College Admissions Testing

Downingtown STEM Academy
Grades and GPA

11th grade is a VERY important year for earning good grades in challenging courses.

- Colleges look for improvement from 9th grade.
- Some colleges require senior year grades (1st MP or mid-year) to make decisions.
- Colleges are looking for continual improvement.

Transcripts will show GPA individually by year, as well as your Cumulative GPA.

- Student's grades in college-preparatory classes are a significant factor in college admission decisions.
College Admissions Tests

ACT vs. SAT

Depending on your strengths and weaknesses, you may perform better on one of these tests over the other.

The SAT and ACT are significantly different tests
American College Testing The ACT test assesses high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. ACT scores are accepted at every four year college and university in the United States.

- www.actstudent.org
SAT Reasoning

Scholastic Aptitude Test tests the subject matter learned by students in high school and how well they apply that knowledge along with critical thinking skills necessary to success in college.

www.collegeboard.com
SAT Subject Tests

• Taken in addition to SAT Reasoning or ACT exams
• Be sure to consult college admissions sites directly, these are generally required or recommended by the most competitive colleges
• One hour timed tests
• 20 different subjects to choose from
• Up to three Subject Tests may be taken on any given date
Subject Tests and ACTs

Some schools requiring Subject Tests consider the ACT an alternative to both the SAT and SAT Subject tests, whereas others accept the ACT in place of the SAT Reasoning Test but require SAT Subject tests as well. Be sure to consult college admissions sites directly, as requirements can change year to year!
Who Takes Which Test?

• ACT
  – based in Iowa City
  – Most popular in the Midwest and Southern States
  – 1.2 million test takers (2006)

• SAT
  – based in NY, NY
  – Most popular in East and West Coast States
  – 1.5 million test takers (2006)
Percentage of Test Takers by State

[Map showing percentage of test takers by state, with a link to the source image: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5b/SAT-ACT_Preference_Map.svg]
Sections

**ACT**
4 Sections
- Reading
  - Grammar
  - Punctuation
  - Reading Passages
- Writing
  - 1 Essay (100% of score)
- Math
  - Pre-Algebra
  - Algebra
  - Geometry
  - Trigonometry
- Science
  - Interpreting
    - Graphs
    - tables
    - research
    - scientific viewpoints

**SAT**
3 Sections
- Reading
  - Sentence Completion
  - Reading Passages
  - Vocabulary
- Writing
  - Multiple Choice (70% of score)
    - Grammar
    - Writing Organization
  - Essay (30% of score)
- Math
  - Algebra
  - Geometry
  - Algebra II
  - Statistics
# Timing and Questions-SAT

3:45 of testing time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>25 mins</td>
<td>Approx 67 total multiple choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25 mins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 mins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>25 mins</td>
<td>10 grid ins and 8 multiple choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25 mins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 mins</td>
<td>20 multiple choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 mins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>25 mins</td>
<td>16 multiple choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25 mins</td>
<td>Essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 mins</td>
<td>49 multiple choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add’l Section</td>
<td>25 mins</td>
<td>Varies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Timing and Questions-ACT

2:55 no writing/3:25 with writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>45 mins</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Comp</td>
<td>35 mins</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>60 mins</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science:</td>
<td>35 mins</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing* optional</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>Essay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*optional*
Questions

ACT
• 215 Total Questions
• Less time per question
• Questions considered less difficult
• No Penalty for wrong answers

SAT
• 170 Total Questions
• More time per question
• Questions considered more difficult
• ¼ point deducted for each incorrect answer
ACT scores range from 1-36 per section and are averages for a total composite score of 1-36

SAT scores range from 200-800 points per section and are totaled for an overall score of 600-2400
Score Reports

There are two ways to send test results to colleges:

- **During Registration** - You receive four free score reports each time you register either for the ACT or the SAT. Using registration score reports ensures that test scores are sent to colleges as early as possible.

- **After Registration** - You can send score reports at any time from your ACT or SAT account for an additional fee.

You are responsible for sending your scores to colleges; test scores do NOT appear on your transcript.
For example at Brown University the...
25th percentile means that 25% of the accepted students made a 630 or below on the Reading section. 75th percentile means that 75% of the accepted students made a 740 or below on the Reading section.
### ACT Scores for Ivy League Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Composite 25%</th>
<th>Composite 75%</th>
<th>English 25%</th>
<th>English 75%</th>
<th>Math 25%</th>
<th>Math 75%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornell</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dartmouth</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princeton</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U Penn</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yale</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For example at Brown University the...*

25th percentile means that 25% of the accepted students made a 29 or below on the test. 75th percentile means that 75% of the accepted students made a 33 or below on the test.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Dates</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>U.S. Registration Deadlines (Expire at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, U.S.A.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 6, 2012</td>
<td>SAT &amp; Subject Tests</td>
<td>September 7, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>September 21, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 3, 2012</td>
<td>SAT &amp; Subject Tests</td>
<td>October 4, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>October 19, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1, 2012</td>
<td>SAT &amp; Subject Tests</td>
<td>November 1, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>November 16, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 26, 2013</td>
<td>SAT &amp; Subject Tests</td>
<td>December 28, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>January 11, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 9, 2013</td>
<td>SAT only</td>
<td>February 8, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>February 22, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 4, 2013</td>
<td>SAT &amp; Subject Tests</td>
<td>April 5, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>April 19, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1, 2013</td>
<td>SAT &amp; Subject Tests</td>
<td>May 2, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>May 17, 2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Offered at DHSW
# Testing Dates - ACT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Date</th>
<th>Register By</th>
<th>Late Fee Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>August 17</td>
<td>August 18 - 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>October 27</strong></td>
<td>September 21</td>
<td>September 22 – October 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>December 8</strong></td>
<td>November 2</td>
<td>November 3 - 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 11</td>
<td>January 11</td>
<td>January 12 - 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>April 13</strong></td>
<td>March 8</td>
<td>March 9 - 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 8</td>
<td>May 3</td>
<td>May 4 - 17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Offered at DHSE*
Cost

- ACT $32
- ACT w/ Writing $47
- SAT Reasoning $45
- SAT Subject
- $20 base fee plus
  - $20 per Language Exam with Listening
  - $9 any other Exam
How To Choose

• Try online practice tests
• Consider your strengths and weaknesses
  – ACT is shorter and more knowledge based
  – ACT does not take points off for guessing
  – SAT is reasoning based like a puzzle
  – SAT allows more time per question
The College Search

• Think about what you're looking for in a college. Make a wish list of what you want in a college.
• Start to get ideas about colleges by examining several of your prospective school’s websites.
• Use our new resource Naviance or visit the Career Center to assist you in your search.
• Talk to your family and friends; they know you best and may offer good insight.
• Have a discussion with your family about the cost of college and related expenses that may impact college choice.
Naviance
http://connection.naviance.com/downingtownhse
User Name: student ID number Password: your birthday -i.e. 2/9/1993
(No 0’s required for single-digit months and/or days)

• Naviance is a web-based college research and planning tool new to Downingtown students, parents, and school counselors. It offers many opportunities during the college planning process.

• While using it, you can:
  – Link personality type and interests with careers
  – Indicate preferences/ criteria to determine college matches
  – Compare your academic statistics to the average statistics of your prospective colleges
  – Predict the outcome of your application for a specific college using the Scattergrams
  – Apply online to your schools and manage deadlines
  – Track application materials, including teacher recommendation letters
  – View schedule of colleges visiting the Career Center
Selecting Where to Apply

• Categorize your choices
  – Reach -schools above your academic qualifications
  – Target -schools where you meet admissions standards
  – Safety -schools where you are above admissions standards

• Visit a variety of schools to determine your best fit
Letters of Recommendation

After considering GPA, rigor of schedule, and test scores, many schools look to the letters of recommendation in the acceptance process.

• Check to see if your colleges require recommendation letters
• Ask two teachers who know you well
• Provide teachers with an Activities Resume and Recommendation Request form
• Ask early!
• FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)
• Determine with teachers whether they will submit letters online through Naviance or if you should provide them with stamped envelopes
College Essay

• Make sure it is edited and free of errors.
• Build your essay around:
  • Something in your personal life that has shaped you
  • How you fit in with the philosophy of the university
• The Essay is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
PA State Universities

PASSHE.EDU

- www.applyweb.com/apply/passhe
- Allows you to apply easily to more than one PA state university:
  - Bloomsburg, California, Cheney, Clarion, East Stroudsburg, Edinboro, Indiana, Kutztown, Lock Haven, Mansfield, Millersville, Shippensburg, Slippery Rock, West Chester
Other Considerations

• Open an email account for college correspondence
• Monitor your Facebook for appropriate content
• Remediate failed courses to improve GPA
• Allow a minimum of 10 school days for transcripts to be processed at DE and additional time for college processing
• Students receiving free or reduced lunch should check with their counselor to see if they qualify for any financial assistance with applications and standardized testing
Helpful Resources

- SAT - www.collegeboard.com
- ACT - www.actstudent.org
- Practice Tests and Information
  - www.petersons.com
  - www.princetonreview.com
  - www.ivybound.net
- Test Requirements for Selective Colleges
- Colleges without Test Requirements - www.fairtest.org