

for further information:
Bob Schaeffer (239) 395-6773
cell (239) 699-0468

for use with annual SAT scores release – Monday, September 24, 2012

CONTINUING SAT DECLINE SHOWS FAILURE OF TEST-DRIVEN, K-12 SCHOOLS; AVERAGE SCORE PLUNGED 20 POINTS IN PAST SIX YEARS; U.S. EDUCATION “HEADED IN WRONG DIRECTION”

SAT results released today show that No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and state high-stakes testing programs have dramatically undercut college readiness, “According to the College Board’s exam, many students are even less ready for college than they were six years ago,” said Bob Schaeffer, Public Education Director of FairTest, the National Center for Fair & Open Testing. SAT average scores have declined by 20 points since 2006, when the test was revised to include a writing section. Schaeffer continued, “If you believe the College Board’s claim that the SAT accurately assesses readiness for higher education, the logical conclusion is that test-driven K-12 school policies have been a colossal failure.”

“Proponents of NCLB and similar state-level testing programs promised that overall achievement would improve while score gaps between racial groups would narrow,” Schaeffer continued. “Precisely the opposite has taken place. Policymakers need to embrace very different policies to reverse this trend. Yet, so-called ‘reforms’ such as Race to the Top and NCLB waivers will actually increase the focus on test-scores in the nation’s public schools. The likely result is more damage to school quality and educational equity.”

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2012 COLLEGE BOUND SENIORS SAT SCORES -- with score changes from 2006*

	READING	MATH	WRITING	TOTAL
ALL TEST-TAKERS	496 (- 7)	514 (- 4)	488 (- 9)	1498 (-20)
Female	493 (- 9)	499 (- 3)	494 (- 8)	1486 (- 20)
Male	498 (- 7)	532 (- 4)	481 (-10)	1511 (- 21)
Asian, Asian Amer. or Pacific Islander	518 (+8)	595 (+17)	528 (+16)	1641 (+41)
White	527 (0)	536 (0)	515 (- 4)	1578 (- 4)
African American or Black	428 (- 6)	428 (- 1)	417 (- 11)	1273 (- 18)
Amer. Indian or Alaskan Native	482 (- 5)	489 (- 5)	462 (- 12)	1433 (- 22)
Mexican or Mexican American	448 (- 6)	465 (0)	443 (- 9)	1356 (- 15)
Puerto Rican	452 (- 7)	452 (- 4)	442 (- 6)	1346 (- 17)
Other Hispanic or Latino	447 (- 11)	461 (- 2)	442 (- 8)	1350 (- 21)

* High school graduates in the class of 2006 were the first to take the SAT “Writing” Test. The “No Child Left Behind” mandate to test every child in grades 3-8 and at least once in high school went into effect in the 2005-2006 academic year.

calculated by FairTest from: College Board, *College-Bound Seniors 2012: Total Group Profile Report* and *College-Bound Seniors 2006: Total Group Profile Report*