# Should the University of California do away with standardized testing?



# California Defines Testing Down

Ignoring faculty, the UC president wants to drop the SAT and ACT.



#### **Problem Statement**

At the start of the pandemic, the University of California decided to temporarily put the use of standardized testing in their admissions process on hold. This has been a contentious issue, some saying without standardized testing, how can we know the best students are being admitted.

On the other side, the argument is that standardized testing is unfair and it's not an accurate assessment of a student's ability or potential.



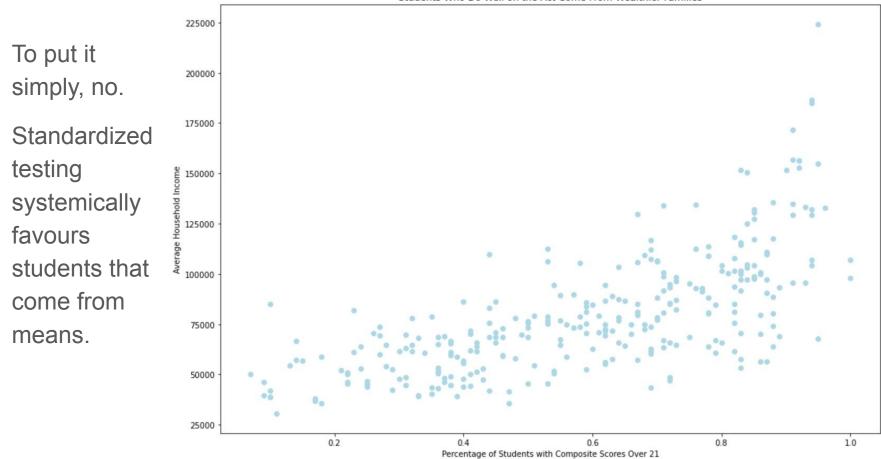
#### **Problem Statement**

With that in mind, you tasked me with to report on the effectiveness of standardized testing to highlight students solely on academic merit and not outside factors beyond their control.

The question remains, is standardized testing an equitable measure for

student performance?





#### **Process**

- Collected the most recent SAT and ACT scores in a California specific context
- Collected SAT and ACT data for 2019 and 2020
- Combined that with most recent racial demographic data for the state of California, per school district
- Cross referenced that data with household income and expenditure on student per district

#### **SAT vs Household Income**

In districts with over a thousand students, students that do the best in terms of SAT benchmarks come from families that have a household income over \$100,000, and white students are overrepresented in the data.

10	district	sat_20_grade_12_at_both_benchmarks	education_spend_per_student	avg_household_income	white	hispanic_or_latino
177	Palo Alto Unified	0.9050	23038.0	151578.0	0.339	0.139
265	Irvine Unified	0.8801	11451.0	106905.0	0.256	0.117
327	Fremont Union High	0.8767	15994.0	154876.0	0.154	0.147
184	Acalanes Union High	0.8568	15267.0	129146.0	0.637	0.103
149	Pleasanton Unified	0.8449	12065.0	156342.0	0.330	0.100
274	Poway Unified	0.8357	12266.0	117394.0	0.406	0.173
100	Walnut Valley Unified	0.8326	11162.0	104237.0	0.056	0.226
3	San Ramon Valley Unified	0.8313	11378.0	171717.0	0.364	0.089
491	San Dieguito Union High	0.8311	11865.0	135646.0	0.584	0.157
130	Tamalpais Union High	0.8234	19565.0	134656.0	0.699	0.142

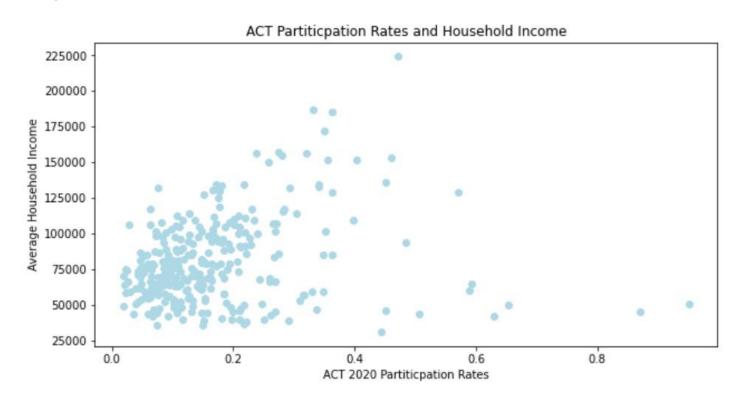
#### **SAT vs Household Income**

Those that do the poorest come from predominantly lower income households and from hispanic or other marginalized communities.

	district	sat_20_grade_12_at_both_benchmarks	education_spend_per_student	avg_household_income	white	hispanic_or_latino
474	Covina-Valley Unified	0.2221	13698.0	73801.0	0.069	0.788
468	West Contra Costa Unified	0.2194	14231.0	78737.0	0.101	0.562
15	Hemet Unified	0.1851	14843.0	46293.0	0.211	0.632
229	Madera Unified	0.1781	13001.0	50878.0	0.051	0.906
275	Stockton Unified	0.1567	15106.0	44393.0	0.047	0.680
453	Fontana Unified	0.1550	15045.0	63253.0	0.038	0.874
413	Moreno Valley Unified	0.1541	14013.0	64003.0	0.063	0.738
240	Val Verde Unified	0.1503	13534.0	70358.0	0.042	0.784
45	Compton Unified	0.1002	15206.0	54613.0	0.002	0.783
127	Lynwood Unified	0.0956	13451.0	52007.0	0.006	0.940

## **SAT/ACT Participation**

This is not just reflected in scores, it is also reflected in participation rates overall.



### **Conclusions**



#### **Conclusions**

The counterpoint is always, without standardized testing, how will schools become more diverse? How will schools find the student that has excelled despite their

household income and racial background?

However, what the data has shown is that those cases are the exception, not the rule.



#### This is a wheel

A wheel works in unison with a car to allow us to travel. If we applied the "must do everything" standard to the wheel, the wheel alone will not allow us to travel.

Just like a wheel, doing away with standardized testing is just one piece to making education more equitable for all students.

