

CAREER

DEVELOPMENT

MONTH

**Webinar
Series**



AMERICAN
SCHOOL
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Students Are More Than A Number

Test free and Test Optional Admissions

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The Cast

School Counseling | Standardized Testing
College Admissions



Choose Your Path



Akil Bello

Adult Film Star | Standardized Testing Expert
Former CEO | PS 232 and Hillman College Alum
Unmentionable HS GPA | 980 SAT
Caught cheating 2x on the SAT



What does SAT (and ACT) measure?



David Coleman

President, College Board

“ The primary purpose of the SAT Suite of Assessments is to determine **the degree to which students are prepared to succeed, both in college and in workforce training programs.** ”

SAT Technical Manual 2020

What Is College Readiness?



COLLEGE CAREER READINESS	
Evidence-Based Reading and Writing	
SAT	480

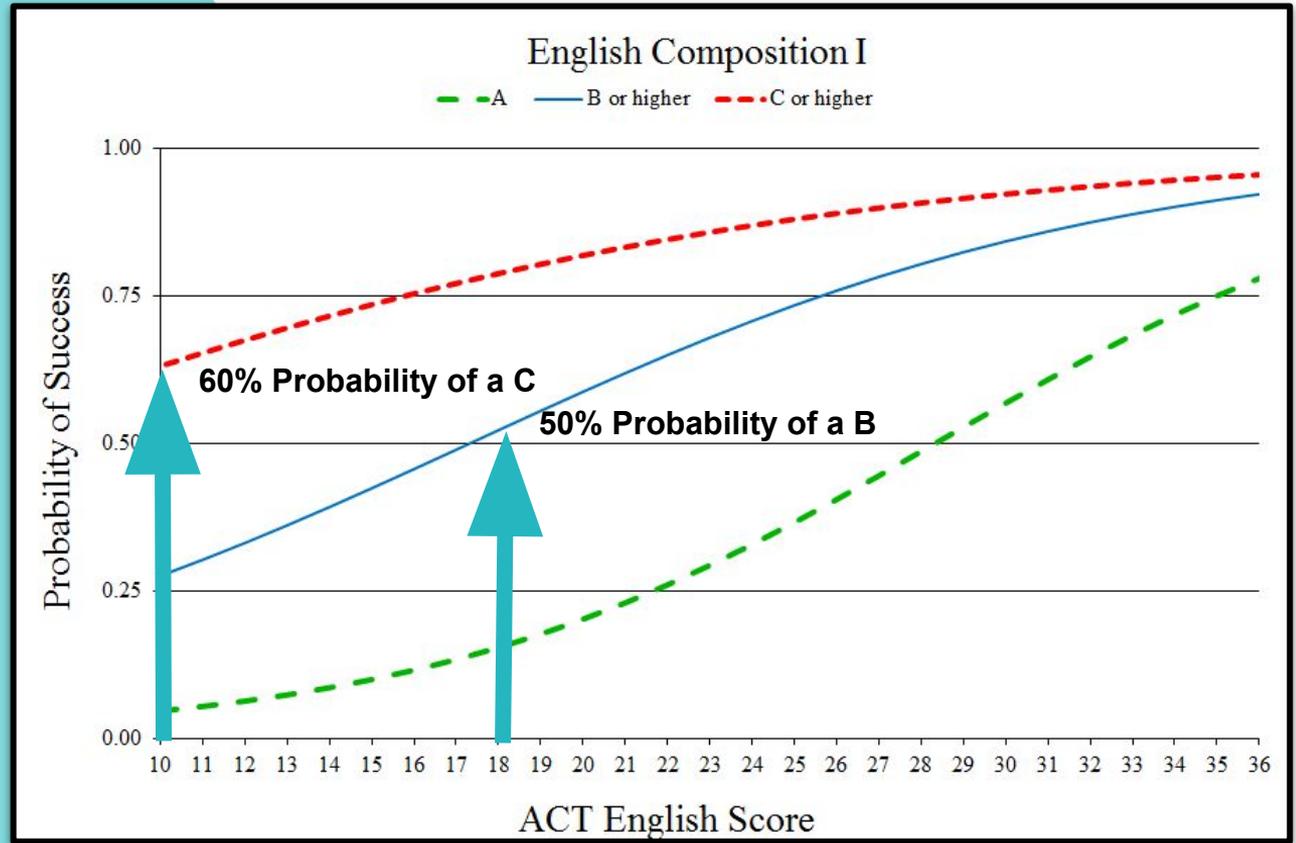
ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks

Test	College Course	EXPLORE		PLAN	The ACT
		8th Grade	9th Grade		
English	English Composition	13	14	15	18
Math	Algebra	17	18	19	22
Reading	Social Sciences	15	16	17	21
Science	Biology	20	20	21	24

- ▶ Empirically-Derived
- ▶ 50% chance of achieving a B or higher or about a 75% chance of achieving a C or higher in the corresponding credit-bearing college course



What Is College Readiness?



What do the test measure?

Passage II

The number of bacteria affected by the medium in the studies examined how different bacteria, either *Escherichia coli* that adhere to a stainless steel

Study 1

In each of 4 trials, Steel

1. Five 0.36 cm² stainless steel chips were placed in a flask.
2. A 125 mL quantity of 10% soy broth (in water) was added to the flask.
3. A 15 mL sample of an *E. coli* culture having a cell density of 100,000 cells/mL was added to the flask.
4. The flask was incubated at 23°C for 1 hr, 24 hr, 48 hr, and 72 hr.
5. The chips were removed from the flask and washed with Ringer's solution (an aqueous salt solution).
6. The chips were placed in a solution of euchrysin (a dye that stains DNA).

7. The chips were washed with pure water.

14. In the studies, the macromolecule that was stained in the cells was composed of what type of subunit?

- F. Amino acid
- G. Fatty acid
- H. Monosaccharide
- J. Nucleotide

15. In Study 1, why were the soil samples oven dried before being analyzed?

- A. To increase the soil mass
- B. To increase the water content
- C. To remove most or all SRP
- D. To remove most or all water

Study 2

Study 1 was repeated with *S. typhimurium* instead of *E. coli* (see Table 2).

Psycho(metric) Babble

Validity and other properties of the SAT and ACT

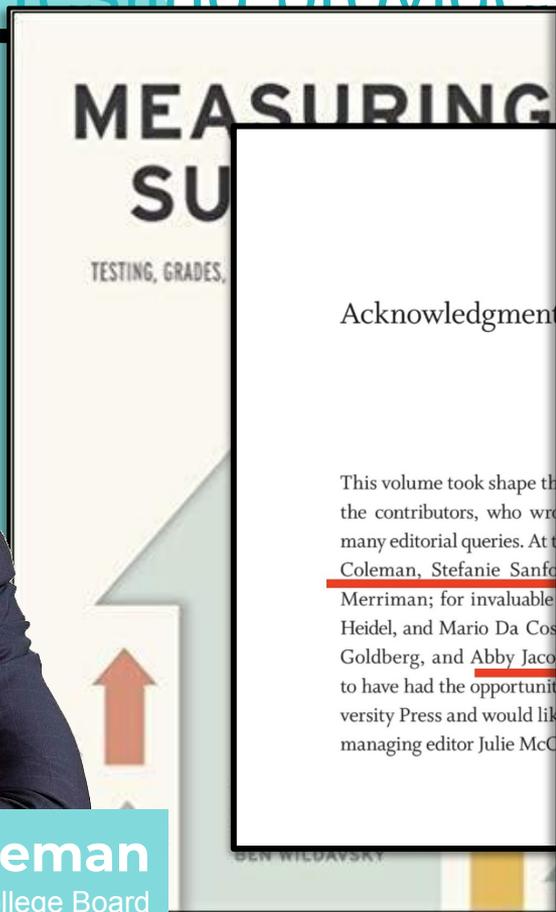


	ACT	SAT
Standard Error of Difference (68% confidence interval)	2	60
Standard Error of Measurement	1.25	40
Standard Deviation	5.8	204
Correlation to FGPA (test alone)	.45	.51
Correlation to FGPA (HGPA alone)	.53	.53
Correlation to FGPA (HGPA + test)	.56 (+0.03)	.61 (+0.08)

Testing provides “objective measure”



David Coleman
President, College Board



Acknowledgments

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Grade inflations vs Score inflation

The Growth of Perfect ACT Scores, 1990-2020

■ Count of Test Takers ■ Increase in Test Takers ■ Count of Perfect ACT Composite Scores ■ Increase in Perfect Scores

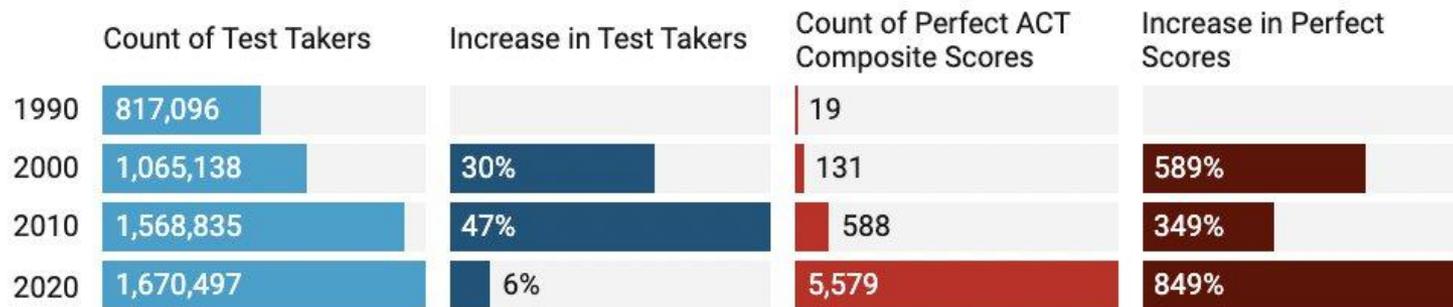
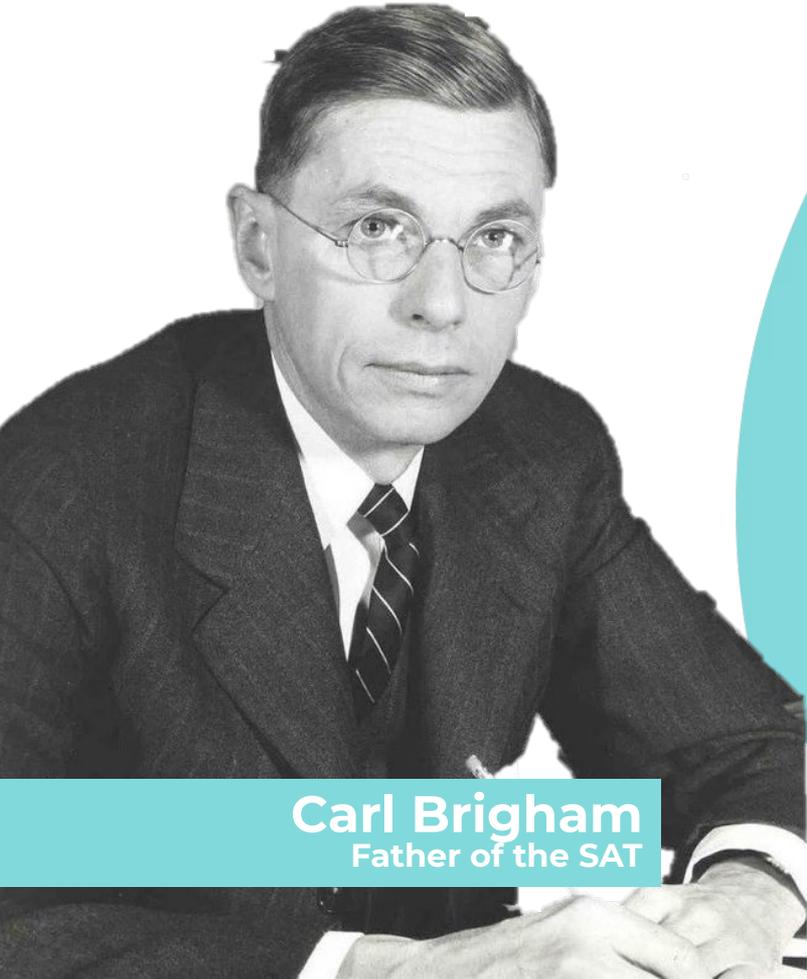


Chart: James S Murphy • Source: ACT National Profile Reports • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

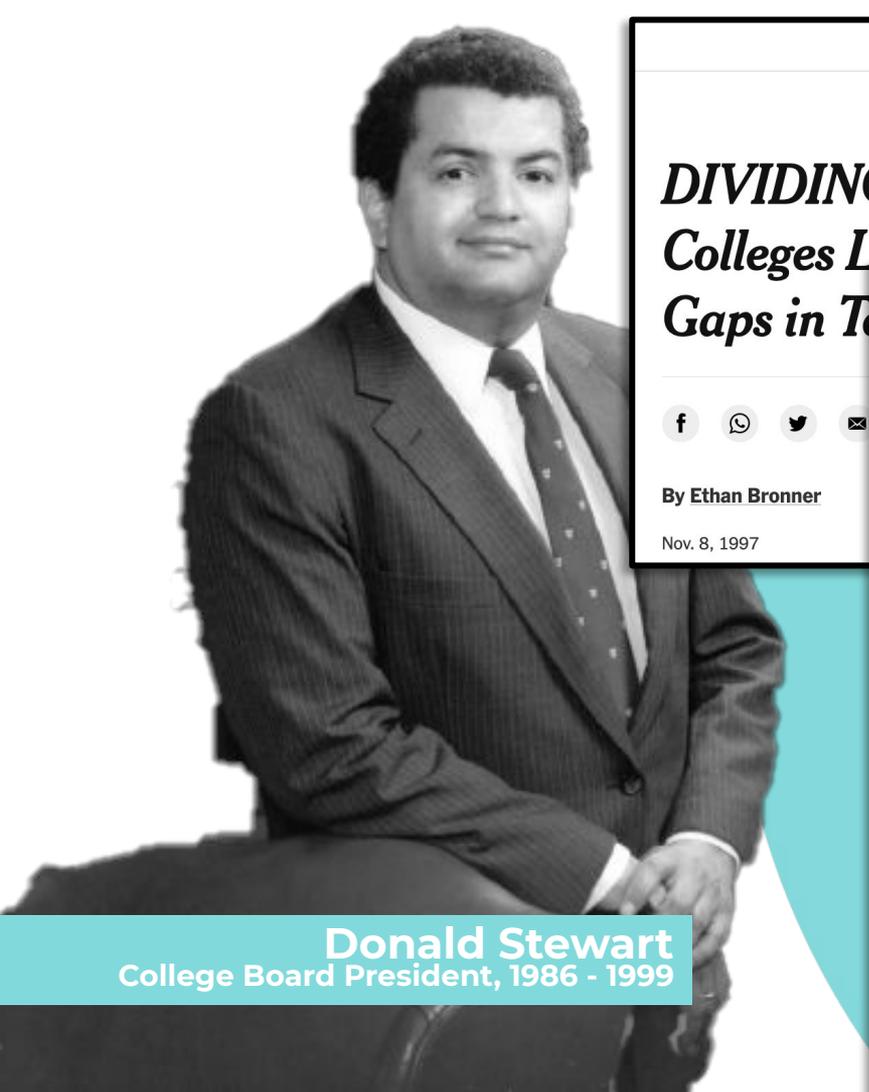
Janet Godwin
President, ACT



Carl Brigham
Father of the SAT

“ The test movement came into this country some twenty-five or thirty years ago accompanied by **one of the most glorious fallacies in the history of science, namely, that the tests measured native intelligence** purely and simply without regard to training or schooling. **I hope nobody believes that now.** ”

- A Study of American Intelligence, 1934



Donald Stewart
College Board President, 1986 - 1999

The New York Times

DIVIDING LINES: A special report.; Colleges Look for Answers To Racial Gaps in Test Scores

f [social icons] [email icon]

By Ethan Bronner

Nov. 8, 1997

The New York Times

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 1997

S.A.T. scores.

¶S.A.T. scores and their professional-school equivalents are weak predictors of academic and career success.

¶Still, admission officials say that much as they would love to rely more on nuanced measures like essays and interviews, the pressures to use test scores are growing from the sheer volume of applicants, limited budgets for evaluating them and the rise of college ranking guides that emphasize test scores.

¶Many officials agree with Donald M. Stewart, president of the College Board, who says that the risk of increased reliance on standardized tests is "simply, the resegregation of higher education."

¶"We're looking at a potential wipeout that could take away an entire generation," Mr. Stewart said. "The social cost of that

¶The Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund has filed a lawsuit against the State of Texas, saying that its high school graduation examination, on which black and Mexican-American students fail at a much higher rate than non-Hispanic whites, is discriminatory.

¶The University of California has set up a commission to consider whether to drop or reduce the importance of S.A.T.'s and is increasing its budget to reach out to members of minorities.

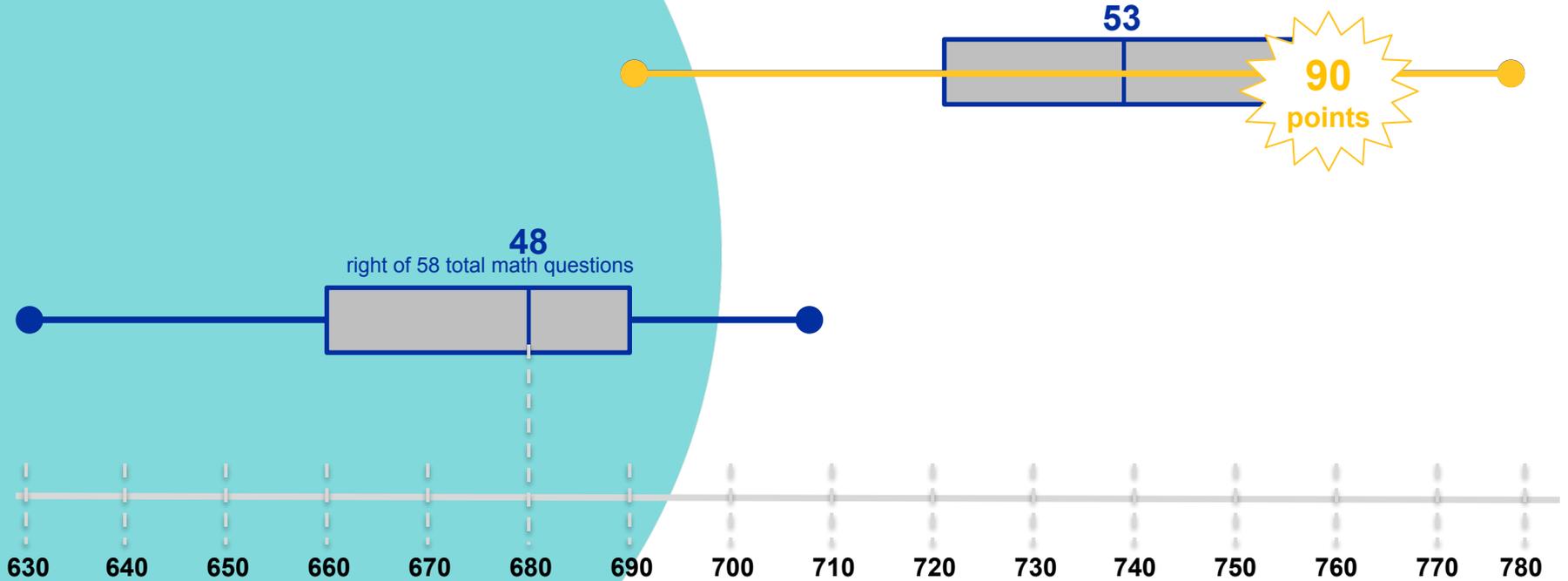
¶The American Bar Association and the Law School Admission Council have begun a study intended to find ways to reduce reliance on the Law School Admission Test (L.S.A.T.) across the country.

¶The Educational Testing

Continued on Page A12

Unstandardized Test

Based on an analysis of math raw to scaled conversions charts from 2016 to 2020.





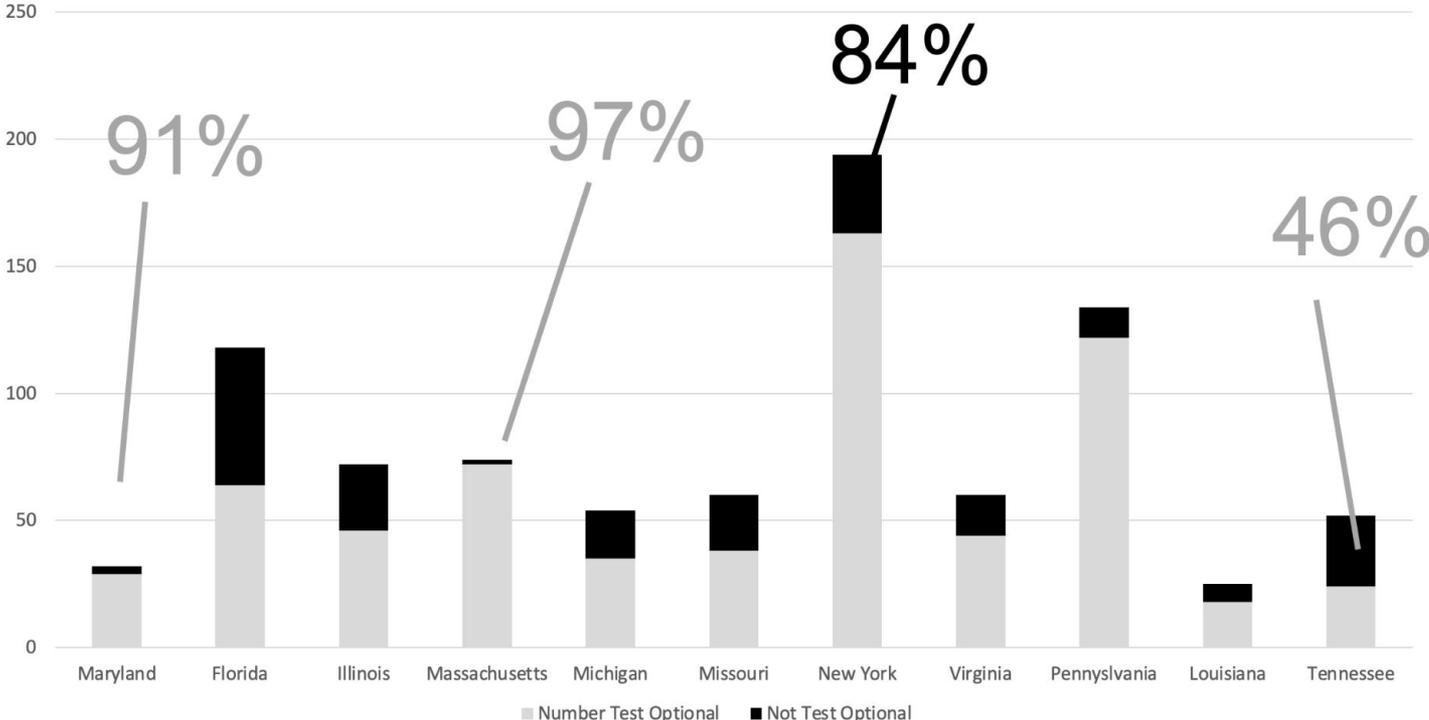
Wayne Camara

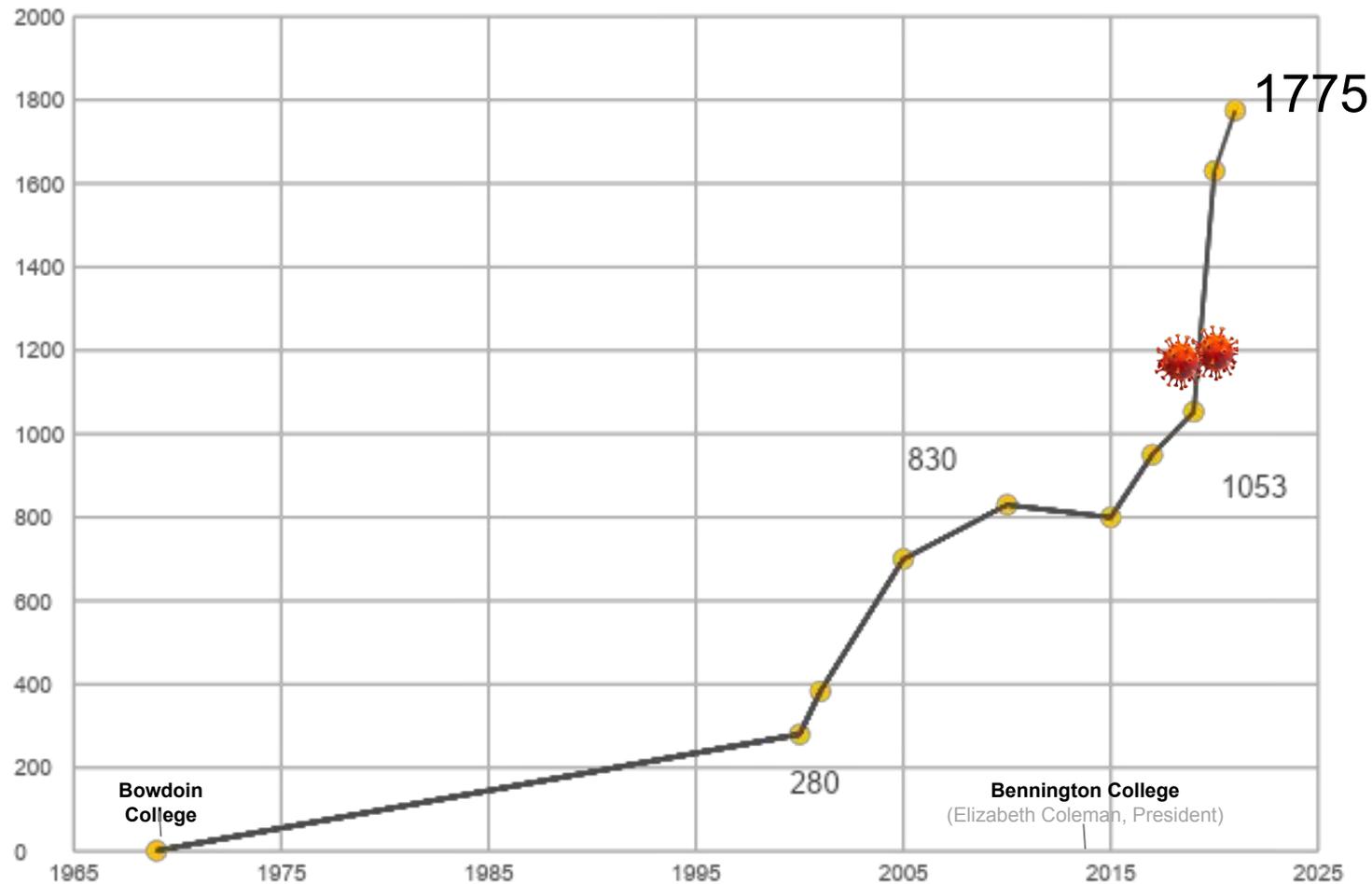
Psychometrician, VP. Of Research
ACT (formerly College Board)

“ When we talk about the number of students who are likely to be college successful, you’ve gotta take those numbers with a grain of salt. **Policy-makers or folks who hope to sell tests or get the ear of policy-makers will make unfortunate statements, will not listen to the folks in research** who try to educate them and try to contextualize the scores. ”

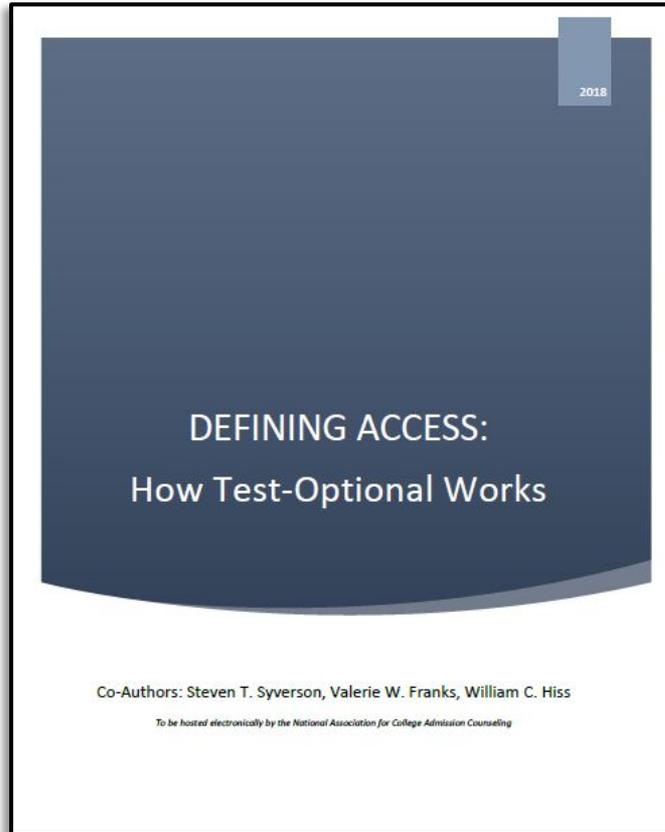
- The Test and the Art of Thinking, 2015

Test Optional Trends





Research



“ The findings are dramatic. ...the coefficients for SAT/ACT scores are always less than 0.02, which means that an **increase in test scores of one standard deviation is associated with an increase of less than 2 percentage points in six-year graduation rates**; this relationship is even negative at the historically black colleges and universities (HBCU's).... ”

Research

“ I find that test-optional policies were usually associated with a 3% to 4% increase in Pell Grant recipients, a 10% to 12% increase in first-time students from underrepresented racial/ethnic backgrounds, and a 6% to 8% increase in first-time enrollment of women. ”

Check for updates

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Untested Admissions: Examining Changes in Application Behaviors and Student Demographics Under Test-Optional Policies

Christopher T. Bennett 
Vanderbilt University

This study examines a diverse set of nearly 100 private institutions that adopted test-optional undergraduate admissions policies between 2005–2006 and 2015–2016. Using comparative interrupted time series analysis and difference-in-differences with matching, I find that test-optional policies were associated with a 3% to 4% increase in Pell Grant recipients, a 10% to 12% increase in first-time students from underrepresented racial/ethnic backgrounds, and a 6% to 8% increase in first-time enrollment of women. Overall, I do not detect clear evidence of changes in application volume or yield rate. Subgroup analyses suggest that these patterns were generally similar for both the more selective and the less selective institutions examined. These findings provide evidence regarding the potential—and the limitations—of using test-optional policies to improve equity in admissions.

KEYWORDS: higher education, test-optional, college admissions, standardized tests

Introduction

Throughout the 20th century, selective 4-year colleges and universities in the United States widely adopted standardized tests as admissions requirements (Syverson, 2007). Despite early aspirations that such tests could serve as a “census of human abilities” capable of reliably identifying talented individuals from a variety of backgrounds (Carmichael & Mead, 1951, p. 196), there remain strong correlations between college admissions test scores and race, gender, and socioeconomic status (e.g., Bowen et al., 2009). Alon and Tienda (2007)

CHRISTOPHER T. BENNETT is a PhD candidate in the Department of Leadership, Policy, and Organizations at Vanderbilt University, 230 Appleton Place, PMB #414, Nashville, TN 37203, USA; e-mail: chris.bennett@vanderbilt.edu. His research focuses on topics related to college access, graduate/professional education, and labor market outcomes for students.

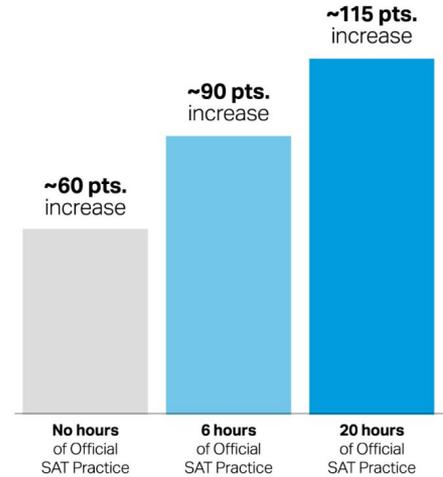
How do colleges evaluate without tests? **Holistically**



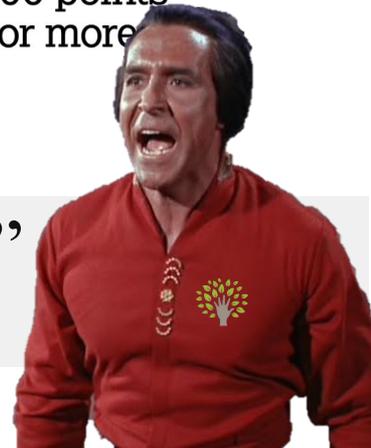
Rhodes College
—1848—

“We have read “test-blind” for students scoring a 28 or better on the ACT . . . for the last three years. **Our data indicates that once students have crossed those thresholds, they are routinely capable of successful academic performance . . . and variance is caused by other personal and social factors rather than measured ability as demonstrated on standardized testing.**”

SAT Suite Program Results: 2017



16,000
students saw
gains of
200 points
or more



“ *Test prep is evil and doesn't work* ”

1960s - 1990s College Board loosely translated

“ *20 hours with Official SAT Practice* ”
improved scores by 115 points

Also College Board

More Information, More
Why test-optional policies do NOT



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Students and Parents College Planning for Parents College Planning Resources ▾ ACT Webinars Recursos para estudiantes y padres

Test Optional or Limiting Your Options?

Many colleges and universities went "test optional" in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. As you prepare to apply to college, it's important to understand how test optional impacts your admission.

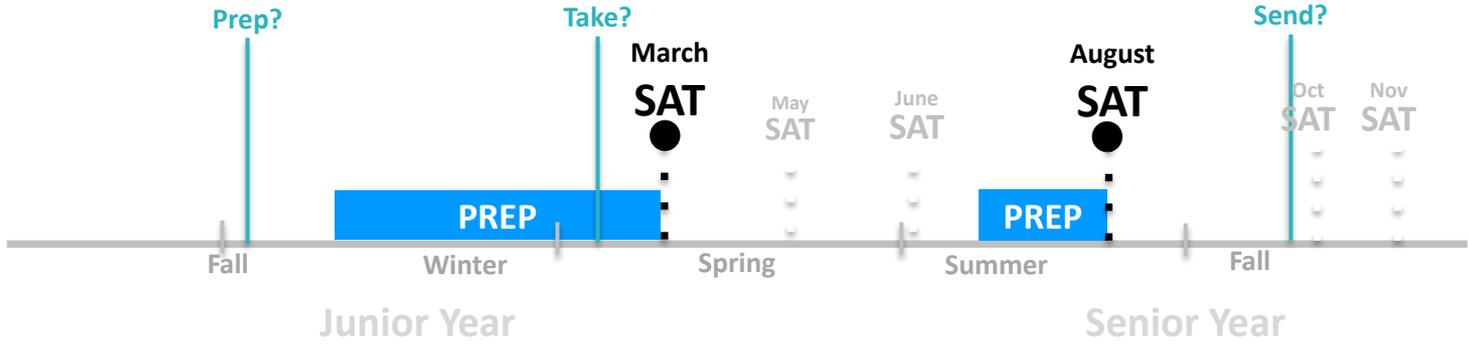
We're here to help!

Top Five Questions You Should Ask Colleges with Test Optional Policies

1. How much weight is given to specific components of my application [i.e. GPA, test scores (if submitted), course load and rigor of courses taken, letters of recommendation, personal statements/essays, high school profile, portfolios, extracurricular activities, work experience, resume, etc.]?
2. How are scholarships awarded? Is the process different for students who submit test scores and those who do not submit test scores?
3. Without test scores, how do I place into appropriate levels of math, English, world languages, etc.?
4. What is your acceptance rate of students who submit test scores compared to non-submitters?
5. Is demonstrated interest considered in the admission process? How can I best demonstrate my interest in your school?



Janet Godwin
President, ACT



Tara Miller

Swatch enthusiast - 37 years
21 Years working with high school students
Public High School College Counselor - 16 years
Community College Advisor - 4 years
College Admission Counselor - 1 year
Wasn't "college ready" in math



Covid-19 Is Accelerating Changes in Standardized Testing. Expect to See

More “Good riddance,” Tara Miller, a college and career counselor at Stephen F. Austin High School, in Austin, Tex., said of the discontinued tests, which she described as a means of maintaining a culture of exclusivity among colleges that used them. Extra tests are never about access and opportunity, but rather hurdles to the many students who were already starting the race from behind,” she wrote in a message to The Chronicle. “Students and parents who didn’t have the luxury of personalized counseling and insider knowledge would often miss deadlines to register for these exams, they often lacked access to testing and study guides, and, quite frankly, would find the doors closed to certain colleges before they could even knock.”

Test Free in Texas: Inside One College’s Decision to Cut Out the SAT & ACT Test

“Calling something optional doesn’t actually make it so”, Miller told him. “This process is so driven by colleges, and students have been taught to fall in line,” she says. “You give students a choice, and they feel like they still have to jump through the hoop. If you remove the hoop, it’s not ambiguous anymore.”

The College Board Is Sharing Student Data Once Again

“It’s troubling to think that students’ information is being monetized, says Tara Miller, a college counselor at Stephen F. Austin High School in Austin, Texas. “These aren’t adults, these are impressionable young people,” she explains. In many cases, a student’s first interaction with the College Board is in ninth grade, at 13 or 14 years old, she adds.”

Covid-19 Is Making SAT, ACT Harder to Take

“Many high schools that serve as test sites are wary. Austin High School, which was one of the largest ACT test sites in Austin, Texas, earlier this year, decided to cancel its tests in June. Austin High school counselor Tara Miller said that the school “shouldn’t have that burden of equity, health and safety put upon our shoulders,” especially as colleges and universities are relying less on the tests.”

High Schools Turn the Wheels of the Standardized-Testing Process. Covid-19 Is Complicating That.

“Tara Miller gets a lot of paper cuts. It’s a hazard of handling hundreds of answer sheets and packing them into boxes, which she has done many times over the past 15 years. Miller, a college counselor at Stephen F. Austin High School, in Austin, Tex., helps keep the wheels of the standardized-testing process turning. Month after month, exam after exam, legions of school counselors, teachers, and staff members do the grunt work that allows high-school students to bubble in answers on the ACT and SAT.”

High School Reality

- Standardized tests are usually part of the school curriculum
- Counselor time is spread thin already
- Tests often required for dual credit
- School, district, and state accountability
- “College Readiness”
- School’s Profile / Ranking / “Prestige”



Time and Money

- Everyone can't pay the personalized test prep premiums
- The stress can affect students emotionally and physically
- Think of testing and test prep as an extracurricular activity
- Unhealthy attitude about test scores and self worth can be dangerous
- What are students giving up by for testing & test prep?



What about the Parents?

- Parents have questions...
- What is test optional/test free?
- Should they be sending scores/not sending scores?
- How will this impact scholarship awards?
 - ★ Students do not need to send scores to colleges before they see them, or before they know where they are going to apply.
 - ★ Expect colleges to start mailing out recruitment brochures after that first PSAT test.
- The college website *should* have the most current and up to date policy.
- When in doubt, call the admission office!



Unmask Testing

- To submit or not submit test scores...
- Students will often test during their junior year of high school, and some will also retest senior year.
- A smaller college list will empower them to research, ask questions, & manage requirements to apply.
- Some college websites can be ambiguous or even out of date with what is required to apply. Let the colleges know!
- Advising students on whether to submit or not can seem opaque, but it does not have to be.
- Tests (in some form) are here to stay, so it is the messaging around them that we should change.



School Counselors ...

- ❑ Colleges want to hear from you!
- ❑ Reach out to college admission directors.
- ❑ Join a virtual advisory board, you can ask if they have one.
- ❑ Ask about Counselor College Fly-Ins!
- ❑ TALK TO EDUCATION JOURNALISTS
 - ❑ <https://www.chronicle.com/page/talk-to-us>
- ❑ 15 QUESTIONS TO ASK COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICERS
 - ❑ <https://www.jennhetutor.com/blog/testoptionalquestions>
- ❑ *College Guidance Network - Data & The College Search*
 - ❑ ["Ranksgiving"](#)

Counselors, Thank YOU!



Tony Sarda

Comic Book Nerd - 1988-Present

12+ years in College Admission

Full-Time Rabble Rouser

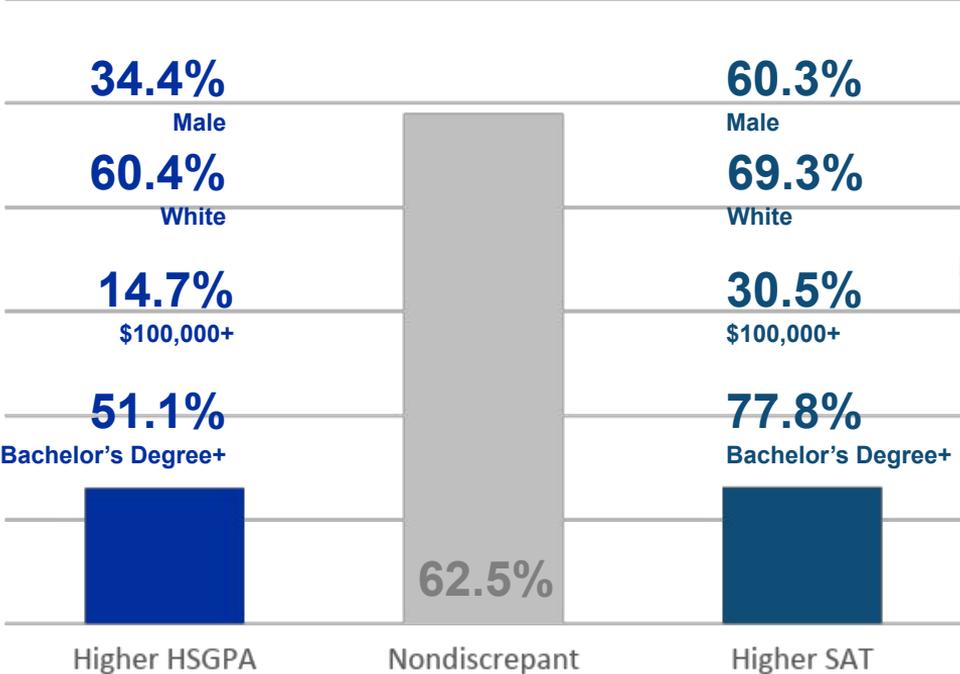
Part-Time Graduate Student (M.A. - University of
Louisville)

Graduated High School with a 2.4 GPA

Started college at the age of 21



Diamonds in the rough



Source: "A Case for Not Going SAT-Optional: Students with Discrepant SAT and HSGPA Performance" College Board, 2010 Mattern

Diamonds in the rough

- Who is the “diamond” that we are helping?
- Who has been systematically advantaged by testing?
- Who has been systematically marginalized by testing?
- Is there an assumption that only “diamond” students are going to get high test scores?
- Is there a counter-assumption that those that don’t get high test scores are incapable, or unworthy?

When ACT Scores and GPAs Don't Match

Based on analysis of a comparison of standardized ACT scores and high school GPAs of 1.6 million students in 2015

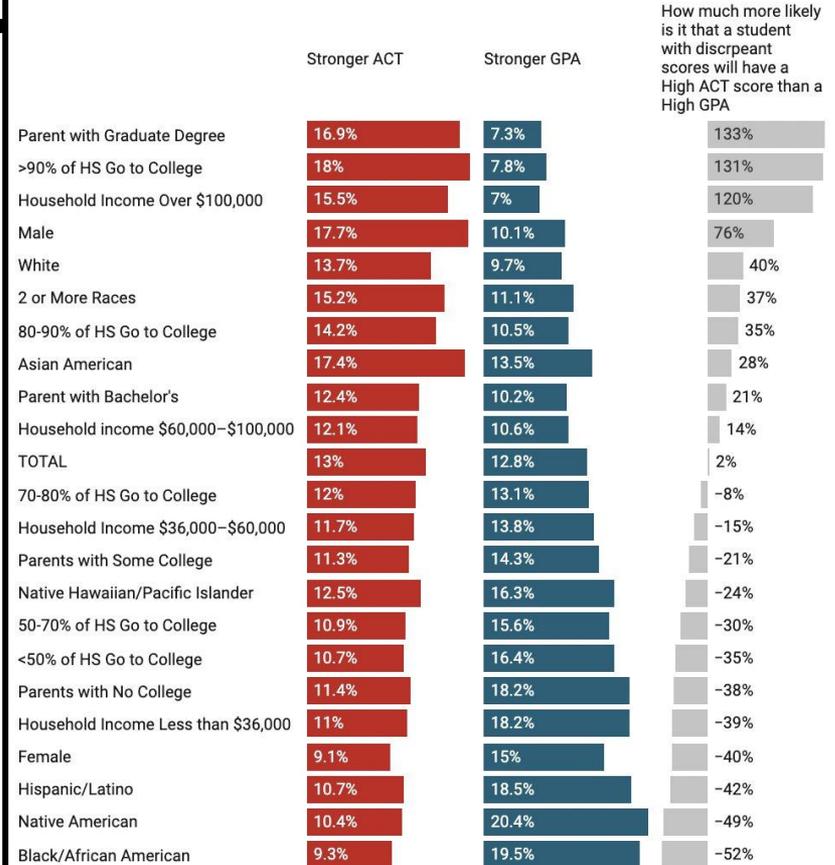


Chart: James S. Murphy • Source: ACT, 2016 • Created with Datawrapper

Evaluation of Applications

- What items are required to apply?
- What are the reasons we admit students?
- Will you ask for optional items?
- How about an essay or rec letter?
- What items can students can submit?
- What about scholarships?
- If I submit test scores, will you see them?

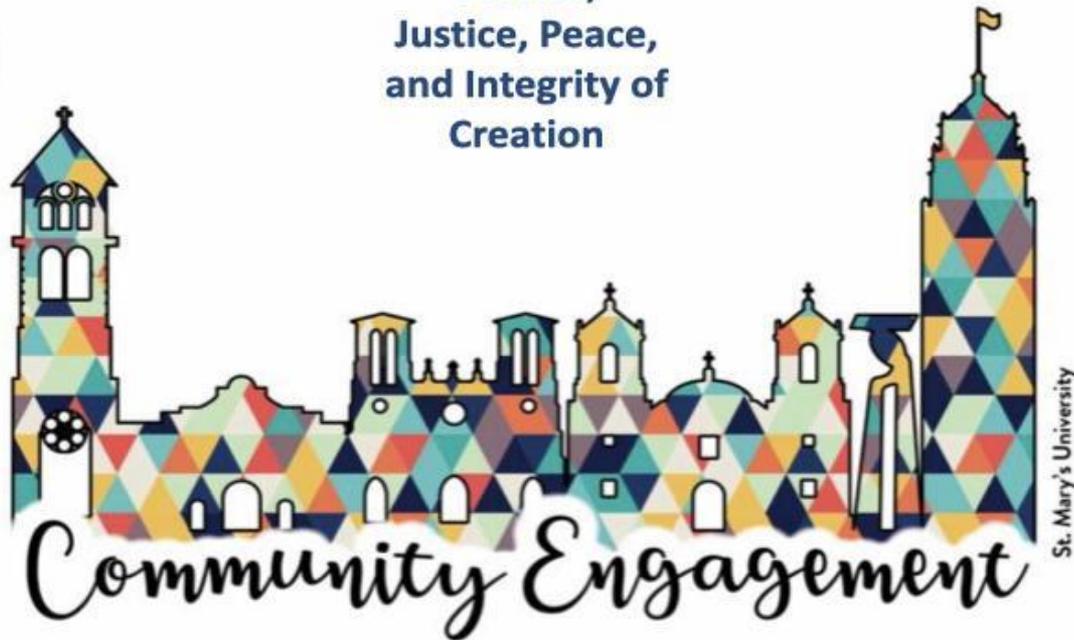


Adaptation
and
Change

Service,
Justice, Peace,
and Integrity of
Creation

Family
Spirit

Integral
Quality
Education



St. Mary's University

Formation
in
Faith

Critical thinking or conformity

41 is more than 36

85
n a d t g

is le

62
n a d t g

Write the following words in alphabetical order (the order they come in the dictionary)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNO

~~apple~~ pumpkin log river

- apple
- ikmnpqr
- log
- river
- fox
- drop

Practice Test II

Silks are to jockeys as
(A) bows are to hunters
(B) ponchos are to walkers
(C) bats are to vampires
(D) slickers are to children
(E) trunks are to boxers

St. Mary's is now Test Free!

Data

- 75% of the students who were admitted and came to St. Mary's were admitted without test scores
- The GPA of our incoming class actually went up.
- If we could do this without the test for 75% of the class, we could do it for the whole class
- The thing that we consider the most is your academic record (high school transcripts)
- For liberal arts students, we saw statistically no difference in retention rates for students with 250+ point differences in their SAT scores
- For students in STEM and Business, standardized tests were adding no predictive value in retention that was not already showing up in the predictive nature of high school accomplishment and GPAs



Demonstration of "preparedness" and what it means to be "college ready"





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