



COLLEGE SUCCESS™

College Admissions Testing Info Night

September 16, 2009



AGENDA

- Overview of the tests:
 - PSAT SAT Reasoning Test
 - ACT SAT Subject Tests
- Preparation and free resources
- College planning, college admissions process

PSAT

- Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test
- Wednesday, October 14, 2009 at Edison
- Who takes it?
 - All Sophomores and Juniors (free)
 - Freshmen who register(\$17)
 - No Seniors

PSAT CONTENT

Five sections – total test time 2 hours, 10 minutes

Three Content Areas:

- Critical Reading
 - Sentence Completion 13 questions
 - Passage-Based Reading 35 questions
- Math Problem Solving (inc. Algebra and Geometry)
 - Multiple Choice 28 questions
 - Student-produced Response 10 questions
- Writing
 - Improving Sentences 20 questions
 - Identifying Sentence Errors 14 questions
 - Improving Paragraphs 5 questions

Why Take the PSAT?

- Get feedback about critical academic skills
- Practice for the SAT
- Qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Program
- Enter other scholarship competitions
- Start the college planning process

The SAT Reasoning Test

Formerly known as SAT I

Ten Sections – total test time 3 hours, 45 minutes

(one of the ten is unscored)

Three Content Areas – same as the PSAT:

- Critical Reading
- Mathematics
- Writing

The SAT tests students' reasoning based on knowledge and skills developed through their course work.

SAT Critical Reading Content

Three sections, total 70 minutes, 67 questions

- Sentence completions
- Short reading passages (~100 words)
- Long reading passages (~500-800 words)
 - Vocabulary in context
 - Comprehension
 - Extended reasoning

SAT Math Content

Three sections, total 70 minutes, 54 questions

Multiple choice and student produced response

- Number and Operations
- Algebra and Functions, including Algebra II
- Geometry
- Statistics
- Probability and Data Analysis

SAT Writing Content

- Multiple Choice – two sections, total 35 minutes, 50 questions
 - grammar and usage questions
- Essay – 25 minutes
 - Students will be given a prompt to respond to
 - Students must first think critically about the issue presented in the essay assignment, then develop a point of view, and define and support their position, using reasoning and evidence based on their own experience, readings, or observations

More Essay Tips

- The essay will be graded on your ability to:
 - Answer the question !
 - Organize and express ideas clearly
 - Develop and support the main idea
 - Use appropriate word choice and sentence structure

Will Colleges Require a Writing Test ?

- Some colleges have decided to use the new SAT writing test for admissions decisions, some for placement only, and some have made no decision yet.
- Colleges may request students' actual writing samples to use instead of—or in addition to—the traditional application essay.

Scoring Procedures for the Essay

- Essays will be scanned and distributed to readers via the Web and scored online by trained high school teachers and college professors
- Each essay will be scored independently by two readers according to the holistic scoring guide
- Essays will be scored on a scale of 1 to 6 by each reader (total score of 2 to 12)
- If two readers' scores differ by more than one point, the essay will be read by a third reader

Scoring – PSAT and SAT

	PSAT Total 240	SAT Total 2400
Critical Reading	CR 20–80	CR 200–800
Math	M 20–80	M 200–800
Writing (Subscores)	W 20–80	W 200–800 (Essay 2–12) (Multiple-choice 20–80)

SAT Subject Tests

Formerly known as SAT II Tests

- Different requirements for each college; can be used by colleges for admission OR course placement
- Each test is one hour long; take up to 3 in one day
- Take subject tests at or near the end of a course
- Language Tests with Listening in November only

SAT Subject Tests

- Literature
- Biology E/M
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Math Level 1 or 2
- U.S. History
- World History
- French
- Spanish
- Latin
- Other Languages:
(German, Hebrew, Italian,
Chinese, Japanese,
Korean)

ACT[™]

The ACT

The ACT measures how well you can perform the skills necessary for college coursework in four curriculum areas:

- English
- Mathematics
- Reading
- Science

The ACT Writing Component

- The ACT includes an optional 30-minute writing assessment; all students taking the ACT should register for the writing component
- Students receive a subscore for each content area, plus a composite score
- Students taking the writing portion will receive a writing subscore that will not affect their composite score.

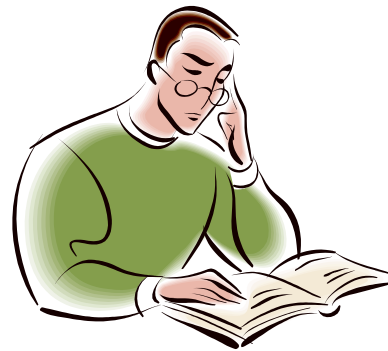
ACT Test Format

	ACT
	3 hours 25 minutes total time
English	45 minutes 75 questions
Math	60 minutes 60 questions
Reading	35 minutes 40 questions
Science	35 minutes 40 questions
Writing	30 minute optional essay

ACT Scores

	ACT
Subscores	1 – 36 for each section
Composite Score	1 - 36
Writing (Subscores)	1 – 36 Writing 1 – 36 Combined Writing and English

Getting Ready for the Tests



Who Takes What?

- **Class of 2010—seniors**
SAT and/or ACT once or twice this fall
up to 3 SAT Subject Tests
(as required by colleges)
- **Class of 2011—juniors**
PSAT October 14
SAT in March, May or June; also try the ACT
SAT in fall of your senior year;
SAT Subject tests as required
- **Class of 2012 and 13—sophomores, freshmen**
PSAT October 14; no SATs this year

FALL SCHEDULE 2009

- **October 14, 2009:** PSAT
- Freshmen must register in school before October 1; sophomores and juniors don't need to register; seniors will not test, nor will freshmen who do not register and pay
- **October 10, 2009:** First SAT of the year
- Register by September 23 (with a late fee)
- **October 24, 2009:** Next ACT of the year
- Register by September 18

How Students Can Prepare

- **Students should:**

- Challenge themselves by taking rigorous courses, including at least 3 years of math
- Read and write as much as possible—both in and outside of school
- Familiarize themselves with the SAT and ACT so they know what to expect on test day
- Familiarize themselves with the different types of questions, the directions, and the scoring
- **Take the PSAT**

Strategies

ALL TESTS

Take prep classes; read
Pace yourself
Use process of elimination
Look for context clues

SAT/PSAT

Penalty for guessing
Questions arranged from easy to hard

ACT

Answer every question
Questions appear in random order

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Free Resources at Edison

- Free online test prep through Family Connection
- Free mini SAT and ACT Prep classes
- Study Guides from College Board and ACT
- SAT Prep library – books to check out
- FCPS Career Connections links to free resources

How to Register

- Register for the PSAT in school: Back to School Night or during lunch the week of September 28
- Register for the SAT at www.collegeboard.com and for the ACT at www.actstudent.org *Registration Problems*
- Write down and save your username and password so you can access your scores and order more score reports online
- If you don't have access to a credit card, you can register by mail for the SAT and ACT
- Don't miss the registration deadlines !\$\$\$\$
- Are you eligible for a fee waiver or accommodations?

2009-2010 Fees

- **SAT** \$45
- **PSAT** \$17
- **SAT Subject Tests** \$20 + \$9/test
- **ACT** \$47 (inc. writing)
- **SAT Late Fee** \$23
- **ACT Late Fee** \$21
- **Waivers** no cost

What to Bring on Test Day

- No. 2 pencils (not mechanical pencils), eraser
- Photo ID and admission ticket (SAT and ACT)
- Watch
- Calculator
 - Every question on the PSAT, the SAT, and the ACT can be solved without a calculator; however using a calculator on some questions may be helpful
 - A scientific or graphing calculator is recommended, but not required

Score Reporting

- **ACT** Your scores are reported for one test date only
- **SAT** The scores for all previous test dates are reported with your current scores

NEW! Selective Score Choice for SAT

College Planning



College Planning

- **Use Family Connection !!**
- Know yourself
- Make your list of priorities
- Do your research – what colleges match?
- Keep up your grades; take the SAT
- Talk to people
- Visit some colleges
- Narrow your list

College Admissions

- Finalize your list
- Make a chart with all the requirements and deadlines
- Meet with your counselor
- Follow directions in your senior planning guide
- Take your last tests
- File your applications WAY before the deadline
- Investigate financial aid and scholarships
- Keep your grades up !

dawn.allison@fcps.edu

www.edisoncareercenter.com

college costs and deadlines

links to career planning resources

links to scholarships and financial aid

www.collegeboard.com

SAT registration

www.actstudent.org

ACT registration

www.fairtest.org

Test-optional colleges