
Improving SAT Participation Rates

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Presentation Outline

- Overview
- Project Objectives
- Tech Overview
- Key Problem(s)
- Major Findings
- States of Interest
- Chosen State
- Conclusions and Recommendations

Overview

- New format for the SAT was released in March 2016.
 - Collated and keeping track of SAT's, as well as ACT's, metrics for the past few years
- **Aim/Problem Statement:** to improve SAT participation rates in a chosen US state.
- **Implementation:** in the year 2020

But first...

Overview - The Situational Context

Amid criticisms of bias and cheating, a record number of universities are turning their backs on the SAT

Mack DeGeurin

October 21, 2019



Increased resistance against standardised tests across states in the US

- “A record number of colleges and universities no longer require students to submit their SAT or ACT scores for admittance, according to FairTest.”

Project Objectives

Business Context

New format for SAT exam has been released in Mar 2016

Business Objective

Identify a state of choice to drive the take-up rate in SAT

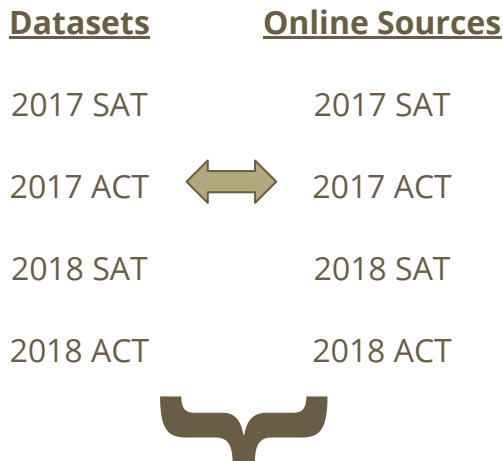
Data Objective

- Track statewide participation rates across SAT and ACT
- Shortlist states of interest
- Explore reasons for any significant changes

Evaluation

California has been identified as a state of choice

Tech Overview



[Cleaned and Combined Single Dataset]

- Analyse and Visualize Data + Statistical Analysis
- Shortlist States of Interest + Research
- Conclusions and Recommendations

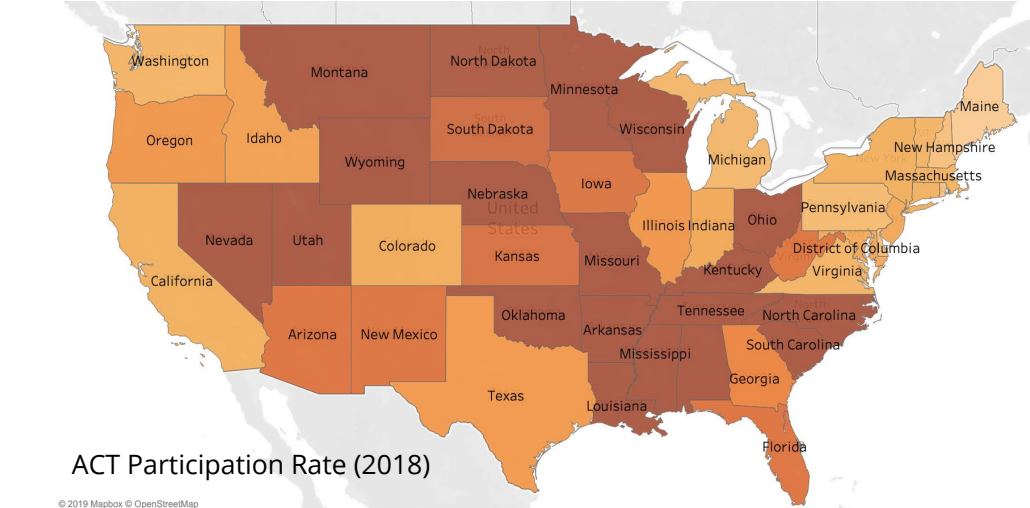
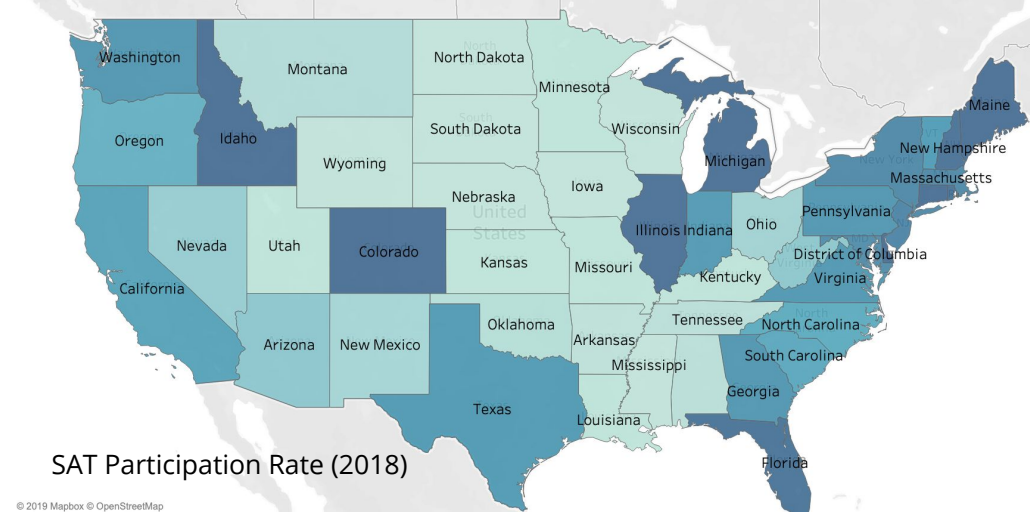
Key Problem(s)

- Implementation of proposal will be for 2020, but analysis is based on 2017/18 datasets.
 - Assumes no drastic changes to 2019 dataset, which is currently incomplete anyway.

Major Finding #1

Negative correlation between SAT participation
and ACT participation

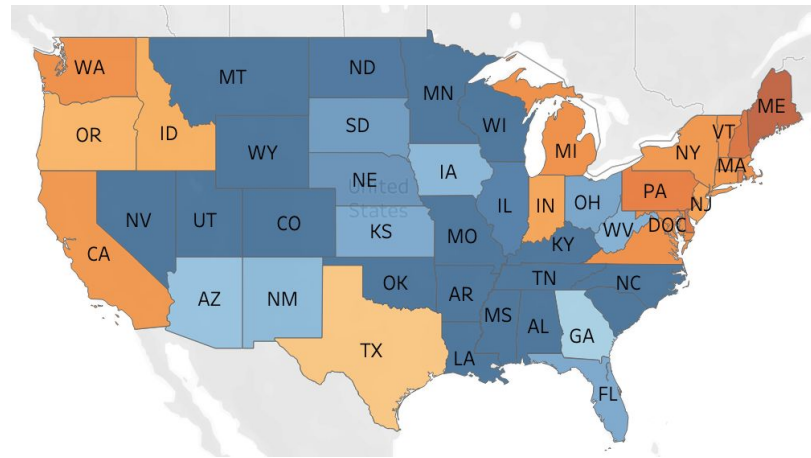
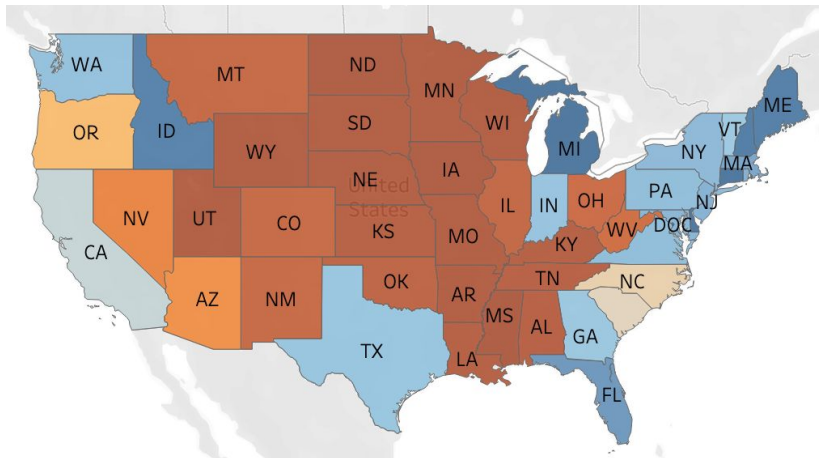
Comparison Across SAT & ACT Participation Rates in 2018



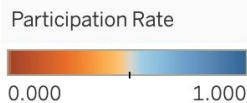
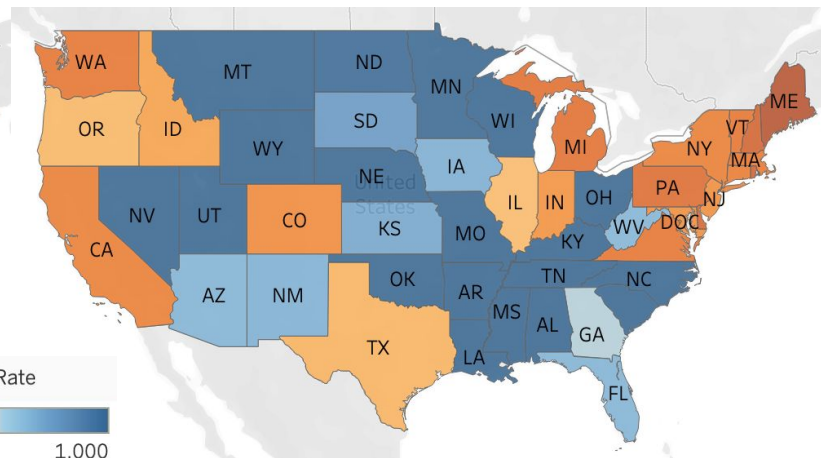
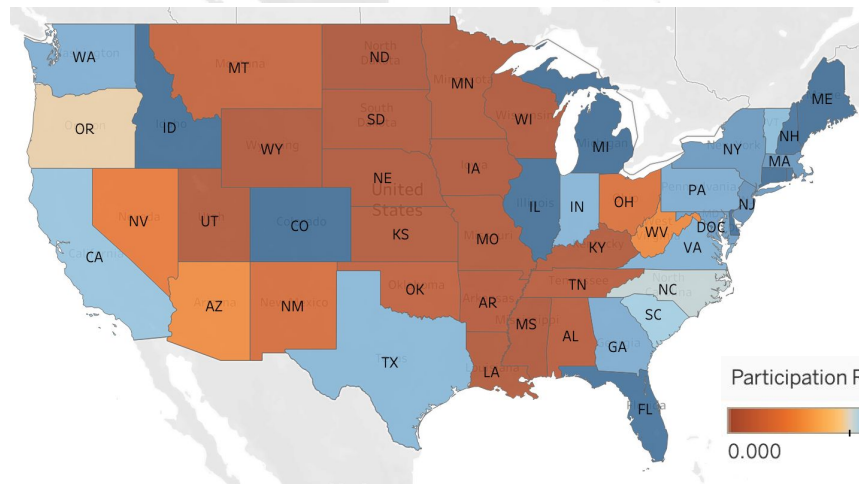
SAT

ACT

2017



2018



Major Finding #2:

Effect of State Policies on SAT/ACT



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Colorado Changed to the SAT in 2017: What You Need to Know

On April 11th, 2017 all Colorado high school juniors will take the SAT.

Why does this matter? In 2016, only 5500 Colo and the College Board partnered to administer will now take a new four hour exam.

The mandated SAT in April also matters for get colleges as a significant part of the application. time to start preparing for the SAT test now.



Illinois moves ahead with new testing plan, replacing ACT with SAT



By DIANE RADO
CHICAGO TRIBUNE | FEB 11, 2016 | 6:18 PM



With SAT required, R.I. sees jump in participation, decline in scores

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In a sea of change,
true commitment
never wavers

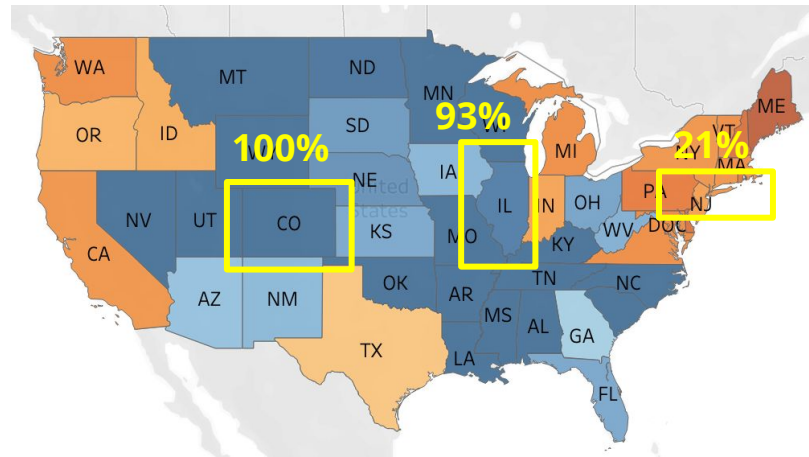
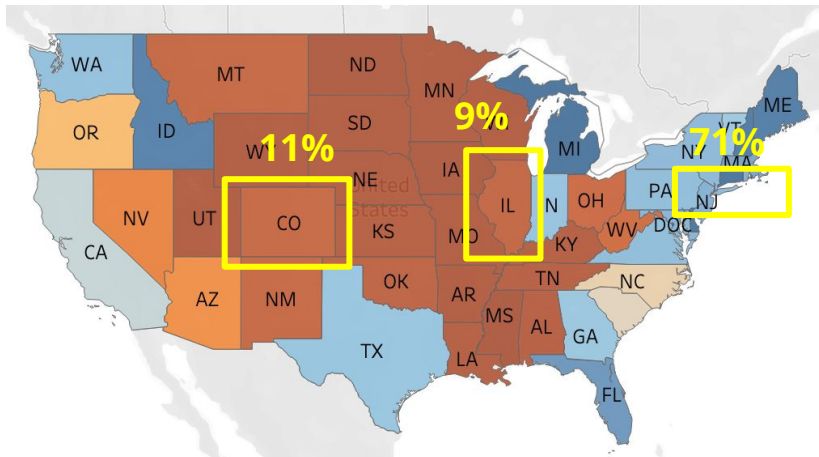
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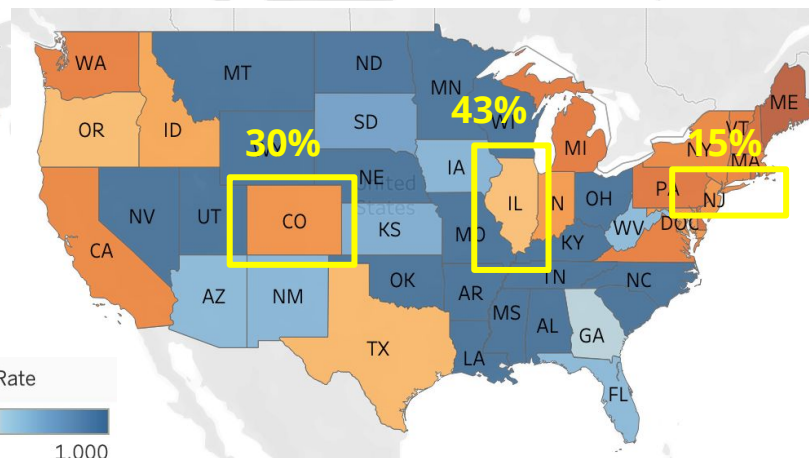
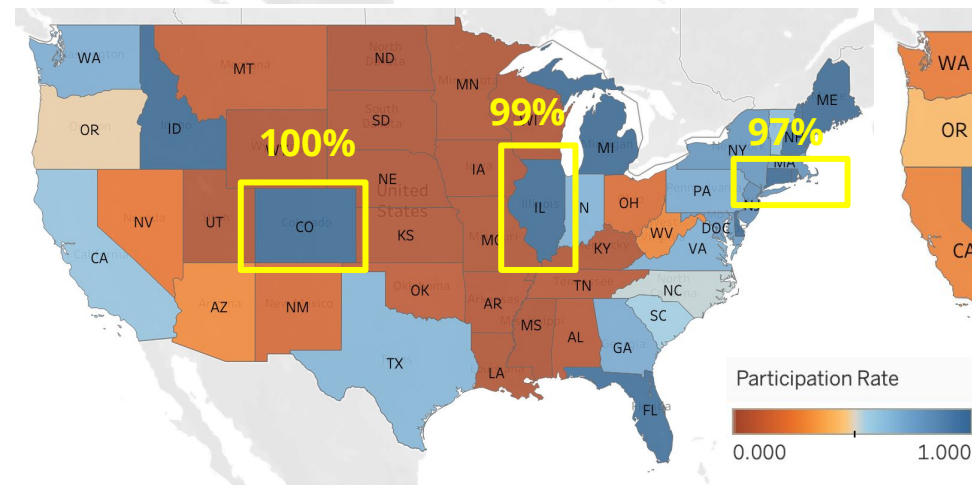
SAT

ACT

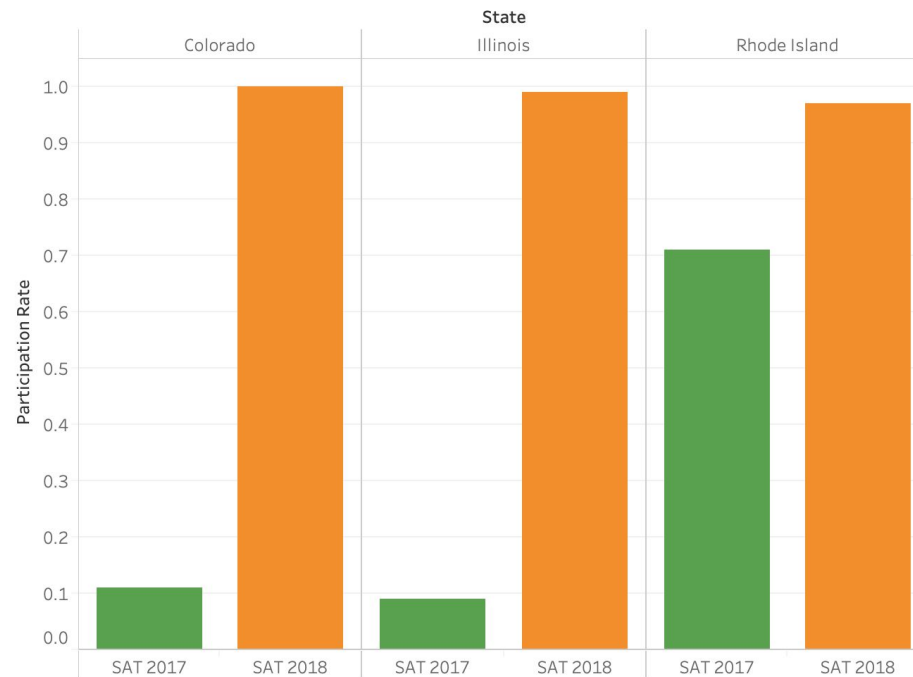
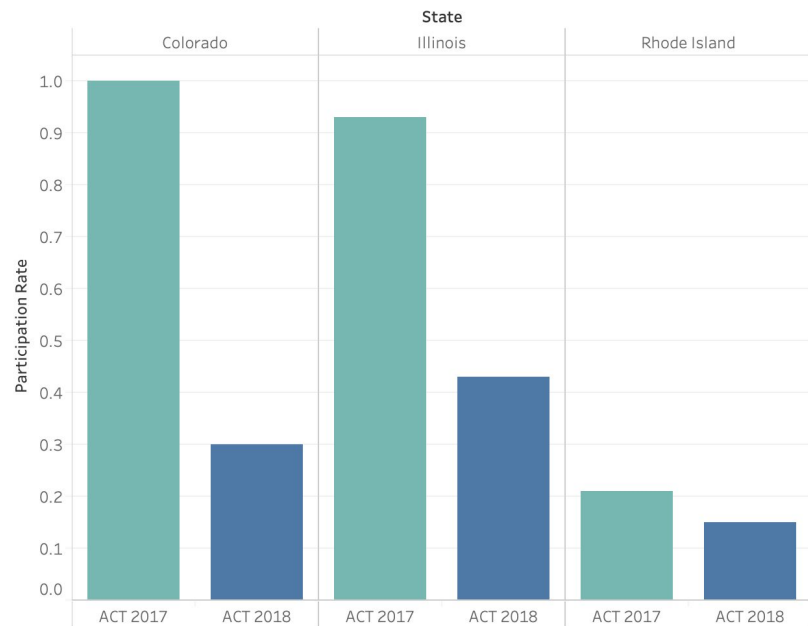
2017



2018

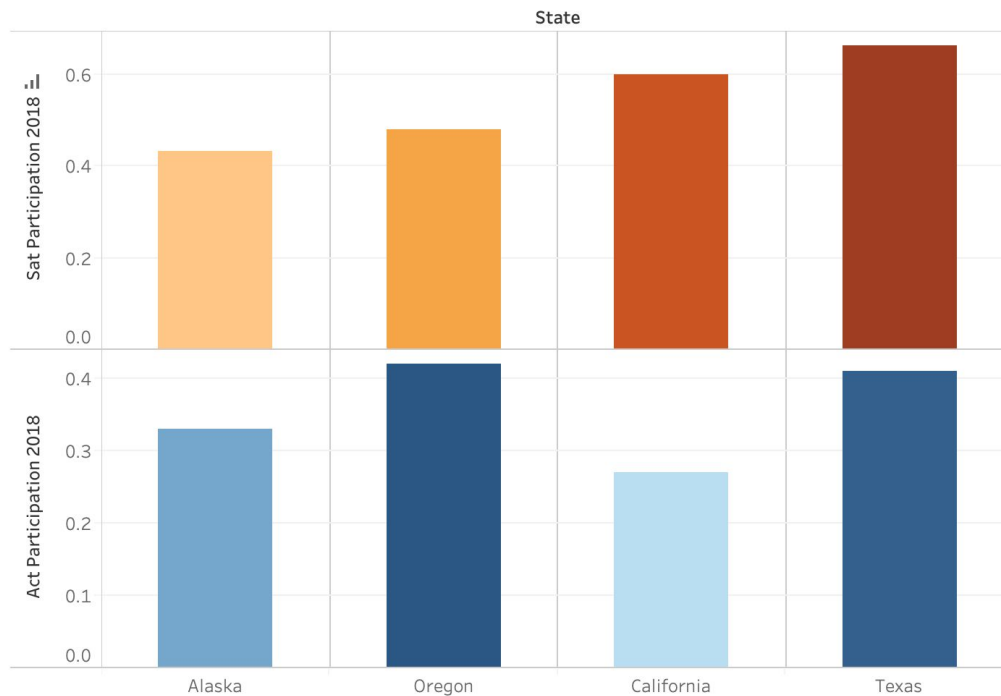


Effect of State Policies on SAT/ACT

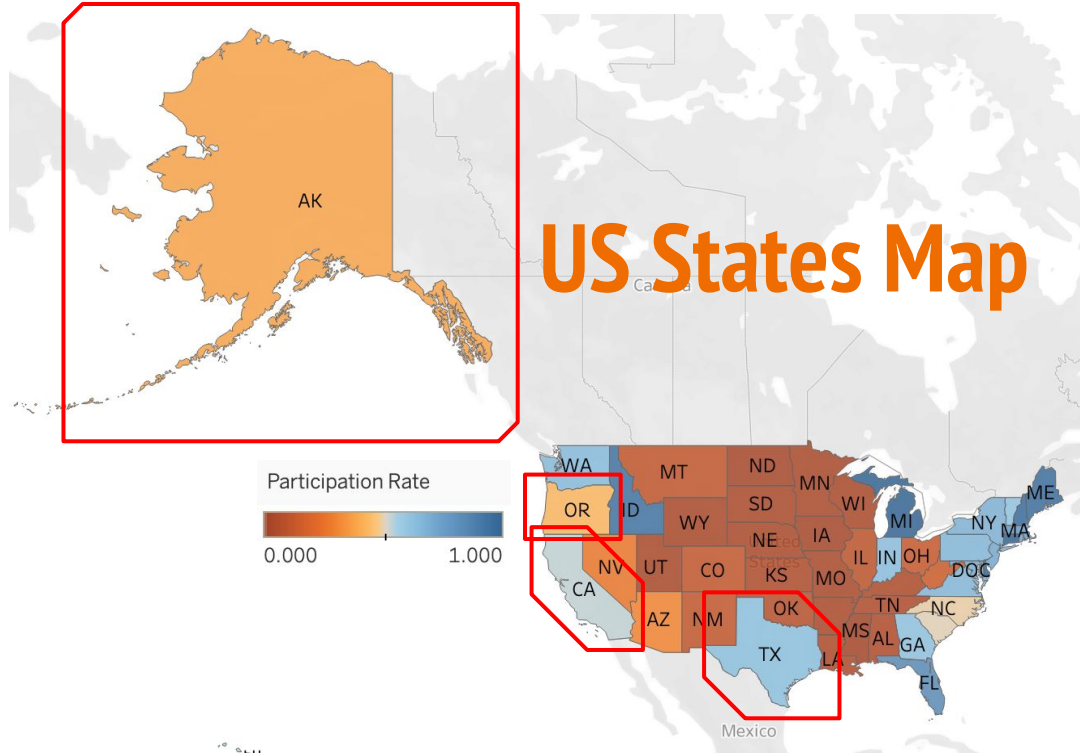


The Shortlist (States of Interest):

After Excluding States With High ACT
or High SAT Participation Rates



Shortlisted States

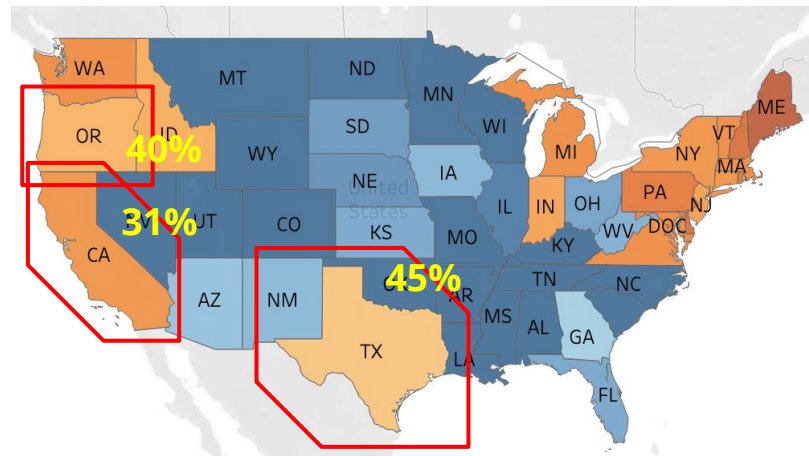
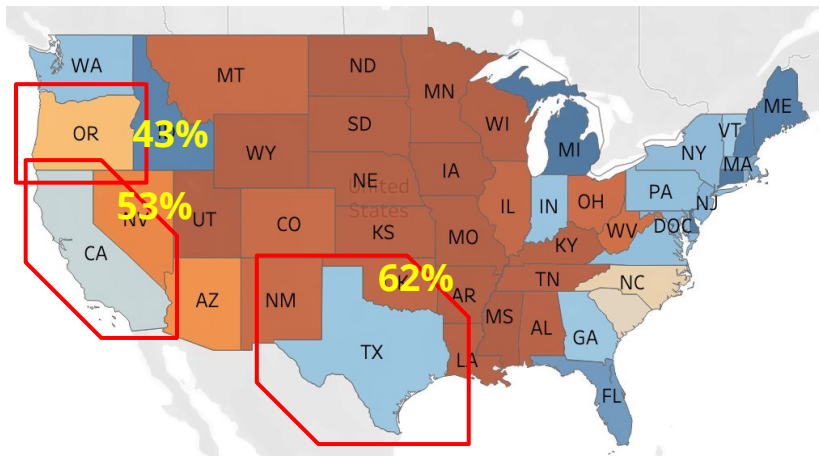


- Alaska
- Oregon
- California
- Texas

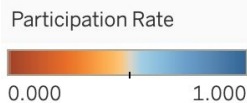
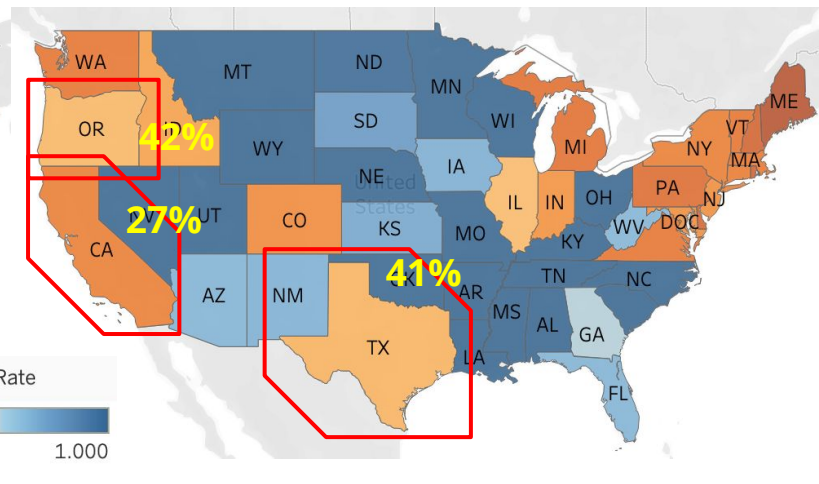
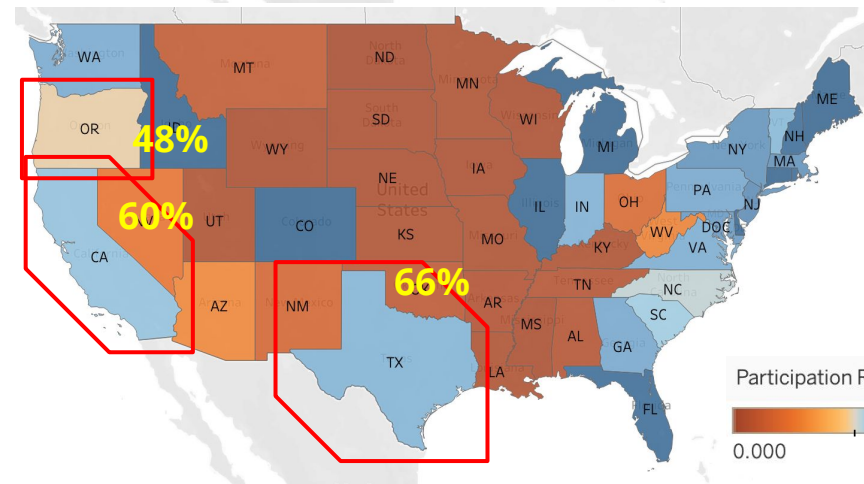
SAT

ACT

2017



2018



States of Interest

Oregon

- ACT participation: **40%** in 2017 —> **42%** in 2018 (15,432)
- SAT participation: **43%** in 2017 —> **48%** in 2018 (17,476)
- Has Smarter Balanced Assessments already implemented since 2015, teachers resistant against SAT/ACT implementation, cost also being a big issue

X

Texas

- ACT participation: **45%** in 2017 —> **41%** in 2018 (141,253)
- SAT participation: **62%** in 2017 —> **66%** in 2018 (226,374)
- No known contracts with SAT/ACT, also facing disagreements over whether to implement ANY of the tests at all just like Oregon, schools also unwilling to pay

X

States of Interest

Alaska

- ACT participation: **65%** in 2017 —> **33%** in 2018 (2582)
- SAT participation: **38%** in 2017 —> **43%** in 2018 (3334)
- Geographically not on mainland US
- State removed the need for students to take national tests to graduate,
- Total number of take-ups is very low compared to other states - low impact



California

- ACT participation: **31%** in 2017 —> **27%** in 2018 (118,521)
- SAT participation: **53%** in 2017 —> **60%** in 2018 (262,228)
- Highest take-up numbers in SAT, many reputable universities in the vicinity

California Is A Strategic Market



Golden Gate Bridge



Death Valley

Reputable Universities in California



USC University of
Southern California



Caltech



STANFORD
UNIVERSITY



Berkeley
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



California Will Affect The Wider Admissions Landscape

“

Any decision by UC to drop the SAT and ACT would play an enormous role in the future of standardized testing in America because of its size and status as the nation's top public research university system. California is the largest market for the tests and six of UC's 10 campuses, which collectively educate 222,500 undergraduates, receive the most applications in the nation.

“This case is profound and far-reaching in its implications,” said Bob Schaeffer, public education director for FairTest, the National Center for Fair and Open Testing, which has fought to end the tests for decades. “The whole world will be watching.”

The UC Academic Senate, which sets the system's admission requirements, is studying whether to drop the test and plans to issue its recommendations to the regents by February. Doan said Tuesday that UC officials would wait for that review, requested last year by President Janet Napolitano, before deciding on the next steps.

”

Conclusion & Recommendations

- **The Academic Senate of California are currently studying if SAT should remain as a relevant college admission, preliminary result targeted to be out by February 2020.**
- **Paramount for the College Board to maintain good relationships with relevant authorities of local educational departments, possibly implementing policies with the state like in Colorado and Illinois**
- **California still has room to grow; SAT participation rate is only at 60% in 2018.**
 - State has one of the biggest student populations + the location where reputable universities reside, hence a strategic territory that the College Board cannot afford to lose.