student attends a school with a six week report card grading cycle or a nine week report card grading cycle, UIL requires an official grade check for all competing students at the first six weeks mark of the school year. **In Austin ISD, that six weeks grade check will occur at the end of this week on Friday, September 24, 2021, even though this is not the end of the report card cycle. Students with an average lower than 70% in an academic-level course (or an average lower than 60% in an advanced course) as of this Friday will NOT be eligible to participate in their UIL activity.** The period of ineligibility will begin on Friday, October 1, and continue for at least three weeks. Thereafter, the student's grades will be checked every three weeks, and the student will become eligible to participate once they are passing all of their courses, meaning the grade check must indicate an average of 70% or higher in academic level classes or 60% or higher in advanced level courses.

Please take a few minutes to review your child's grades using the Parent Self-Service tile in the Austin ISD Parent Portal (<https://portal.austinisd.org>) and discuss any concerns with your child, particularly if their UIL eligibility is at stake. Encourage your student to talk to their teacher(s) about their progress and/or attend tutoring opportunities before and after school and during FIT. For your future reference, the [2021-22 UIL Eligibility Grade Check Dates](#) are available on the Student Activities page under the Students tab on the JBHS.org website.

DIGITAL CONTENT ALERTS - In our continued efforts to keep our students safe, AISD utilizes content monitoring software as outlined in the Student Handbook under Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices (All Grade Levels). On district-owned technological devices, GoGuardian software proactively identifies students at risk of self-harm. [Gaggle](#) is another student safety solution that is used by AISD to filter and monitor safe learning online. This filtering program reviews the student's use of Austin ISD issued Google products (Gmail, Hangouts, Meet, Calendar, Drive for storage, Docs, Sheets, Slides, Forms, etc.) and sites such as BLEND.

The Threat Assessment Coordinator receives Gaggle and GoGuardian alerts based on unsafe keywords. Prioritized by alert levels, during school hours, School Administrators will receive an email for students that are both virtual and in-person but do not pose an imminent threat such as drugs and alcohol, harassment, and violence towards others. Alerts that include nudity and sexual content and pose any type of imminent threat are sent to AISD PD Dispatch and assigned to an investigator or SRO. Alerts indicating self-harm or harm to others are handled collaboratively between Health Services Department Licensed Mental Health Professionals, AISD PD Crisis Intervention Team, and the Office of Counseling. Upon receipt of the alert, the team follows the established Crisis Response Protocol. All imminent threats after normal school hours are sent to AISD PD Dispatch for

assistance. Questions about these alerts can be submitted at Let's Talk - Student Safety Concerns <https://www.austinisd.org/letstalk>.

NATIONAL MERIT RECOGNITION - Each year students are entered in the National Merit Scholarship Program, a nationwide competition for recognition and awards, by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®) during their junior year of high school. Last week officials of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC®) announced the names of approximately 16,000 Semifinalists in the 67th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. These academically talented high school seniors have the opportunity to continue in the competition for some 7,500 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly \$30 million that will be offered next spring. To be considered for a Merit Scholarship award, Semifinalists must fulfill several requirements to advance to the Finalist level of the competition. About 95% of the Semifinalists are expected to attain Finalist standing, and approximately half of the Finalists will win a National Merit Scholarship, earning the Merit Scholar title. **Please help us in congratulating the following five Bowie seniors on their accomplishment of earning the title of National Merit Semifinalist: Mason Hyde, Austin Pound, Caroline Rasmussen, Duncan Redheendran, and Samantha Thompson.** We wish them the best of luck moving forward in the competition!

We are also excited to announce that an additional 22 Bowie seniors have been selected as a National Merit Commended Student. Commended Students are being recognized by NMSC® for their exceptional academic promise as demonstrated on the PSAT/NMSQT® qualifying test. They will not, however, continue in the competition for National Merit Scholarships to be offered next spring. **Bowie's National Merit Commended Students are: Brandon Almaguer, Edward Alonzi, Trey Brown, Corey Chrudimsky, Hannah Dasilva, Anna Holme, Ethan Jordan, Maya Lerma, Adelynn Lilley, Belinda Lin, Brandon McNamara, Joshua Nielsen, Lillian Pennock, Vittal Ranganath, Madeline Savasky, Arushi Sharma, Karen Sung, Jacob Sylvie, Benjamin Thollander, Christopher Thompson, William Wallace, and Kai Wilson.**

OCTOBER 26TH PSAT & SENIOR ACTIVITIES: Juniors in the Class of 2023 cohort will be entered into the National Merit Scholarship Program competition when they take their PSAT/NMSQT® qualifying test at Bowie on Tuesday, October 26, 2021. Juniors can begin preparing for the PSAT/NMSQT® by linking their previous PSAT scores with Khan Academic materials for a personalized study plan. Although only the performance of juniors will be considered for scholarships, all students in grades 9-11 will be automatically registered for and will take a Preliminary SAT (PSAT) during the school day on Tuesday, October 26, 2021. While the students in grades 9-11 take the PSAT on October 26, seniors will be participating in special college and career readiness activities, or they can plan to utilize this date for college visits (click [HERE](#) for college visit requirements and information).

Go Dawgs!

Mark Robinson
Principal
James Bowie High School