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**STAGNANT ACT RESULTS, GROWING RACIAL SCORE GAPS  
MORE EVIDENCE THAT TEST-BASED SCHOOL “REFORM” IS ON WRONG TRACK;  
“WHY ARE POLICY-MAKERS DOUBLING DOWN ON A FAILED STRATEGY?”**

Flat ACT college admissions exam scores released today show, “The nation’s decade-long fixation on high-stakes testing as the primary tool to boost academic performance and narrow learning gaps is a sweeping, expensive failure,” according to FairTest, the National Center for Fair & Open Testing. ACT results, which claim to measure college readiness, are unchanged over the past five years. The test score gap between racial groups has risen slightly in the same period, according to ACT data.

“Rational policy-makers would look at the evidence and change course,” said FairTest public education director Bob Schaeffer. “Yet, instead of abandoning what is clearly the wrong track for improving U.S. schools, policy-makers are actually putting more weight on standardized tests.” Recent U.S. Department of Education waivers of the controversial “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) law require states to use tests for more high-stakes purposes, including evaluating teachers. Many states have also increased standardized exam requirements.”

Schaeffer, concluded, “Why are policy-makers doubling down on a failed strategy? How much more data do they need to understand this approach is not working?”

Reports by the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences and other experts have also concluded that high-stakes testing programs have not raised student achievement. Results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) confirm that academic improvement has slowed under NCLB.

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## 2012 COLLEGE BOUND SENIORS AVERAGE ACT SCORES

Approximately 1.66 million test takers

	COMPOSITE SCORE	FIVE-YEAR SCORE TREND (2008 – 2012)
<b>ALL TEST-TAKERS</b>	<b>21.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Asian	23.6	+ 0.7
White	22.4	+ 0.3
African-American	17.0	+ 0.1
American Indian	18.4	- 0.6
Hispanic	18.9	+ 0.2

source: ACT, *The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2012*