



News Release

45 Columbus Avenue, New York, NY 10023-6992 T 212-713-8052 F 212-713-8184 www.collegeboard.org

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More than 65 Percent of Students in Vermont Class of 2011 Took the SAT®; Academic Rigor Continues to Play Key Role in Student Success

September 14, 2011 — In Vermont, 5,014 college-bound seniors participated in the college-going process by taking the SAT. This represents 67 percent of the state's class of 2011 graduates. As always, student performance on the SAT underscored the importance of a rigorous high school education, as those who completed a core curriculum and/or pursued more advanced course work tended to achieve greater success on the SAT. Students who reported completing a core curriculum outperformed their peers on the SAT by an average of 129 points, combined

"I congratulate Vermont's 2011 senior class, their parents and educators for promoting a rigorous, college-going culture as reflected in both the percentage of students taking the SAT and their overall performance," said College Board President Gaston Caperton. "The SAT is a proven indicator of college readiness and a valuable tool in connecting students to college success and opportunity. Ensuring that students are ready to attend and complete college provides them with the competitive advantage they need to successfully compete in the marketplace, which is critical to the future of our nation."

2011 Vermont College-Bound Seniors Highlights

The Value of a Core Curriculum and Rigorous Course Work

- Completing a core curriculum and pursuing rigorous course work are two critical components of college readiness, and the students who do so tend to perform better on the SAT.
- Vermont students who completed a core curriculum — 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 — did better on the SAT than those who did not complete a core curriculum.

	SAT Takers — All Schools			SAT Takers — Public Schools		
	CR	M	W	CR	M	W
Core Curriculum	529	529	519	529	529	518
Noncore	484	491	473	486	489	473
Difference	+45	+38	+46	+43	+40	+45
Combined Difference	+129			+128		

- Vermont students who took English honors or AP® courses scored 67 points higher in critical reading and writing than the average for all Vermont SAT takers.
- Similarly, Vermont students taking math honors or AP courses had an 88-point advantage compared to the average SAT mathematics scores for the state.
- Vermont students who took natural sciences, social sciences and history honors or AP courses also scored significantly higher on each section of the SAT than the average for all Vermont SAT takers.

Vermont Class of 2011			
2011 Mean SAT Scores by AP or Honors Participation — All Schools			
	CR	M	W
English and Language Arts AP/Honors	582	568	572
Mathematics AP/Honors	580	606	574
Natural Sciences AP/Honors	576	585	567
Social Sciences and History AP/Honors	586	577	576
<i>Mean Scores for All Test-Takers</i>	515	518	505

The Value of the PSAT/NMSQT®

- In addition to a core curriculum and rigorous course work, the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®) is another important step on the path to college readiness. It provides valuable tools that can help students prepare for the SAT and education opportunities beyond high school.
- 81 percent of SAT takers in the Vermont class of 2011 reported taking the PSAT/NMSQT.
- The PSAT/NMSQT measures the same skills as the SAT, and students who take the PSAT/NMSQT generally perform better on the SAT than those who don't take the PSAT/NMSQT.

	Vermont Class of 2011					
	SAT Takers — All Schools			SAT Takers — Public Schools		
	CR	M	W	CR	M	W
PSAT/NMSQT Takers	529	532	521	530	531	521
Non-PSAT/NMSQT Takers	475	472	454	474	472	453
Difference	+54	+60	+67	+56	+59	+68
Combined Difference	+181			+183		

Participation and Performance

- **Vermont SAT participation remains strong**

- 5,014 students in the Vermont class of 2011 took the SAT, which represents 67 percent of the state’s high school graduates.
- The 4,143 public school SAT takers in the Vermont class of 2011 represent 65 percent of the state’s public high school graduates and 86 percent of the state’s SAT takers who reported their high school code.
- Students in Vermont take the SAT more than they take any other college admission test.

School Type	Number	PCT
Public	4,143	86
Religiously Affiliated	149	3
Independent	542	11
Other or Unknown	180	

- **Score performance remains relatively stable**

- Average scores for all Vermont SAT takers declined compared to 2010 with average scores for critical reading down 3 points, mathematics down 2 points and writing unchanged.
- When looking beyond year-to-year comparisons at longer-term trends, critical reading scores among all Vermont SAT takers were down 1 point, mathematics scores up 1 point and writing scores down 3 points since 2007. Public school mean scores remained stable, with critical reading up 1 point, mathematics unchanged and writing scores down 1 point since 2007.

	Vermont Class of 2011					
	SAT Takers — All Schools			SAT Takers — Public Schools*		
	CR	M	W	CR	M	W
2007	516	517	508	515	517	506
2010	518	520	505	522	522	508
2011	515	518	505	516	517	505

**Note about public school participation and mean scores: A number of factors can contribute to yearly fluctuations in public school participation levels and mean scores, including a state’s efforts to foster a college-going culture, the academic preparedness of students taking the SAT®, and changes in student behavior when completing the SAT Questionnaire. Public school participation levels are calculated based on optional, self-reported data students provide when completing the SAT Questionnaire during registration. Unanticipated increases or decreases in the number of students providing their high school’s unique code can influence year-over-year differences in public school participation and influence mean scores. A decline in the number of students providing their high school’s unique code among the classes of 2009 and 2010 resulted in a decline in reported public school participation for those years. The College Board carefully monitors changes in student data and has enhanced the registration process to encourage more students to report school affiliation. As a result, the percentage of students reported by school type in the class of 2011 has increased. As with any data, the College Board recommends looking at public school mean score trends over time rather than in one-year increments that tend to overemphasize any changes. Trends over a longer period of time, in this case 2007–2011, will give a more accurate picture of both student participation and mean scores.*

Expanding Access and Equity

The College Board has long been committed to expanding access and equity and to increasing minority participation. The SAT was created to democratize access to education for all students, and this is reflected in the increasing diversity among SAT takers.

- **Vermont SAT takers include many traditionally underserved student groups**

- Diversity of Vermont SAT takers in the class of 2011 is at the highest percentage of any class in state history (10 percent).
- 32 percent (1,511) of all Vermont SAT takers and 33 percent (1,304) of Vermont public school SAT takers report their parents’ highest level of education as a high school diploma or less.

- 10 percent (492) of all Vermont SAT takers and 8 percent (325) of Vermont public school SAT takers report that English is not exclusively their first language.
- **Eliminating barriers through fee waivers**
 - In keeping with its mission to connect students to college success and opportunity, the College Board provides SAT fee waivers to low-income students for whom exam fees would present an unnecessary barrier in the college-going process.
 - With the assistance of high school counselors throughout the country, the [SAT Fee-Waiver Service](#) is reaching more students than ever before. More than **350,000** students in the graduating class of 2011 benefited from SAT fee waivers. The College Board provided more than **\$37 million** in SAT services to fee-waiver recipients during the 2010-11 academic year.
 - 18 percent (886) of Vermont SAT takers in the class of 2011 utilized fee waivers.

College Plans of Vermont's SAT Takers

- Among the SAT takers in Vermont's class of 2011 who responded to optional questions about their college plans:
 - 39 percent of students indicated plans to attain a bachelor's degree
 - 36 percent indicated plans to attain a more advanced (master's or doctoral) degree
 - 81 percent indicated that they planned to apply for financial aid
- Students from the Vermont class of 2011 who took the SAT and/or SAT Subject Tests™ sent score reports to a total of 1,045 institutions.

Top 10 Institutions Receiving Scores from Vermont SAT Takers		
Institution	State	Type
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT	VT	Public
CASTLETON STATE COLLEGE	VT	Public
UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE DURHAM	NH	Public
SAINT MICHAELS COLLEGE	VT	Private
CHAMPLAIN COLLEGE	VT	Private
JOHNSON STATE COLLEGE	VT	Public
NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY	MA	Private
VERMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE	VT	Public
KEENE STATE COLLEGE	NH	Public
BOSTON UNIVERSITY	MA	Private

The SAT®

Created by educators to democratize access to higher education, the SAT® is a highly reliable standardized measure of college readiness used in the admission process at nearly all four-year, not-for-profit undergraduate colleges and universities in the United States. Aligned to high school curricula, the SAT tests the reading, mathematics and writing skills and knowledge students acquire during high school. The SAT also measures how well students can apply their knowledge, a factor that educators and researchers agree is critical to success in college. The SAT is consistently shown to be a fair and valid predictor of college success for all students. Studies regularly demonstrate that the best predictor of college success is the combination of SAT scores and high school grades. In addition to admission, colleges often use the SAT for course placement and scholarships. During the 2010-11 school year, the SAT was administered to more than two million students worldwide. For further information, visit www.collegeboard.org.

About 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 5,900 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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Contact:

College Board Communications at 212-713-8052 or communications@collegeboard.org.

College-Bound Seniors Data Notes

SAT Cohort Data:

The College-Bound Seniors cohort traditionally included students who tested through March of their senior year. However, the College Board has observed a trend in which more students are taking the SAT for the first time in May or June of their senior year. Beginning with the class of 2011, College-Bound Seniors cohort data reflect all students in a graduating class who took the SAT at least once through June of their senior year. For comparative purposes, College-Bound Seniors data for the 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 cohorts have been recalculated to include all students who tested through June of their senior year.

Type of High School:

Unless otherwise noted, data reflect all students in Vermont who took the SAT at least once during high school. Data specific to public school SAT takers are marked as such.

Comparing SAT Mean Scores:

Media and others often rank states, districts and schools on the basis of SAT scores despite repeated warnings that such rankings are inappropriate. The SAT is a strong indicator of trends in the college-bound population, but it should never be used alone for such comparisons because demographics and other nonschool factors can have a strong effect on scores. If ranked, schools and states that encourage students to apply to college may be penalized because scores tend to decline with a rise in percentage of test-takers.

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