Six BGHS Students Named National Merit Semifinalists

Six students from Bowling Green High School have been recognized for outstanding academic achievement by the National Merit® Scholarship Program. (Pictured from left) Owen Hanna, Ethan Holaday, David Crocker, Mary Grayson Batts, Denis Hodzic, and Logan West have been named National Merit Semifinalists and will have the opportunity to compete for scholarship awards worth over $32 million.

Six recognized this year from BGHS are the most to ever achieve this honor in the same year. Additionally, these students have spent all of their academic years enrolled in the Bowling Green Independent School District.

Principal Gary Fields says, “Their success and recognition are direct results of the outstanding work the employees in our district do with kids each day, from preschool through 12th grade.”

The National Merit® Scholarship Program is an academic competition for recognition and scholarships. High school students enter by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test which serves as an initial screen of approximately 1.5 million entrants each year. Students with the highest scores (critical reading + mathematics + writing skills scores) qualify for recognition in the National Merit® Scholarship Program, with less than 1% of high school seniors being recognized as Semifinalists. Forty Bowling Green High School students have earned this status over the past ten years.

Upon completion of additional requirements, approximately 90% of all Semifinalists are expected to attain Finalist standing, and approximately half of the Finalists will be selected as Merit Scholarship winners earning the Merit Scholar title.

Cash Rewards Distributed for Advanced Placement Scores

On Friday, September 21, Bowling Green High School distributed a total of $17,500; $100 for each passing score on Advanced Placement Exams in areas of English, math and science. The money distributed was made possible by the Advance Kentucky initiative to promote rigorous coursework among high school students.

AdvanceKentucky was formed in 2008 by the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) and the Kentucky Science and Technology Corporation (KSTC). NMSI committed $13.2 million in matching funds to AdvanceKentucky over a six-year period through monies from Exxon Mobil and the Dell and Gates Foundations. Federal funding also is provided by the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Kentucky Department of Education through the U.S. Department of Education AP Incentive Program and the Race to the Top funding program. Other Kentucky sponsors include Berea College, the Initiative for Military Families (supported by ExxonMobil and Lockheed Corporations) and Council on Postsecondary Education and Kentucky Science and Technology Corporation.
Ed Sweetman was recently named Bus Driver of the Year by the Kentucky Association For Pupil Transportation (KAPT). Mr. Sweetman drives route 18 for Bowling Green Schools, transporting students from Bowling Green High School and Bowling Green Junior High. He also helps manage the district's transportation website, has been instrumental in implementing new routing software and has improved communication among bus drivers by creating a blog site for the district's transportation staff.

Pictured from left to right, Mike McCloud, Director of Transportation, Ed Sweetman, and David Causey, Vehicle and Bus Driver Supervisor

### Upcoming Surveys: Students & Employees

Beginning Tuesday, October 16, schools and students in grades 5-12 will be participating in a Gallup Student Survey. This is the first of two brief surveys Bowling Green City Schools will be administering this month, with an Employee Satisfaction Survey opening on October 29.

The Gallup Student Survey is a national survey that is free to public schools and measures student hope, engagement, and well-being, with the goal of deeper understanding an overall school population. Hope, engagement, and well-being have been determined as greater predictors of student success than GPA or ACT/SAT scores because they measure a student's energy for future goals, involvement in school, and how the individual experiences life.

The results will be compared with national data and provide suggested interventions and strategies to foster communication and improvement within the schools.

The Employee Satisfaction Survey will be administered to all employees for the fifth time in eight years through a partnership with the Kentucky School Boards Association. Survey questions have been developed and reviewed by a committee of employees, representing all schools and all role groups. The questions measure working conditions, involvement, district communication, overall moral, supervisor, superintendent, and school board performance, and overall job satisfaction. Results will be used by the district and individual schools to evaluate, reflect, and also make decisions or improvements.

### TeachMeet Kentucky 2012

The 3rd Annual TeachMeet Kentucky was held on the campus of WKU on Friday, October 5. More than four hundred educators participated in the collaboration of teachers, school technology staff, the Green River Regional Educational Cooperative, and WKU.

TeachMeet is known as an “unconference” for technology, because there is no registration fee, the event is casual, and teachers learn from each other through networking and brief 20-minute sessions reviewing a variety of technology tools.

Resources and more information from the event are available here:

http://tmky.wikispaces.com/Session+Materials

### NOW ENROLLING Preschool Students

The Bowling Green City Schools Preschool Program is offered free of charge to children who live in the City School District.

Children must be four years old by October 1, 2012 and meet income eligibility guidelines or children must be 3 or 4 years old and have a delay or disability.

For more information, contact Jennifer Grieshop, 746-2277 or Vicki Writsel, 746-2200.

www.bgreen.kyschools.us

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Hundreds of Grandparents joined students for lunch during school Grandparents Day celebrations.

Joe Drape, *New York Times* Sports columnist and author of *Soldiers First* spoke at BGJHS.

Demolition has started on the former L. C. Curry School. The new Dishman-McGinnis will be built on the site.

Potter Gray and Bowling Green Junior High students participated in the Scotty’s Contracting and Stone Festival of Sand.

Primary students at W. R. McNeill celebrated Clifford’s 50th Birthday through a live simulcast with children from around the world.

Fourth graders from across the district traveled to Trammel Creek in September to study bugs and water in the natural habitat. The GM Assembly Plant and the WKU Center for Environmental Education and Sustainability sponsored the trips and provided educational assistance and volunteers.

Mayor Bruce Wilkerson visited Kindergarten classes at T. C. Cherry to compare the roles of Mayor with the role of the school principal, Mr. Twyman.
Parents and community members will soon have the opportunity to view school and district accountability data from the 2011-12 school year. This is the first year Kentucky schools will report scores based on the new assessment and accountability system, Unbridled Learning: College/Career Readiness for All. The academic standards are more rigorous, but the future result will be students better prepared for college and the workplace.

The Unbridled Learning accountability system is made up of state tests such as the Kentucky Performance Rating for Educational Progress or K-PREP, and end-of-course exams. These assessments determine how well students learned the academic content. Other exams: EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT show whether students are on track to graduate college-ready.

As the Unbridled Learning plan is implemented in the future, other components, such as school program reviews in areas of arts and humanities, writing and practical living, as well as evaluations of teachers and school leaders will be factored into school and district scores.

When scores are reported in October, overall accountability will range from 0 – 100. To calculate the overall score, points will be awarded based on how well a school performs in three to five components, as determined by their school level:

- **School Achievement** percentages are based on student performance on the state tests. Student scores will be labeled as novice, apprentice, proficient or distinguished and schools will receive points for proficient and distinguished scores. Kentucky’s goal is 100 percent proficiency or above for all students.

- **Gap** compares the percentage of proficient and distinguished scores of African-American, Hispanic, Native American, special education, low income, and limited English proficiency students to other students not in that category.

- **Growth** measures how individual students improve from one year to the next based on statistical growth of other students in their peer group.

- **College/Career Readiness** is added at the middle school level and is based on 8th grade EXPLORE scores. At the high school level, the College/Career Readiness Component is based on PLAN and ACT scores or career certification tests.

- **Graduation Rate** included at the high school only, compares the number of students who entered 9th grade four years ago to how many students graduated in May 2012. Overall scores from Kentucky schools and districts will be ranked. Depending on where schools and districts are in that order, they will be classified into one of four main categories:

  - **Distinguished:** 90th percentile and above;
  - **Proficient:** 70th-89th percentiles;
  - **Progressing:** schools/districts meeting their annual measurable objective, but not proficient or distinguished;
  - **Needs Improvement:** the remaining districts.

No schools will be classified as progressing in 2012, as this is the first year to use the new assessment system.

Schools and districts are not only labeled in to the four main categories, they will also be considered for recognition or consequences. Recognition of achievements will be awarded to the state’s highest performing schools with top overall scores, as well as to schools showing the most progress. Consequence categories will be used to classify schools and districts not meeting their goals. Similar to the former No Child Left Behind Law, support systems are also in place to assist schools and districts that consistently do not meet their goals.

The new Unbridled Learning system has provided schools with more rigorous academic standards and a plan for continuous improvement. The goal for the entire Commonwealth of Kentucky is to ensure students graduate prepared for their future, and to lead the future workforce of our state. Thank you for your support of our schools, teachers, and students.

Additional information about Unbridled Learning is available on the program website located at education.ky.gov.