

# **SAT**

# **Family & Student**

# **Resource Guide**

Prepared by Oakland Schools, Department of School Quality



**Oakland**Schools

## Introduction

This guide is intended as a resource to help students and families understand the SAT and High School testing in the State of Michigan. This guide attempts to answer the most common questions students and families have regarding testing in a quick, easy to access format. This guide has been prepared by Oakland Schools – Department of School Quality, using information obtained from the College Board as well as the Michigan Department of Education. This guide is not intended to be a complete list of rules, policies, and procedures regarding SAT. While specific questions regarding SAT should be directed to SAT or your local school district, we hope that this guide helps you to become more familiar with SAT and the newly adopted changes to assessment in the state of Michigan.

For more information on the SAT, visit [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)

For more information on testing in Michigan, visit [www.michigan.gov/mde](http://www.michigan.gov/mde)

## TABLE of Contents

<b>The Who, What, When, Where, Why &amp; How of Michigan Testing.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>What’s New with SAT.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>SAT Components &amp; Scoring.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>ACT vs. SAT Comparison.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Frequently Asked Questions.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Tips &amp; Strategies.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Online Help &amp; Resources.....</b>	<b>12</b>

## **WHO** is required to take the SAT?

Michigan schools are required by state and federal law to administer a college entrance test to 11<sup>th</sup> grade students and eligible 12<sup>th</sup> grade students, as one part of a three-part testing series called the Michigan Merit Exam (MME). Schools are required by state and federal law to test a minimum of 95% of students eligible to test. Michigan has selected the SAT as the college entrance test, starting in the Spring of 2016.

## **WHAT** is the SAT?

The SAT is a college entrance test, created by the College Board. The College Board was founded in 1900 to expand access to higher education. The first version of the SAT was administered in 1926. Over the years, the SAT has been improved and redesigned several times, including most recently in 2015. The newest version of the SAT measures student performance in **Evidence-Based Reading & Writing** and **Math**. The SAT is used by colleges and scholarship granting organizations to make decisions regarding admissions, program placement, and financial awards.

## **WHEN** do students take the SAT?

Students take the MME in the spring of their 11<sup>th</sup> grade year in high school. In 2016, as a part of the MME, students will take the SAT on **Tuesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>**. Students who miss this initial administration of the SAT will sit for a make-up administration on **Tuesday, April 26<sup>th</sup>**. Students may decide to take the SAT on their own during any of SAT's national administration dates. But, by law, schools must test students in the spring of each year, regardless of other tests they may have taken.

## **WHERE** do students take the SAT?

As a part of MME, students typically take the SAT at the school where they are enrolled. Schools schedule special sessions for test-taking students within the school's normal school day, and are supervised by school staff.

## **HOW** do students take the SAT?

For 2016, Michigan students will take a Paper & Pencil version of the test. Students will bubble responses on an answer document, which is scored by a machine. Student essays are scanned into a database and scored by College Board staff. Students will receive score reports from the College Board electronically, through an on-line account. This account provides detailed reports that give students specific directions on how to improve their performance. Students will also receive a printed report mailed home.

## **WHY** does the state require schools to administer the SAT?

The state of Michigan is required by federal law to administer a college entrance test to students prior to exiting high school. This is a part of a package of state and federal laws that aim to hold schools accountable for preparing all students to be ready for colleges and careers.

From 2006 to 2015, the state's selected college entrance test was the ACT. The State of Michigan selected the SAT to replace the ACT, beginning in the spring of 2016. This change was made to provide schools with a more rigorous and cost effective tool to measure high school student readiness for college level learning.

The State of Michigan has a strong, vested interest in ensuring that schools prepare students for the workforce of tomorrow. The SAT will help give schools, as well as state and federal governments, valuable information on how well students are learning and where students need help. This information is used to continuously support and improve student learning.

# WHAT'S NEW with SAT?

The redesigned **SAT**, **PSAT/NMSQT**, **PSAT™ 10**, and **PSAT™ 8/9** will feature key changes that will make the test clearer, more closely connected to student course work, and more useful for college admission officers. Learn more about the key changes at <http://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org>.

There are **8 Key Changes** for the newly designed SAT, which students will take for the first time in 2016.



## **Words in Context**

The redesigned assessments will focus on relevant words, not obscure vocabulary, that students will use in college and beyond.



## **Command of Evidence**

The redesigned assessments will ask students to demonstrate their ability to interpret, synthesize, and use evidence found in a wide range of sources.



## **Essay Analyzing a Source**

The redesigned SAT essay section will more closely mirror college writing assignments. Students will read a passage and explain how the author builds an argument to persuade an audience.



## **Math that Matters Most**

The tests will focus on three essential areas of math. Problem Solving and Data Analysis; the Heart of Algebra; and Passport to Advanced Math.



### **Problems Grounded in Real World Contexts**

Throughout the redesigned assessments, students will engage with questions grounded in the real world and directly related to work performed in college and careers.



### **Analysis in Science and in History/Social Studies**

Students will apply their reading, writing, language, and math skills to solve a broad array of contexts.



### **U.S. Founding Documents and the Great Global Conversation**

Every time students take one the redesigned assessments, they will encounter a passage from a founding document or a text from an ongoing conversation about freedom, justice, and human dignity.



### **No Penalty for Guessing**

The redesigned assessments will remove the penalty for wrong answers. Students will earn points for the questions they answer correctly.

Source: <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/inside-the-test/key-changes>



# SAT Components & Scoring

<b>Test Length</b>	3 Hours, 50 Minutes
<b>Tested Subjects</b>	Reading – <i>60 Minutes, 52 Questions</i> Writing & Language – <i>35 Minutes, 44 Questions</i> Math-80 Minutes, 58 Questions Essay- 50 Minutes, 1 Question
<b>Scoring Scale</b>	Overall scale of 400 to 1600: <i>200-800 - Evidence Based Reading &amp; Writing</i> <i>200-800 - Math</i>
<b>Wrong Answer Penalty</b>	No Penalty for Wrong Answers
<b>Question Types</b>	Reading & Writing – <i>100% Passage based multiple choice</i> Math – <i>78% Multiple Choice, 22% Produced Response</i> Essay – <i>1 Writing Prompt</i>
<b>English/Language</b>	Four Passages, 400-450 words per passage <i>Questions on expressions of ideas, standard English, conventions, vocabulary in context, analysis</i>
<b>Reading</b>	Four single passages and one paired passage <i>Questions on vocabulary in context, command of evidence, analysis in history/social studies and science</i>
<b>Science</b>	No Science Section <i>Questions built into math, reading, and writing sections</i>
<b>Math</b>	Heart of Algebra, Problem Solving and Data Analysis, Passport to Advanced Math, and Additional Topics in Math
<b>Essay</b>	Final Section <i>Written Analysis of a Provided Source Text</i>

# Getting to Know the New SAT Side-By-Side Comparison



Michigan Association of  
Secondary School Principals

## ACT

## SAT

[2016 Redesign]

<b>Test Length</b>	<b>3 hours, 25 min</b> (with Writing Test)	<b>3 hours, 50 min</b> (with Essay)
<b>Tested Subjects</b>	<b>English</b> (45 min) <b>Reading</b> (35 min) <b>Science</b> (35 min) <b>Math</b> (60 min) <b>Writing</b> (30 min)	<b>Writing and Language</b> (35 min) <b>Reading</b> (65 min) <b>Math</b> (80 min) (One section with calculators and one without) <b>Essay (optional)</b> (50 min)
<b>Scoring Scale</b>	<b>Composite of 1-36</b> Four scores of 1-36 for each test, averaged for composite Writing Test scored 0-12 with results reported separately	<b>Scale of 400 to 1600</b> 200-800: Evidence-Based Reading and Writing 200-800: Math 2-8 on each of three traits for Essay with results reported separately
<b>Wrong Answer Penalty</b>	<b>No penalty.</b>	<b>No penalty.</b>
<b>Question Types</b>	<b>Reading, Writing, Math, Science</b> 100% multiple choice <b>Essay</b> writing prompt	<b>Reading, Writing</b> 100% passage-based multiple choice <b>Math</b> 78% multiple choice, 22% produced response <b>Essay</b> writing prompt
<b>CONTENT COMPARISON</b>		
<b>English/Language</b>	<b>Usage/Mechanics</b> punctuation, grammar and usage, sentence structure <b>Rhetorical Skills</b> strategy, organization, style	<b>Four passages, 400-450 words per passage</b> Questions on: expression of ideas, standard English, conventions, vocabulary in context, analysis
<b>Reading</b>	<b>Four long passages</b> <b>Reading comprehension</b> focus on showing understanding of: what is directly stated and statements with implied meanings <b>Little emphasis on vocabulary</b>	<b>Four single passages and one paired passage</b> Questions on: vocabulary in context, command of evidence, analysis in history/social studies and science <b>Vocabulary de-emphasized</b>
<b>Science</b>	<b>Focus on scientific reasoning</b> Analysis/interpretation/evaluation of scientific passages, charts, diagrams, etc.	<b>No science section</b> (questions built into math, reading, and writing sections)
<b>Math</b>	<b>Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Algebra II and Trigonometry</b>	<b>Heart of Algebra, Problem Solving and Data Analysis, Passport to Advanced Math, and Additional Topics in Math</b>
<b>Essay</b>	<b>Final Section - 30 min</b> Topic of importance to high school students	<b>Final Section - 50 min</b> Written analysis of a provided source text





## **FREQUENTLY** Asked Questions

### ***Why did Michigan testing change from the ACT to the SAT?***

The contract period for ACT ended in 2015, and several companies submitted bids to be selected as Michigan's college entrance test provider, including ACT. SAT was awarded the contract, based on improved student results reporting, learning support to schools & students, alignment to Common Core State Standards, and cost efficiencies.

### ***Do colleges accept SAT scores?***

Yes! The SAT has been in existence for decades and virtually every college in the United States accepts SAT scores. All Michigan Colleges & Universities will accept SAT scores to determine admissions.

### ***Do scholarship organizations accept SAT scores?***

Rules for scholarships are governed by the bodies or companies that provide the scholarship. While many scholarship organizations do accept SAT scores, some many not. It is very important that students and families research scholarships and meet whatever qualifications are outlined in the scholarship eligibility criteria. Financial aid offices and academic departments in universities have a variety of scholarship information. Scholarship information can also be found online.

Additionally, the College Board has a long standing partnership with the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. Students who take the PSAT/NMSQT are entered into the National Merit Scholarship Competition, which awards scholarships to thousands of top performing students each year. For more information on the NMSQT visit [www.nationalmerit.org](http://www.nationalmerit.org).

### ***Should my child also take the ACT?***

The SAT score students will receive will likely meet most, if not all of a student's college admissions needs. Students may choose to take the ACT, but this is an independent family decision. Students may go to [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) to register for an upcoming ACT administration date.

### ***What is a good SAT score?***

This spring will mark the first time students will take the newly developed SAT test. Not only has the content and design of the subject tests on the SAT changed, but the scoring has changed too. This means that there isn't any real data yet to determine averages or performance percentiles. Once students begin to take the newly designed SAT, College Board will publish reports on how scores compare to the old SAT, and the ACT, as well as how students perform across the country. These reports will be shared with colleges, so that college staff can make informed decisions on admissions, programs, and financial awards.

### **How can I prepare my child for the SAT?**

One great way that your child can prepare for the SAT is by taking the PSAT series of assessments in earlier grades, so that students and families have a clear picture of student strengths and challenges. PSAT gives detailed reports on student learning, and provides specific steps students can take to improve.

**PSAT 8/9** – Students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade can take the PSAT 8/9 to get early feedback on college readiness. ***Newly adopted state laws require that schools administer the PSAT 8/9 to all 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in the spring.***

**PSAT 10** – This test is specifically designed for 10<sup>th</sup> grade students, in order to provide them with specific, focused feedback as they prepare to take the SAT the next school year. ***Newly adopted state laws require that schools administer the PSAT 10 to all 10<sup>th</sup> grade students in the spring.***

**PSAT/NMSQT** – This test is designed to qualify students for the National Merit Scholarship Competition, and also gives students feedback on specific areas of academic development. 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students typically take the PSAT/NMSQT.

For more information on College Board assessments in Michigan, visit <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/state-partnerships/michigan>

***Are there free tools to help my child learn SAT content?***

Yes! The College Board has partnered with Khan Academy to provide online learning support for SAT, including explanation of SAT changes, practice recommendations, and full length practice tests. These resources are available online anytime, anywhere, and at no cost. Visit [www.khanacademy.org/sat](http://www.khanacademy.org/sat) to sign-up for a free account. Students can also create a free account on the College Board website to learn more about the redesigned SAT, as well as College Board news and updates. Visit <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/state-partnerships/michigan> to sign up.

## **TIPS & Strategies**

***We recommend the following tips & strategies for parents to help their students on the newly redesigned SAT.***

- ✓ *SAT personnel strongly recommend* that the best preparation for the SAT is strong school achievement, especially in core content classes and Honors/AP classes.
- ✓ *Put away the calculator (some of the time).* The SAT includes a math test where students may not use a calculator. With the guidance of your child’s math teacher, help your child get in the habit of math reasoning without the use of a calculator.
- ✓ *Answer every test question.* There’s no penalty for wrong answers, so it is in your child’s best interest to attempt all questions.

- ✓ *Analyze informational graphics.* Many items on the test will require students to read, interpret and analyze charts, graphs, and other types of informational graphics. In addition to practice items from SAT & Khan Academy, talk with your child about informational graphics you encounter in newspapers, magazines, television broadcasts, and internet content.
- ✓ *Build reading stamina.* The newly redesigned SAT includes more complex reading passages, including U.S. Founding documents and texts revolving around global conversations. Have your child read daily and engage them in reflection on what they have read.

***These are just a few of the many tips and strategies that SAT recommends for students. For the full guide, “Getting Ready for the Redesigned SAT”, visit the following link:***

***<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/getting-ready-redesigned-sat.pdf>***

## **ONLINE** Help & Resources

The newly redesigned SAT for Michigan

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/state-partnerships/michigan>

The Michigan Department of Education

[www.michigan.gov/mde](http://www.michigan.gov/mde)

Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress

[www.mi.gov/mstep](http://www.mi.gov/mstep)

Khan Academy SAT Partnership

[www.khanacademy.org/sat](http://www.khanacademy.org/sat)

