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## **Baesler Nominates North Dakota Presidential Scholars for 2016**

BISMARCK, N.D., Nov. 25, 2015 – State School Superintendent Kirsten Baesler has nominated 25 North Dakota high school seniors to compete for the distinction of being named as a Presidential Scholar, which is one of the nation’s most distinguished academic awards.

Each year, as many as 161 high school seniors nationwide are named as Presidential Scholars, including one male and one female from each state. The scholars are chosen by a presidential commission that includes leaders in education, business and the arts.

A group of Presidential Scholar semifinalists will be made public in April 2016, followed by the announcement of the names of each state’s scholars in early May.

“This is a very prestigious academic award that is given to very few people,” Baesler said. “The nomination process is exceptionally rigorous.”

The Presidential Scholars program was established by President Lyndon Johnson in 1964 as a way to recognize the nation’s most academically accomplished high school seniors. It has since been expanded to include students with exceptional talent in the arts and career and technical education.

“For the first time ever this year, we are including students who are suggested by the Department of Career and Technical Education,” Baesler said. “We are recognizing the importance of that sector, and the fantastic set of skills and knowledge that those students bring to the table.”

Five of Baesler’s 25 nominees were suggested by the state Department of Career and Technical Education as exceptional vocational education students.

The names and high schools of the nominees are listed below. The students whose names are in italics were suggested by the Department of Career and Technical Education.

Beulah: Alfred Schwalbe

Bismarck Century: Sedalia Mahlum

Carrington: Keaton Erickson

Central Cass, Casselton: Ian Saum

Fargo North: Sophie Johnson, Annika Kjar, Alexis Vannett

Fargo Davies: Nathaniel Thoreson

(Continued)

Grand Forks Central: *Dashley Foltz*

Grand Forks Red River: *Aidan Matheney, Tai Mosley, Mari Rustebakke, Hannah Tinkler*

Hillsboro: Evan Kritzberger

Our Redeemer's Christian School, Minot: Ethan Hinkel

Mohall (Mohall-Lansford-Sherwood): Allison Voigt

New Rockford (New Rockford-Sheyenne): Heather Tollefson

Park River: Peyton Cole

Sargent Central, Forman: Jacob Nelson

Valley City: Mikaylah Ross

Wahpeton: *Tracer Bowar*, Whitney Welder

West Fargo: James Kollie

Wimbledon: Anthony Plumb

Wyndmere: Sierra Heitkamp

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