



News Release

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Download *The SAT[®] Report on College & Career Readiness* at
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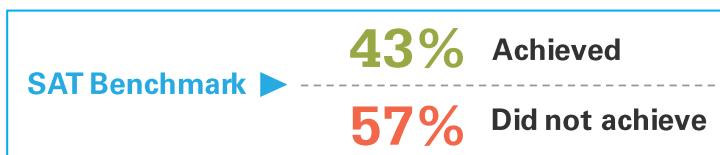
For Immediate Release: Sept. 24, 2012

SAT[®] Report: Only 43 Percent of 2012 College-Bound Seniors Are College Ready

Report Underscores Importance of Increasing Rigor in America's Schools

NEW YORK — *The SAT Report on College & Career Readiness* released today revealed that only 43 percent of SAT[®] takers in the class of 2012 graduated from high school with the level of academic preparedness associated with a high likelihood of college success. These findings are based on the percentage of students in the class of 2012 who met the SAT College & Career Readiness Benchmark, which research shows is associated with higher rates of enrollment in four-year colleges, higher first-year college GPAs and higher rates of retention beyond the first year.

“This report should serve as a call to action to expand access to rigor for more students,” said College Board President Gaston Caperton. “Our nation’s future depends on the strength of our education system. When less than half of kids who want to go to college are prepared to do so, that system is failing. We must make education a national priority and deliver rigor to more students.”



SAT Benchmark

Among the high school class of 2012, **43 percent of all SAT takers met the SAT College & Career Readiness Benchmark**. This percentage is consistent with that of the class of 2011, which also met the benchmark at a rate of 43 percent. The SAT Benchmark score of 1550 indicates a 65 percent likelihood of achieving a B- average or higher during the first year of study at a four-year college.

Impact of Rigor on College Readiness and SAT Performance

The SAT performance of students in the high school class of 2012 continues to reinforce the importance of a rigorous high school education. **Data confirm that students who complete a core curriculum and enroll in honors and/or Advanced Placement Program[®] (AP[®]) courses perform better on the SAT.**

The relationship between high school course work and SAT performance is understandable, since the SAT is a valid and reliable measure of a student’s college readiness, and students who complete a core curriculum and participate in more rigorous course work are often better prepared for college. When students are better prepared for college, they are more likely to do well in college, more likely to stay in college and more likely to graduate from college — the keystone of our efforts to sustain American competitiveness and prosperity long into the future.

The College Board and the Common Core State Standards

The Common Core State Standards have been designed to provide a rigorous learning platform that prepares our nation’s students to perform in the classroom, to succeed in college and to prosper in their careers.

The College Board has been a consistent advocate and collaborator in the development of the Common Core State Standards, helping to draft the original College and Career Readiness Standards, providing feedback on the K–12 standards and serving on the advisory group that guided the initiative. The College Board is committed to helping states and districts understand how to implement these new common standards. The SAT is aligned to the Common Core State Standards as well or better than any assessment that has been developed for college admission

and/or placement. The College Board will continue to invest in and is committed to building deeper alignment to ensure the SAT reflects the key components of the CCSS.

High School Course Work and SAT Mean Scores

+144 points

on the SAT for students who completed a core curriculum versus those who did not.

+294 points

on the SAT for students who took AP[®] or honors mathematics versus those who did not.

+251 points

on the SAT for students who took AP or honors English versus those who did not.

+284 points

on the SAT for students who took AP or honors natural science versus those who did not.

SAT Access and Equity

754,922

minority students in the class of 2012 took the SAT, up from 600,830 in 2008.

457,971

SAT takers in the class of 2012 spoke a **first language that was not exclusively English**, up from 347,512 in 2008.

46%

of all first-generation college goers are underserved minority students.

62%

of Hispanic/Latino SAT takers are first-generation college goers.

48%

of African American SAT takers are first-generation college goers.

SAT Access and Equity

More than ever, the population of students taking the SAT reflects the diverse makeup of America’s classrooms. Among SAT takers in the class of 2012, **45 percent were minority students**, making this the most diverse class of SAT takers ever. Among public school SAT takers in the class of 2012, 46 percent were minority students.

Among the SAT class of 2012, **36 percent of all students reported their parents’ highest level of education as a high school diploma or less**. Underserved minority students accounted for 46 percent of first-generation college goers. Conversely, underserved minority students accounted for only 20 percent of SAT takers in the class of 2012 who reported their parents had a postsecondary degree.

“Taking a college entrance exam is a critical step on the road to higher education, but many traditionally underserved students face financial, familial and geographic barriers that can prevent them from testing,” said James Montoya, vice president of relationship development for the College Board. “Low-income students are less likely to have parents who went to college, less likely to participate in rigorous courses and less likely to have completed a core curriculum. Providing these students with the support and resources they need is crucial to meeting our nation’s long-term college completion goals.”

Low-Income SAT Takers

22%

of all SAT takers and **27%** of public school SAT takers **took the SAT for free** through the College Board's SAT Fee-Waiver Service.

70%

of SAT fee-waiver recipients **reported their parents' highest level of education as a high school diploma or less**, compared to 26 percent of non-fee-waiver SAT takers.

46%

of SAT fee-waiver recipients **reported that English was not exclusively their first language**, compared to 23 percent of non-fee-waiver SAT takers.

Since 1970, the College Board has provided **SAT fee waivers** to low-income students for whom exam fees would present an undue burden in the college-going process. With the assistance of high school counselors throughout the country, the College Board's SAT Fee-Waiver Service is making it possible for more low-income students than ever before to get on the road to college.

More students in the class of 2012 utilized SAT fee waivers than any class in the history of the program. Since 2008, participation in the College Board's SAT Fee-Waiver Program has increased 61 percent.

During the 2011-12 academic year, the College Board expended more than **\$44 million in fee waivers and related expenses**.

SAT Participation and Performance

More than 1.66 million students in the class of 2012 took the SAT, making it the largest class of SAT takers in history.

The number of students taking the SAT in each graduating class has increased 6 percent since 2008, while critical reading scores have declined four points, writing scores have

declined five points, and mathematics scores have remained stable during that time.

The 2012 College-Bound Seniors Total Group Profile Report and State Profile Reports are available on the College Board's Research & Development website at:

<http://research.collegeboard.org/programs/sat/data>.

The SAT

Created by educators to democratize access to higher education, the SAT[®] is a highly reliable and valid standardized measure of college readiness used in the admission process at nearly all four-year colleges and universities in the United States, including test-optional institutions. The content on the SAT reflects the reading, mathematics and writing curricula taught in high school classrooms. Uniquely, the SAT also measures how well students can apply their knowledge, a factor that is critical to college and career success. The SAT is a fair and valid predictor of college success for students of all backgrounds, and SAT performance data illustrate that success on the SAT is linked to the type and rigor of course work completed during high school. Studies regularly demonstrate that the best predictor of college success is the combination of SAT scores and high school grades. Nearly three million students take the SAT each academic year via nearly 7,000 test centers in more than 170 countries. For further information, visit www.collegeboard.org/SATPress.

SAT Performance

Mean SAT Scores — All Schools

	CR	M	W
2008	500	514	493
2011	497	514	489
2012	496	514	488

Mean SAT Scores — Public Schools

	CR	M	W
2008	496	508	487
2011	493	506	482
2012	491	505	481

4%

of SAT takers in the class of 2012 achieved an SAT score between 2100–2400.

360

SAT takers in the class of 2012 (0.022%) achieved the highest possible score (2400).

The College Board

The College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the

membership association is made up of more than 6,000 of the world's leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, the College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success — including the SAT[®] and the Advanced Placement Program[®]. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators and schools. For further information, visit www.collegeboard.org.

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Data Notes:

- Unless otherwise noted, data reflect high school graduates in the class of 2012 who took the SAT at least once during high school. Students are counted only once, no matter how often they tested, and only their latest scores and most recent SAT Questionnaire responses are summarized.
- Data reflect SAT takers from all school types unless specifically marked as public school data.
- “First-generation” indicates that neither parent earned an associate degree or higher.
- “Parental education” indicates the highest level of either parent’s education.
- “Underserved minority” refers to SAT takers who reported their race/ethnicity as American Indian or Alaska Native; Black or African American; Mexican or Mexican American; Puerto Rican; or Other Hispanic, Latino or Latin American.
- “Core course work” indicates that a student has taken four or more years of English, three or more years of mathematics, three or more years of natural sciences and three or more years of social sciences and history based on self-reported answers on the SAT Questionnaire.
- The “mean” is defined as the arithmetic average.
- “Percent” is a way of expressing a proportion, a ratio or a fraction as a whole number by using 100 as the denominator.