

States to focus on to increase ACT Participation Rate

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Background



Context

Certain state governments administer either the SAT or the ACT exclusively and also cover the fees for taking the test. These programs increase access to low-income students and consequently the participation rate of both standardized tests.

Objective

While ACT is mandatory in 14 states compared to 8 for SAT, there remains significant demand for ACT in these 8 states and other states that do not have any requirement.

This study seeks to identify states that ACT should devote resources on to increase participation rate

Problem Statement

This project attempts to answer the following questions:

1. Establish if there is any relationship between the test performance and test participation rate for both SAT and ACT.
 2. Identify the SAT-mandatory states that has high demand for the ACT test
 3. Identify states with low ACT participation rate from states without test requirement
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Analysis Methodology

Data Sources

Participation Rate and Performance Data for both ACT and SAT in 2017 and 2018 were used in conjunction with states' test requirement as of May 2017

Analysis

Performed visualization techniques to identify trends and correlations between features

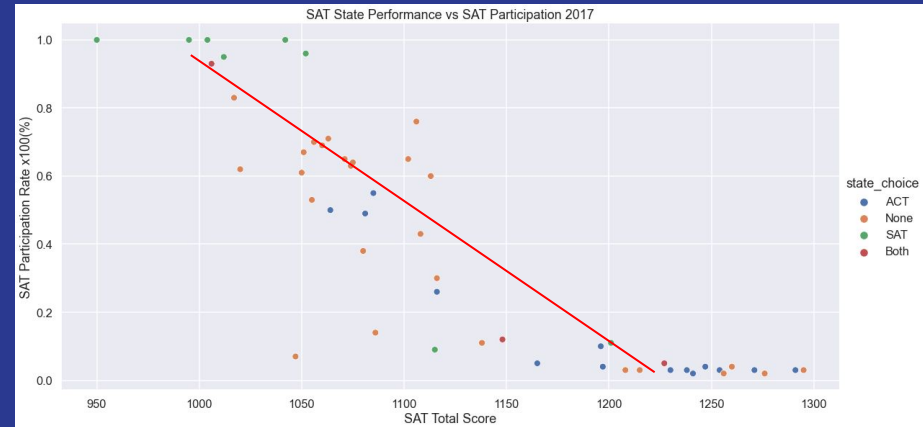
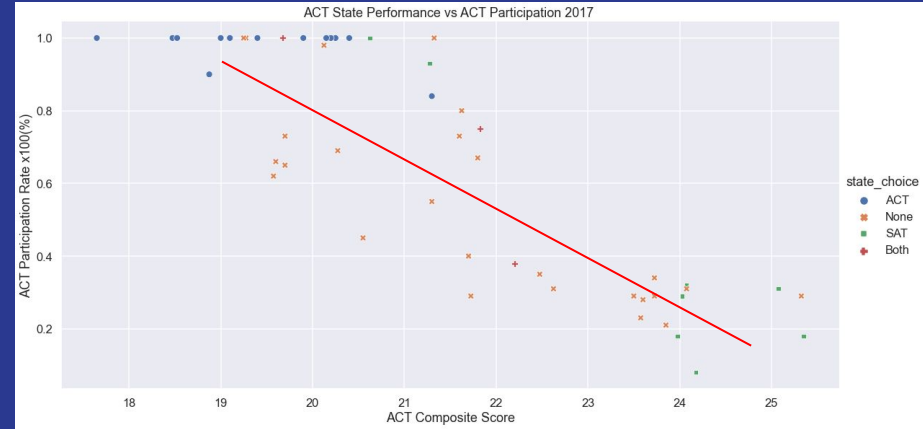
Recommendation

Make recommendation on states with good potential to increase ACT participation. Identify SAT-mandatory states with high ACT participation to draw useful insights from

Key Observations

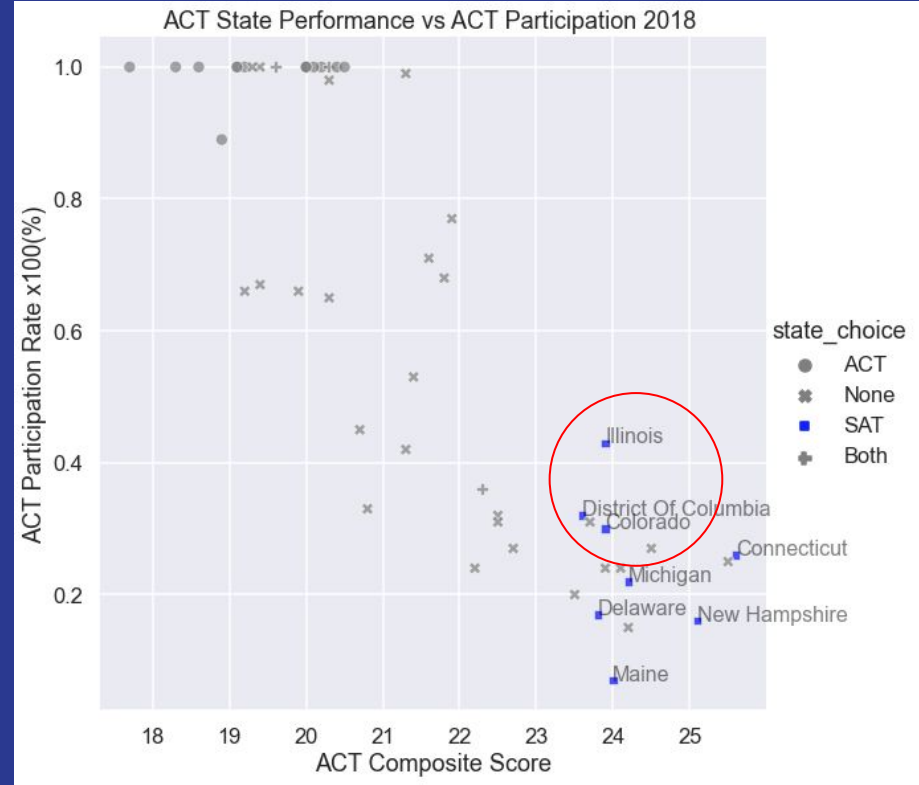
Participation is inversely correlated with Total/Composite Scores

High participation rate dilutes performance. Academically strong students may take optional test to expand college options



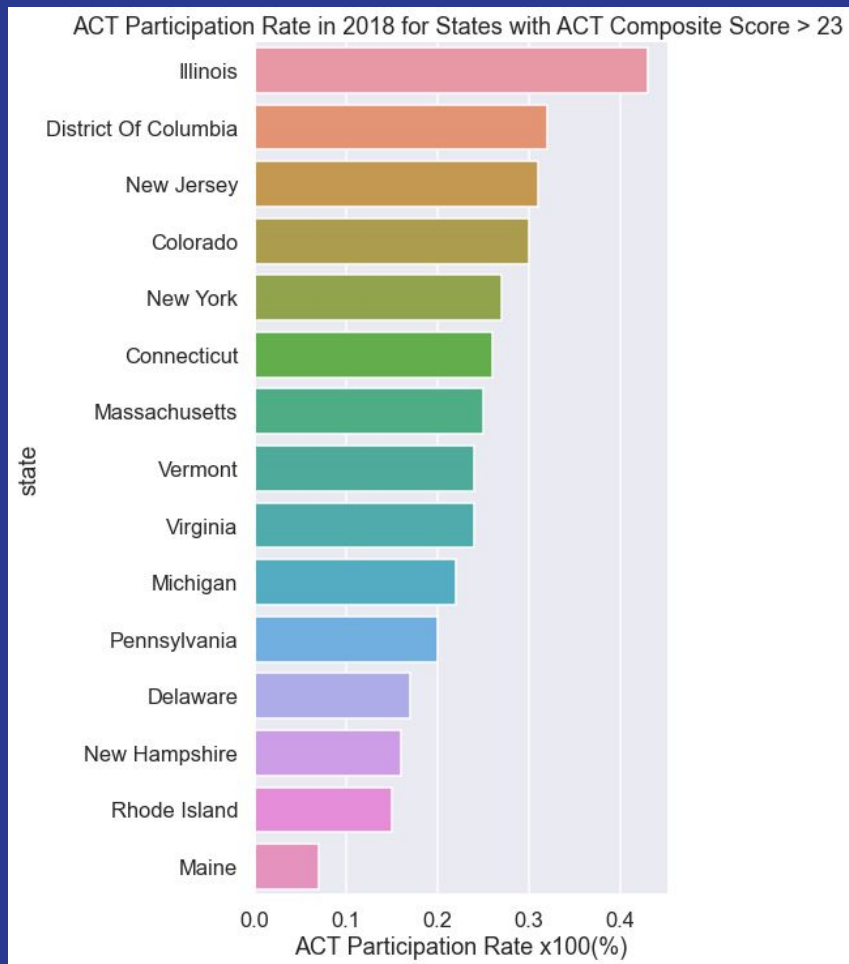
Illinois, Washington DC
and Colorado has high
ACT participation despite
being SAT-mandatory
states/region

Further study required to examine
ACT's popularity in these states



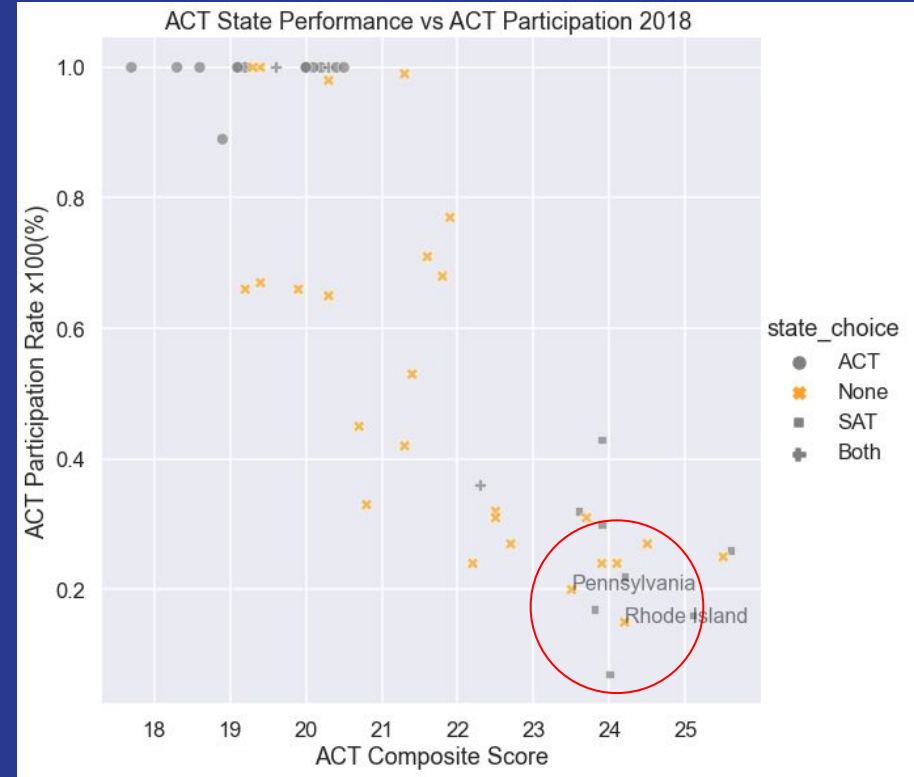
Illinois and Washington
DC and New Jersey also
have the highest ACT
participation among
states who performed the
best in ACT

Academic inclined students are
more likely to take more than one
test.



Students in Pennsylvania and Rhode Island are the least enrolled in ACT among states where both tests are not required

Resources should be assigned to these states to increase ACT participation



Recommended Actions

1. Perform more in-depth study on why ACT is popular in Illinois and DC despite being SAT-mandatory state/regions
2. Assign resources to states to increase ACT participation where academically inclined students are more likely to take more than one tests such as Illinois, DC and New Jersey
3. Step up effort to increase participation in Pennsylvania and Rhode Island where neither test is compulsory