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2013
SAT® Report on
COLLEGE & CAREER
READINESS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The College Board's *2013 SAT® Report on College & Career Readiness* reveals that fewer than half of all SAT takers in the class of 2013 graduated from high school academically prepared for the rigors of college-level course work. This number has remained virtually unchanged during the last five years, **underscoring a need to dramatically increase the number of students in K–12 who acquire the skills and knowledge that research demonstrates are critical to college readiness.**

With our country struggling to compete in the global marketplace — and with millions of skilled jobs left unfilled — there is a heightened focus on understanding how our students are performing academically and in ensuring that they are college and career ready. **While some might see stagnant scores as no news, the College Board considers them a call to action. These scores can and must change — and the College Board feels a sense of responsibility to help make that happen.** We've deepened our commitment to changing these outcomes because our research shows that students who meet the SAT College and Career Readiness Benchmark are more likely to be successful in their postsecondary endeavors.

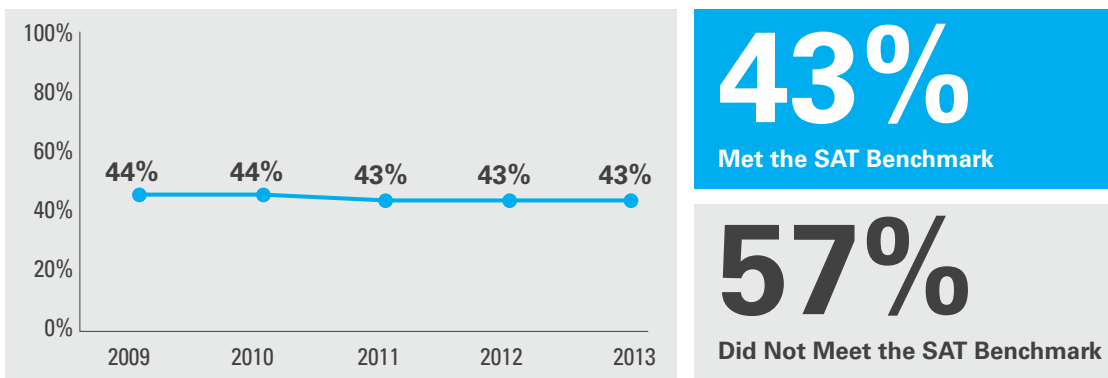
Over the past year, the College Board's members have called for a renewed focus on our social mission by declaring that the students in our programs are within our care. We are working closely with our members in the K–12 and higher education communities to fulfill this charge and break down the barriers that prevent students from realizing opportunities.

The College Board's objective is to use **evidence-based practices to deliver measurable results for students across the country.** Our efforts range from expanding access to the rigors of Advanced Placement Program® (AP®) courses to all students with potential to succeed in them, to keeping the SAT accessible and affordable and providing students with early information about colleges that best fit their academic needs.

This year's report underscores the need to act early in order to propel students forward. While we see some pockets of hopeful progress in the results in terms of diversity, overall student outcomes have not changed. This year's report offers a blueprint for progress — showcasing the characteristics of higher-achieving students to help establish best practices and detailing efforts that are already under way to spark breakthroughs in student achievement.

FINDINGS FROM THE CLASS OF 2013

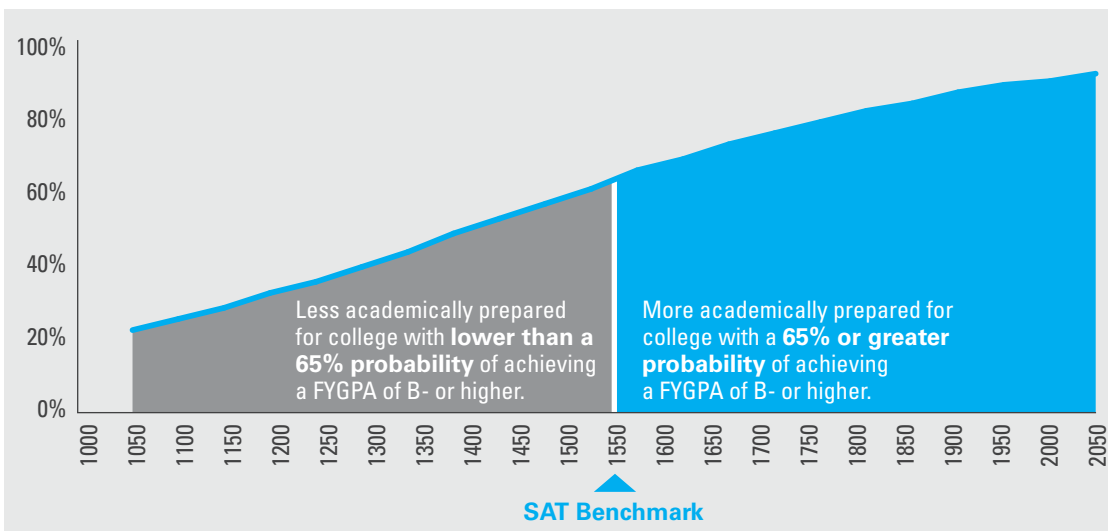
The SAT College and Career Readiness Benchmark



While it is widely acknowledged that increasing college completion is critical to sustaining our nation’s competitiveness and prosperity long into the future, gains will only be possible if more students graduate from high school having acquired the skills and knowledge that research demonstrates are critical to college and career readiness.

The College Board’s *2013 SAT Report on College & Career Readiness* reveals that only 43 percent of SAT takers in the class of 2013 met the SAT College and Career Readiness Benchmark. This percentage has remained virtually unchanged during the last five years, underscoring the need to dramatically increase the number of students who graduate from high school with the skills and knowledge that research demonstrates are critical to college and career readiness.

The data are clear — **college and career readiness matters. When students are prepared, they enter college, persist, and complete at much higher rates than those who are not prepared.** Studies show that students who meet the SAT College and Career Readiness Benchmark are more likely to enroll in a four-year college, more likely to earn a higher first-year GPA (FYGPA), more likely to persist beyond the first year of college, and more likely to complete their degree than their peers who did not meet the benchmark.



The SAT Benchmark and Higher Enrollment and Completion

Enrollment	Met the SAT Benchmark	Did Not Meet the SAT Benchmark
Four-Year Institution	78%	46%
Two-Year Institution	8%	29%
Did Not Enroll	14%	25%
First-Year GPA	Met the SAT Benchmark	Did Not Meet the SAT Benchmark
3.67+ (A- to A+)	20%	4%
3.33–3.66 (B+ to A-)	23%	11%
3.00–3.32 (B to B+)	21%	18%
2.67–2.99 (B- to B)	14%	18%
2.33–2.66 (C+ to B-)	10%	18%
Lower than 2.33 (C+ or lower)	11%	32%
College Retention	Met the SAT Benchmark	Did Not Meet the SAT Benchmark
To 2nd Year	91%	81%
To 3rd Year	85%	69%
To 4th Year	83%	67%
College Completion	Met the SAT Benchmark	Did Not Meet the SAT Benchmark
Within Four Years	54%	27%
Within Six Years	77%	53%

The College Board developed the SAT College and Career Readiness Benchmark to help secondary school administrators, educators, and policymakers evaluate the effectiveness of academic programs and better prepare students for college. The SAT Benchmark score of 1550 is associated with a 65 percent probability of obtaining a first-year GPA of B- or higher, which in turn is associated with a high likelihood of college success. Studies show that students who meet the SAT College and Career Readiness Benchmark are more likely to enroll in a four-year college, more likely to earn a higher first-year GPA, and more likely to persist beyond the first year of college and complete their degree.

- Among students who met the SAT College and Career Readiness Benchmark, 78 percent enrolled in a four-year college or university, compared to only 46 percent of those who did not meet the SAT Benchmark.
- The majority of students — 54 percent — who met the SAT College and Career Benchmark earned a bachelor’s degree within four years, compared to only 27 percent of those who did not meet the SAT Benchmark.

Of those who met the SAT Benchmark, **78%** enrolled in a four-year institution.

Of those who met the SAT Benchmark, **54%** completed college within four years.

Of those who did not meet the SAT Benchmark, **46%** enrolled in a four-year institution.

Of those who did not meet the SAT Benchmark, **27%** completed college within four years.

The SAT Benchmark and Academic Characteristics

Academic Characteristic	Met the SAT Benchmark	Did Not Meet the SAT Benchmark
Took High-Level Math (Calculus, Precalculus, or Trigonometry)	89%	60%
Took the PSAT/NMSQT®	85%	72%
Completed a Core Curriculum	84%	69%
Took AP®/Honors Courses	79%	42%
Ranked in Top 10 Percent of High School Graduating Class	55%	17%

Those students who met the SAT College and Career Readiness Benchmark had a number of critically important academic characteristics that must be shared by all students if our nation is to make meaningful gains in educational attainment. This year's report highlights characteristics of these students to help demonstrate successful patterns that can be replicated in schools and districts throughout the country.

- Students who met the SAT College and Career Readiness Benchmark were more likely to have completed a core curriculum, which is defined as four or more years of English, three or more years of mathematics, three or more years of natural science, and three or more years of social science and history. However, of the students who completed a core curriculum (75 percent), only 49 percent met the SAT Benchmark, indicating a need for more rigorous core courses.
- Students who met the SAT College and Career Readiness Benchmark were more likely to have taken honors or AP courses, more likely to have taken higher-level mathematics courses (e.g., precalculus, calculus, and trigonometry), and more likely to be in the top 10 percent of their high school graduating class than their peers who did not meet the SAT Benchmark.

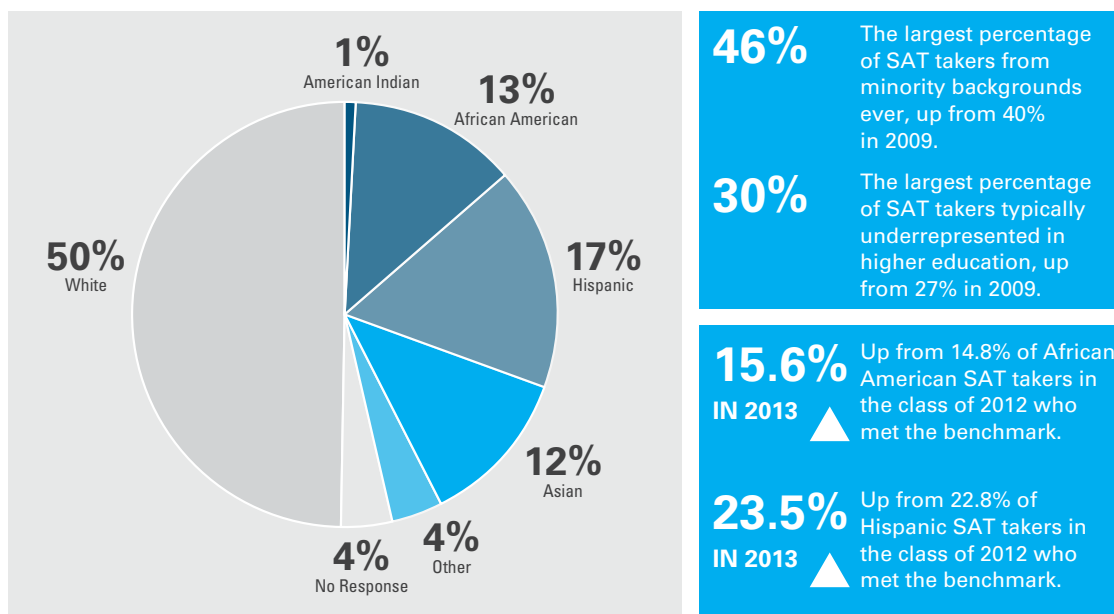
Of those who met the SAT Benchmark, **84%** completed a core curriculum.

Of those who did not meet the SAT Benchmark, **69%** completed a core curriculum.

Of those who met the SAT Benchmark, **79%** took AP/honors courses.

Of those who did not meet the SAT Benchmark, **42%** took AP/honors courses.

SAT Participation Among Underrepresented Minority Students



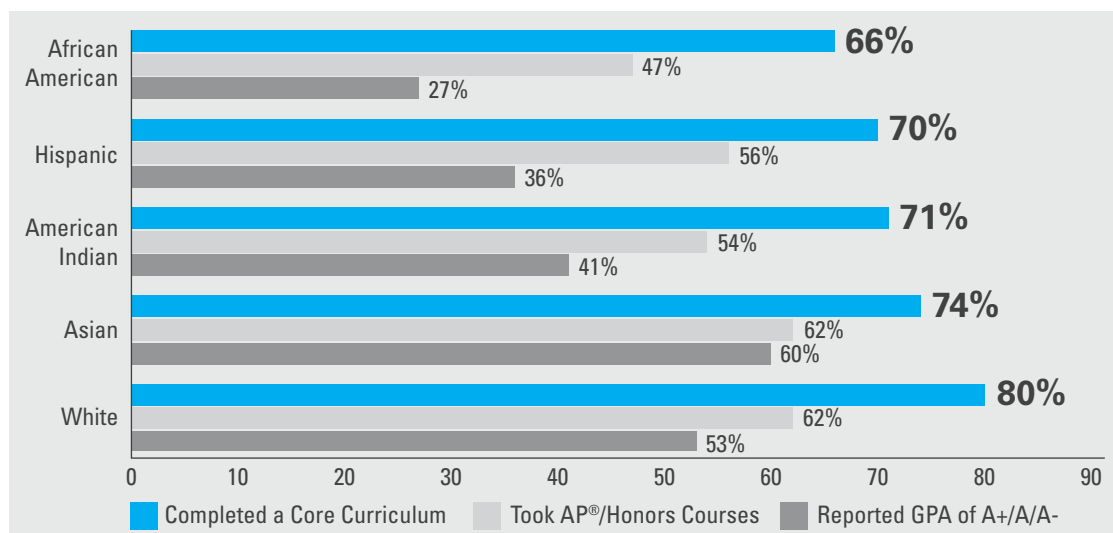
Nowhere is the need to expand access to rigorous course work more important than among underrepresented minority students. While significant challenges remain, there are some positive findings:

- Among SAT takers in the class of 2013, 46 percent (762,511 students) were minority students — the largest percentage ever and up from 40 percent (635,730 students) in the class of 2009.
- African American, American Indian, and Hispanic students, who are typically underrepresented in higher education, comprised 30 percent of all SAT takers in the class of 2013, up from 27 percent five years ago.

There was also an increase in the number and percentage of African American and Hispanic SAT takers who met or exceeded the SAT Benchmark in 2013.

- In 2012, 14.8 percent of African American SAT takers met or exceeded the SAT Benchmark. That rose to 15.6 percent in 2013.
- In 2012, 22.8 percent of Hispanic SAT takers met or exceeded the SAT Benchmark. That rose to 23.5 percent in 2013.

Academic Preparation of Underrepresented Students



While gains in SAT participation by underrepresented minority students are encouraging, there continue to be striking differences in academic preparation among these groups that directly impact college readiness. These students, who often lack access to rigorous course work such as AP in high school, are also less likely to complete a core curriculum and less likely to report a GPA equivalent to an A. To have any hope of achieving breakthrough increases in the number of our nation’s students who are prepared for college and careers, we must address the challenges these students face. The need for action to address this is clear — when students are prepared, they enter college, persist, and complete a degree at much higher rates than those students who are not prepared.

Early Indication of Readiness

The PSAT/NMSQT® is a standardized exam that provides an early indication of a student’s readiness for college-level work. The PSAT/NMSQT measures the same skills as the SAT, and students who take the PSAT/NMSQT generally perform better on the SAT than students who do not take it. The PSAT/NMSQT can also help educators and families identify students with the potential to succeed in rigorous, college-level AP course work.

The College Board’s goal is to expand access to rigorous course work — and to the assessments that help measure college and career readiness — because evidence shows that it will help our students succeed. For example, in Maine, where the state provides funding for all students to take the PSAT/NMSQT and the SAT, we are seeing increased access to college for 5 percent of students who are college and career ready but previously were not likely to have taken the SAT or considered going to a four-year college. Similarly, there have been modest increases in both two-year (3 percent) and four-year (4 percent) college enrollment after implementation of statewide SAT testing in Maine.

EXPANDING ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

The College Board is working to put students on the path toward college and career readiness through initiatives that begin with expanding access to rigorous course work in high school.

Access to rigorous course work: With the knowledge that students who met the SAT College and Career Readiness Benchmark were also more likely to have taken honors or AP courses, the College Board is working with its partners to expand access to AP for students across the country. **Last year alone, more than 300,000 students in the graduating class of 2012 who had been identified as having the potential to succeed in an AP course did not take one.** The College Board is also working to find ways to expand access to the PSAT/NMSQT, one of the strongest predictors of AP success. This will help to identify even more students with the potential to succeed in an AP course.

Expanding access through fee waivers and SAT School Day: Taking a college entrance exam is a critical step on the road to higher education. That is why the College Board has remained committed to making its key programs affordable. **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. More students than ever are using SAT fee waivers.** Among the class of 2013, 23 percent of SAT takers (387,748 students) used fee waivers, up from 17 percent five years ago. Among public school SAT takers in the class of 2013, 28 percent (365,463) used fee waivers.

First offered in the spring of 2010, SAT School Day helps states and districts foster a college-going culture and increases access to college. Enabling students to take the SAT for free during the school day ensures that promising students who might otherwise face barriers to standard Saturday testing — such as part-time jobs or family responsibilities — do not miss out on a chance at the college-going process. This year, the SAT will be administered during the school day to all public school juniors and/or seniors in Delaware, Idaho, and the District of Columbia, and to students in more than 60 districts in 12 additional states.

Giving low-income students a fair shot at college: **The College Board wants to ensure that students who have succeeded in high school recognize their potential for college. More than 50 percent of high-achieving low-income students attend less selective schools where students are less likely to graduate and earn a degree.** To date, the College Board has produced and sent nearly 7,000 packets of customized college information to high-achieving low-income students in the class of 2014. The goal of this work is to ensure that these students have the necessary information to help them more effectively find the colleges that best fit their academic performance. Over 20,000 additional students are set to receive packets in early October.

ABOUT THE SAT

Each academic year, millions of students take the SAT at test centers in more than 170 countries. Nearly all four-year colleges and universities in the U.S. use SAT scores because the SAT is a reliable measure of college readiness as well as a fair and valid indicator of likely college success for students from all backgrounds.

Admission officers use the SAT in conjunction with other measures such as high school GPA to predict how well a student will perform academically at a particular college or university. In college admission, predictive validity refers to the ability of an admission factor (SAT scores, high school GPA, etc.) to successfully predict a specific student outcome (first-year GPA, retention to second year, etc.).

The College Board conducts regular validity research to evaluate the efficacy of the SAT. Research shows that using the SAT together with high school grades is a better predictor of college success than SAT scores or high school grades alone. The College Board's national validity study, consisting of data from more than 200 four-year colleges and universities, has found not only that the SAT is a valid predictor of first-year college GPA but also that it predicts fourth-year cumulative GPA equally as well as high school GPA. As always, the combined use of the SAT and high school GPA is the best predictor of college GPA.

The SAT

The SAT is a college entrance exam used in the admission process at nearly all four-year colleges and universities in the United States. The content on the SAT reflects how well students can apply the reading, mathematics, and writing skills and knowledge they have learned in high school that are important for success in college. Validity research shows that the SAT is a fair predictor of college success (defined in terms of grade point average, persistence, and degree completion) for students of all backgrounds, and its effectiveness is intensified when used in conjunction with high school grades. SAT performance data illustrate that students who take rigorous courses in high school and do well in those courses are likely to perform well on the SAT. The SAT is administered nearly three million times a year at test centers in more than 170 countries.

For further information, visit www.collegeboard.org/SATPress.

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 over 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.