



Normandale Hills Elementary School students work on a mural for their school. See more on page 4.



A Message from Superintendent Les Fujitake

# OPTIONS FOR SUCCESS: CAREER OR COLLEGE?



Superintendent Les Fujitake visits with high school students at the Future Leaders Conference, a program that connects high school students with business mentors, speakers and scholarship opportunities. Bloomington Future Leaders is a partnership with the Bloomington Chamber of Commerce.

How often have we heard, “One size does not fit all”? As school leaders, it is a recognition that we do not limit students to one pathway toward success. Often, that pathway was an expectation that in order to be a success, students had to pursue a four-year degree. We are proud of our efforts to prepare students to attend the college or university of their choice, including:

- Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) where students pursue challenging coursework with dual credit programs.
- ACT testing of all students, which helps identify students who may not have known they were college-ready.
- Partnerships with organizations like Best Prep, Genesys Works, AVID and others to give students a jump start into college and career.

While the pursuit of a bachelor’s degree continues to be the goal of most of our graduates, we believe many students can benefit from considering options other than the traditional track of a four-year institution. We want every student, beginning as early as middle school, to be exposed to the possibilities of college and career pathways, and find one that

best suits them and allows them to have a successful means to a livable wage. One of the top issues facing our state economy is a labor shortage, especially high skilled labor in technical fields that require trade degrees and apprenticeships. There is high demand in industries throughout the metro area with livable wage jobs in fields that do not require a four-year degree. In fact, I often hear from Bloomington employers and business community leaders about high demand employment in construction, transportation, public safety, health care, information technology—a host of great career opportunities. Not just jobs, but careers. Our collaboration with Hennepin and Dakota county technical colleges, Normandale Community College and our own Bloomington Career and College Academy are giving students exposure to career options while attending middle and high school. Some companies and state organizations are actively working with us to encourage students to consider career paths in the trades, computer technology and the like. Walser Toyota, Freeway Ford, Red Wing Shoes, and the Minnesota State Building Trades Council are investing in programs to spur student interest in career pathways. We believe all of these efforts will benefit our students with increased opportunities and access as they pursue a pathway to college or career.

## PGPs connect students with opportunities

We continue to improve the Personal Growth Plan (PGP), a key element of preparing students for career and college success. Starting in middle school, all students create a PGP that helps map and track their career interests and goals, and includes activities, lessons and research tools to help them make informed choices. A new PGP Hub was launched this year offering a mobile-friendly website designed to improve parent engagement with students’ PGPs and their career interests. The PGP Hub shows a variety of key indicators. The PGP Task screen includes student reflections on advisory-based lessons, while My PGP Plan allows students to document their goals and action plans, career interests and postsecondary education aspirations. Staff can add notices and alerts about events and activities based on a student’s interests, giving them opportunities to gain valuable experiential learning. Future features will help students and families monitor progress to ensure alignment with postsecondary plans.

My PGP Summary

**Personal Growth Plan**  
I have entered the key elements of my PGP

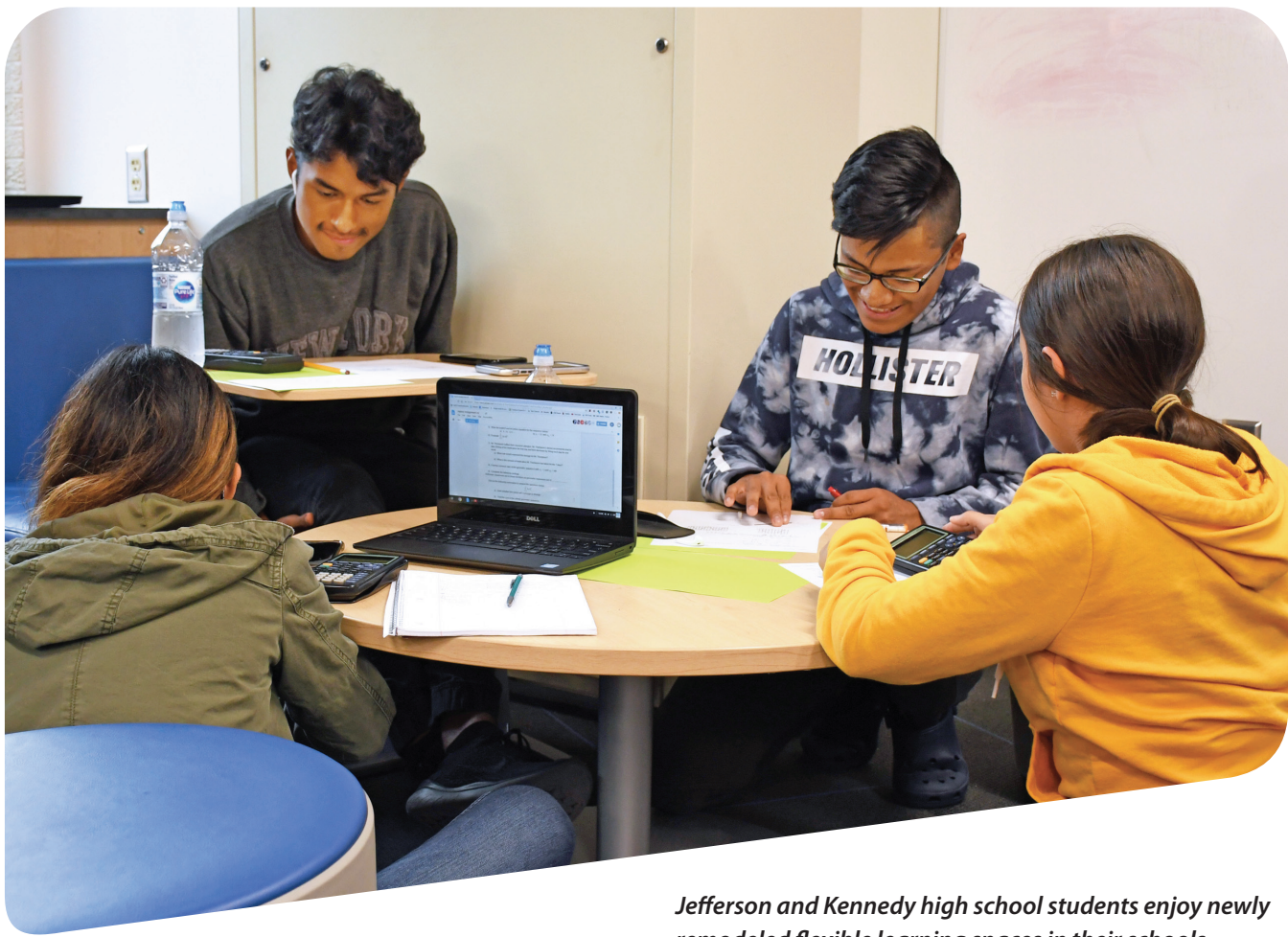
**My Progress**  
Coming Soon

**PGP Tasks**  
I have entered the key elements of my PGP

**Events & Activities**  
I have entered the key elements of my PGP

**Notes**  
I have been reading my PGP notes





Jefferson and Kennedy high school students enjoy newly remodeled flexible learning spaces in their schools.

# BPS ONLINE COURSES OFFER FLEXIBLE LEARNING OPTION

The District’s first online high school courses, introduced last school year, offer interactive, flexible learning opportunities that are created and taught by Bloomington teachers.

BPS Online offerings include 23 courses for 2018-19 with plans to expand to 44 online courses next year, spanning arts and humanities, math and science and more.

## Anytime, Anywhere, Any Pace

BPS Online courses offer students flexibility, giving them control over where, when and at what pace they complete the course work. Online courses provide the same Bloomington curriculum as traditional classroom courses.

And students love the new online option. According to a survey of students who took an online course in the first trimester, 67 percent favor taking more online classes in the future.

“Students like the flexibility of online classes,” said Kathryn Haddad, who teaches an online English humanities course at Kennedy High School. “It allows students to learn on their own time, while introducing them to a method of instruction that is commonplace at many colleges and universities.”

Jefferson science teacher Cory Carufel agreed that students taking courses online enjoy the option to complete their coursework anywhere. “Many of my students report that they are working on chemistry content at school in flex spaces or the cafeteria, at home or in nearby coffee shops.”

Although many students listed the flexibility as the primary reason for choosing an online course, other popular motivations include trying something new and different, accelerating the learning pace and accommodating busy

schedules while fitting in desired classes. The program is designed to offer students classes that they may not have otherwise been able to take due to scheduling conflicts, and to offer opportunities for students with health issues or family circumstances that might otherwise be a barrier to attendance and course completion.

“Students can trade their time at night to work on an online class to free up time during the school day for something else,” said Scott Cater, who teaches two online algebra courses at Jefferson. “Whether it’s a traditional class or the time to work on another class, it gives students more control over their schedules.”

The online format also gives students the option to learn and complete coursework at their own pace: “Students like not having to wait for others to finish work to move on,” said Katie Juul, who teaches an online 11th grade English course at Kennedy. Carufel agreed: “There’s great potential for unique course pacing; students can either move ahead or take extra time on challenging content.”

## In-person Support

BPS Online courses offer flexibility without losing the personal aspect of the teacher-student relationship. Although not required, students in online courses are given opportunities for face-to-face connection with teachers and peers, which is a benefit to students not used to the online format.

“It’s a great opportunity for high school students to try online learning in a supported environment,” said Juul. “Teachers are in the building and available to help, so there’s support for those who need it.”

## Is BPS Online for me?

All high school students are eligible to take online courses. Students ready to do well in an online environment are motivated, organized, disciplined and have strong time management and technology skills.

Teachers agree that staying on top of email every day and regularly checking in with the teacher are key to succeeding in an online course. “Be ready to make two-way communication a big part of your online course experience,” said Carufel.

Students can take a survey to reflect on their levels of readiness for online learning at [bit.ly/BPS-online-readiness](http://bit.ly/BPS-online-readiness). Learn more at [bloomingtonschools.org/online](http://bloomingtonschools.org/online).



## Normandale Hills, Poplar Bridge partner on mural projects

Normandale Hills and Poplar Bridge elementary schools and Artistry were selected for a Minnesota State Arts Board 2019 Arts Learning grant. The grant is funding a “Celebrate Us” mural residency with artist Brian Jensen. Under his guidance, Normandale Hills third graders recently completed their mural which now hangs in the school’s media center. Poplar Bridge is currently working with Jensen to complete their own mural.



# SCHOOL SAFETY

## What parents need to know

A school crisis is an incident that affects students and staff and can occur before, during or after regular school hours. We want our parents to feel confident in the safety of their children while they're at school, so we've provided responses to a few of the most frequently asked school safety questions.



BPS completed a series of joint crisis exercises in partnership with the Bloomington Police and Fire departments and Allina Health EMS.

### What plans are in place to help children stay safe?

Bloomington voters supported the 2013 safety and technology referendum that provided resources to initiate best practices in school safety, including access and visitor management systems, emergency preparedness measures, school and district crisis response teams and ongoing training and drills.

Our emergency response and recovery plan is aligned with recommendations provided by the U.S. Departments of Education and Homeland Security to reduce risks and ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff.

All school staff are trained to assess the potential for serious incidents and respond according to our plan's established procedures and guidelines.

### What can parents do when a school is in crisis?

Trust that we are first doing what is needed to protect your child(ren); then we'll communicate with available information. It is important to remain calm and monitor information sources.

We understand the natural instinct to want to rush to your child. Phone lines, staff and roads are needed for emergency response. Parents will not be allowed on campus.

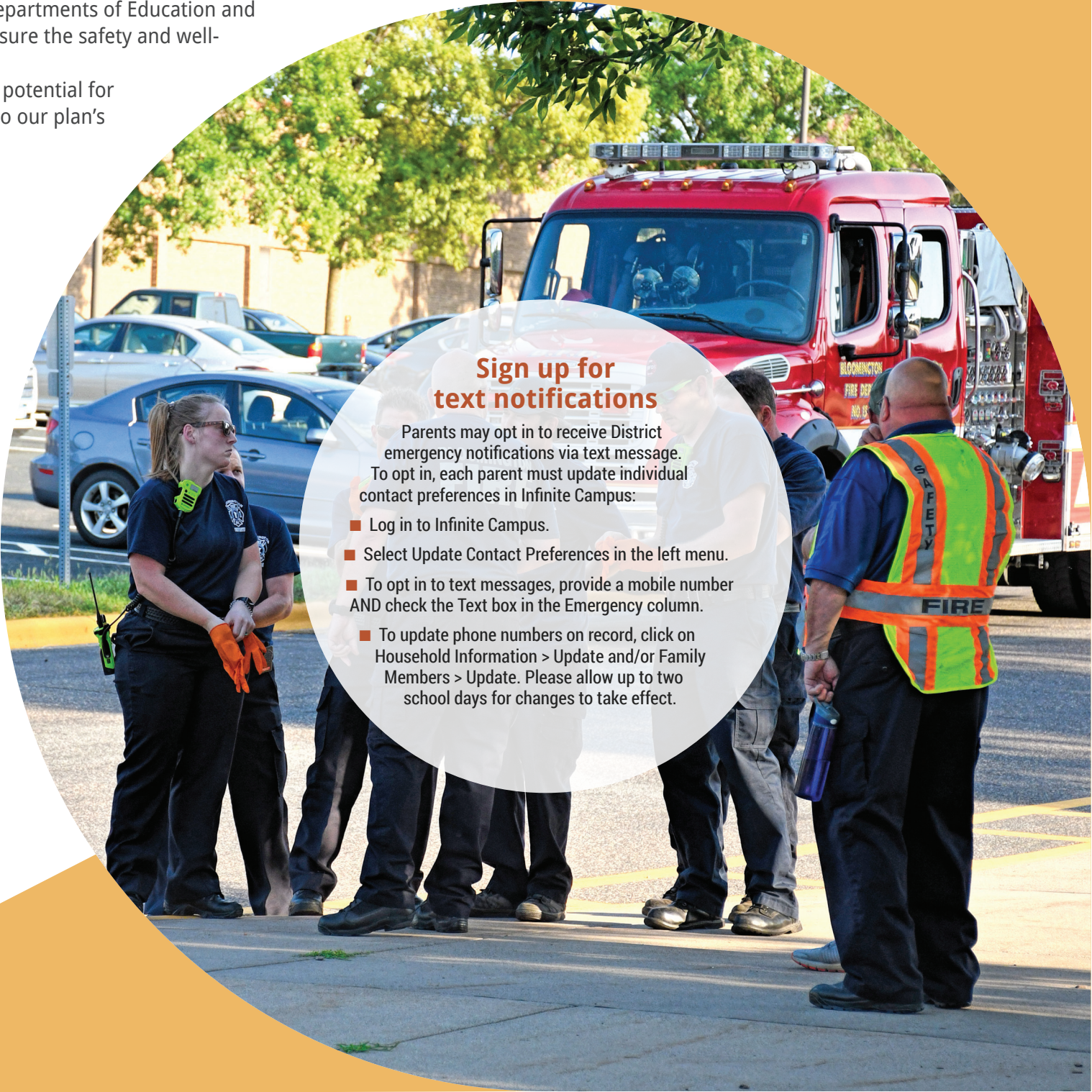
Refrain from calling or texting your child(ren). The sound, vibration or conversation may put students in danger. Students need to be paying attention to instructions from trained staff.

As soon as it is safe to do so, and under the guidance of emergency responders, we will evacuate students to a secure location and begin the parent-student reunification process.

## What happens in a school emergency?

In the unlikely event of a school crisis, schools will initiate one of the following school safe conditions:

- ★ **Lockdown** when the perceived threat is inside a building or on the campus.
- ★ **Shelter-in-place** when a potential threat exists near the campus and requires police or fire response.
- ★ **Evacuation** when conditions are safer outside the building.
- ★ **Hold-in-place** when an urgent or medical incident occurs to a student or staff. The response is intended to shelter students from the incident location.
- ★ **Severe weather** when conditions warrant relocating students and staff to a more secure location inside the school.



#### Sign up for text notifications

- Parents may opt in to receive District emergency notifications via text message. To opt in, each parent must update individual contact preferences in Infinite Campus:
- Log in to Infinite Campus.
  - Select Update Contact Preferences in the left menu.
  - To opt in to text messages, provide a mobile number AND check the Text box in the Emergency column.
  - To update phone numbers on record, click on Household Information > Update and/or Family Members > Update. Please allow up to two school days for changes to take effect.





# IN THE KNOW

## Preschool registration now open



Preschool registration for the 2019-20 school year is now open. Parents can visit [bloomington.ce.eleyo.com](http://bloomington.ce.eleyo.com) to register for three- or four-year-old preschool, including morning or afternoon options. Three-year-old preschool is offered two (T/Th) or three (M/W/F) days per week, with four-year-old preschool offered five days per week.

Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis, and classes fill quickly. Visit [bloomingtonschools.org/preschool](http://bloomingtonschools.org/preschool) for more information, and register your child today!

## District-wide Food Drive is April 22-26

The 11th Annual District-wide Food Drive is April 22-26. Students, families, staff and community members are invited to donate non-perishable food items or cash to their schools throughout the week.

All food and cash donations are presented to VEAP (Volunteers Enlisted to Assist People), a Bloomington non-profit agency serving low-income families. Last year, food and cash donations totaled 76,126 pounds of food

## Bus GPS info available in MyStop

Parents and students can access live school bus GPS information using the MyStop system. Users can view current bus locations and the estimated time of arrival at their neighborhood bus stop. Only students assigned to a bus route are linked to the system. Learn more and sign up at [bloomingtonschools.org/mystop](http://bloomingtonschools.org/mystop)

## Save the Date—Chip-in for Schools Golf Classic

The 2019 Chip In for Schools Golf Classic will tee off Wednesday, July 24, at Dwan Golf Course. Tournament proceeds help Bloomington students through the Education Foundation of Bloomington's Children's Food for Thought program, Student Success Stipends and classroom innovation grants. Sponsorship information and player registration are available at [efbm.org](http://efbm.org)

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# POINTS OF PRIDE

■ Seniors **Samantha Sunnarborg**, **Ryan Meany** (Jefferson), **Libby Taffe** and **David Vences Mendez** (Kennedy) are this year's Triple "A" (Academics, Arts and Athletics) Award nominees. Each year, seniors are selected for their participation in Minnesota State High School League sponsored arts and athletics while maintaining high academic standing.



Kailee Shermak



Ebba Wako



Benjamin Griesel



Ally Starks

■ Juniors **Kailee Shermak**, **Ebba Wako** (Jefferson), **Benjamin Griesel** and **Ally Starks** (Kennedy) are 2019 ExCEL (Excellence in Community, Education and Leadership) Award nominees. Each year, high school juniors are recognized for their involvement in school activities, volunteer efforts and leadership qualities. Nominees are eligible for a statewide award.

■ Kennedy senior **Emily Smeltzer** was named a Wendy's High School Heisman school winner and will receive a \$500 college scholarship.

■ **Luci Bianchi** (Jefferson) and **Samantha Husting** (Kennedy) are this year's Athena Award winners. The Athena Award recognizes one outstanding senior female athlete from each school. They will be honored at the Minneapolis Athena Banquet on May 3 with other metro-area recipients.

■ Jefferson soccer coaches **Kelly Anderson** (varsity girls) and **Mark Yueill** (varsity boys) were named Assistant Coach of the Year for Class AA Section 2 by the Minnesota State High School Soccer Coaches Association.

■ Bloomington students receiving awards in this year's Minnesota Scholastic Art Competition include the following:

**Gold Key:** Kennedy's **Phoebe Sinner**, **Savanna Hanxana**, **Isabel Villalobos Alvarado**, **Samuel Lopez Ruiz** and **Ava Katz**; Jefferson's **Kelsey Johnson** and **Samantha Ouellette**.

**Silver Key:** Kennedy's **Sinner**, **Hannah Butala**, **Lysander Colindres**, **Riley McGuinness** and **Natalie Schmitz**; Jefferson's **Johnson** and **Ouellette**; Oak Grove Middle's **Madison Belgarde**.

**Honorable Mention:** Kennedy's **Madeline Hergott**, **Emma Moore** and **Annabelle Benitez**; Jefferson's **Johnson**, **Bryan Belvedere**, **Luci Bianchi** and **Elyse Cooke**; Oak Grove's **Katy Campbell**

■ Bloomington teachers nominated for Education Minnesota's 55th Annual Teacher of the Year award, include the following:

- **Joshua Coval**, Kennedy
- **Kris Goodwin**, Hillcrest
- **Katie Juul**, Kennedy
- **Lisa Leary**, Jefferson
- **Cory Wade**, Hillcrest

**Coval**, **Juul** and **Wade** have been selected semifinalists for the award, which will be announced May 5.

■ Bloomington United for Youth's Volunteer Recognition Event honored the following for their contributions to the community:

- **Tommy Panvica** (Jefferson) and **Jeanne Chan** (Kennedy): Individual Youth Recognition
- **Tom Daly** and **Ann Tillotson**: Individual Adult Recognition
- **Kennedy High School Student Government**: Youth Organization Recognition



■ Jefferson seniors **Charles Maki**, **Ryan Martz**, **Emily Wammer**, **Amelia Miller**, and **Isabella Phan** (L-R, above) are National Merit Scholarship finalists.