



# PROJECT 1 –

Should Students be  
**EMPOWERED** to Choose Their  
State-Sponsored Test?

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- ▶ Do most states that mandate either test have a high % of students that get into colleges?
  
- ▶ EMPOWER students to choose their state-sponsored test?

# Overview

- ▶ Colleges do not discriminate between applicants who have taken the SATs or ACTs
- ▶ State mandate means that all state-administered SATs/ACTs are mandatory for eleventh-grade students
- ▶ Paid-for and administered by the respective State Boards of Education
- ▶ If a state mandates all students take one particular standardized test, students who would additionally like to take the other standardized test have to do so on their own expenses.
- ▶ The students should be able to decide which standardized test they'd like to be sponsored for by the state as both tests are formatted and scored differently.

# Problem Statement

- ▶ Establish that a state's preference for mandating one test over the other has no bearing on the likelihood of high school graduates successfully gaining admission into college.
- ▶ By studying the relationships between
  - ▶ (1) Test participation (either SAT or ACT)
  - ▶ (2) percentage of high school graduates that gained admission into college
- ▶ If no correlation between either test and college admission, it means that mandating an entire state to take one type of test is not made in the interest of students.



# Who should take the ACT?

- ▶ Scientific data, graphs, and hypotheses
- ▶ Struggle to solve math quickly without a calculator
- ▶ Much larger focus on geometry (30-45% of ACT Math)
- ▶ Matrices, graphs of trig functions, and logarithms
- ▶ Math accounts for only 1/4 of your total score
- ▶ If you're not a fan of open-ended math questions
- ▶ Reading questions are always separate from one another
- ▶ Good reading comprehension skills (Optional Essay)
- ▶ Strong rhetorical skills too (Optional Essay)
- ▶ Give ample evidence to support your perspectives on issues (Optional Essay)

# Who should take the SAT?

- ▶ SAT offers more time per question on all sections of the exam
- ▶ Good enough at math to work fast without a calculator
- ▶ Good at algebra and data analysis
- ▶ SAT provides you with a diagram of math formulas
- ▶ Math accounts for half of your total score
- ▶ Evidence-support questions in a chronological order
- ▶ SAT Reading questions are generally easier to follow
- ▶ Chronologically ordered questions save you time on the SAT

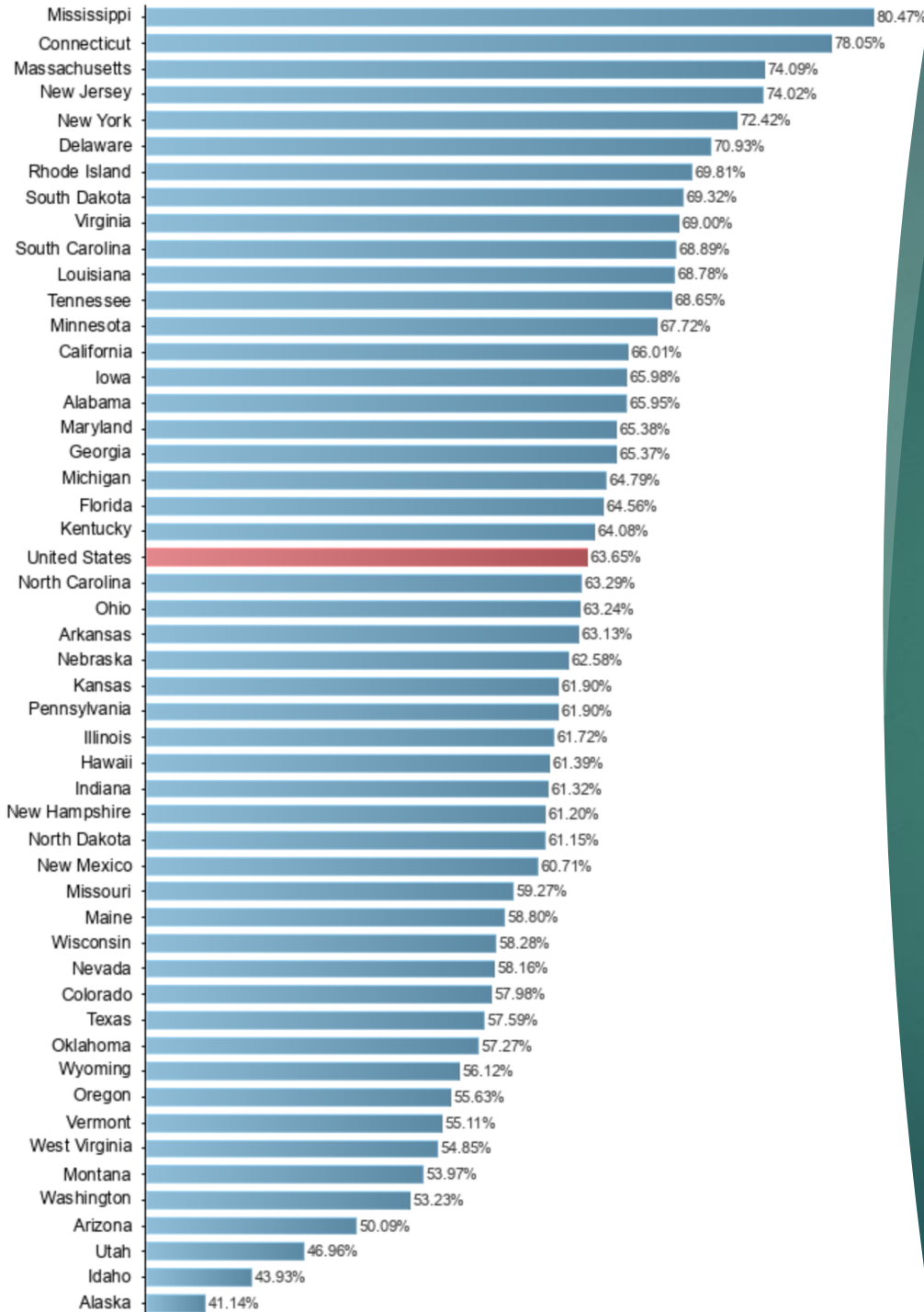
# State-Mandated Tests

## ▶ ACT:

- ▶ Alabama
- ▶ Hawaii
- ▶ Idaho
- ▶ Kentucky
- ▶ Louisiana
- ▶ Mississippi
- ▶ Missouri
- ▶ Montana
- ▶ Nebraska
- ▶ Nevada
- ▶ North Carolina
- ▶ North Dakota
- ▶ Ohio
- ▶ South Carolina
- ▶ Tennessee
- ▶ Utah
- ▶ Wisconsin
- ▶ Wyoming

## ▶ SAT:

- ▶ Colorado
- ▶ Connecticut
- ▶ Delaware
- ▶ District of Columbia
- ▶ Idaho
- ▶ Illinois
- ▶ Maine
- ▶ Michigan
- ▶ New Hampshire
- ▶ Ohio
- ▶ Tennessee



# High School Grads going to College

## ▶ ACT-mandated states with $\geq 65\%$ :

- ▶ Mississippi
- ▶ South Carolina
- ▶ Louisiana
- ▶ Tennessee
- ▶ Alabama

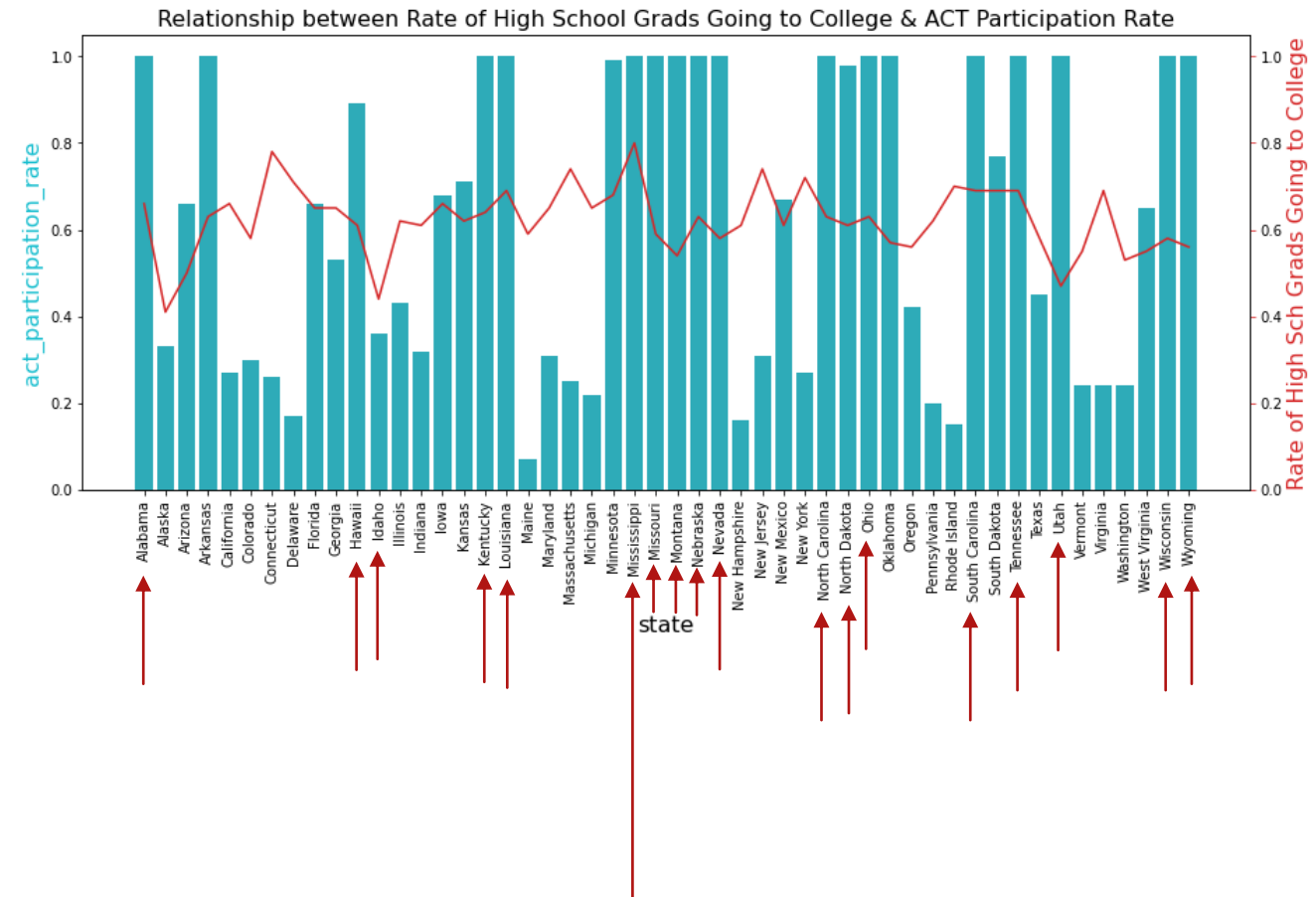
## ▶ SAT-mandated states with $\geq 65\%$ :

- ▶ Connecticut
- ▶ Delaware
- ▶ Tennessee



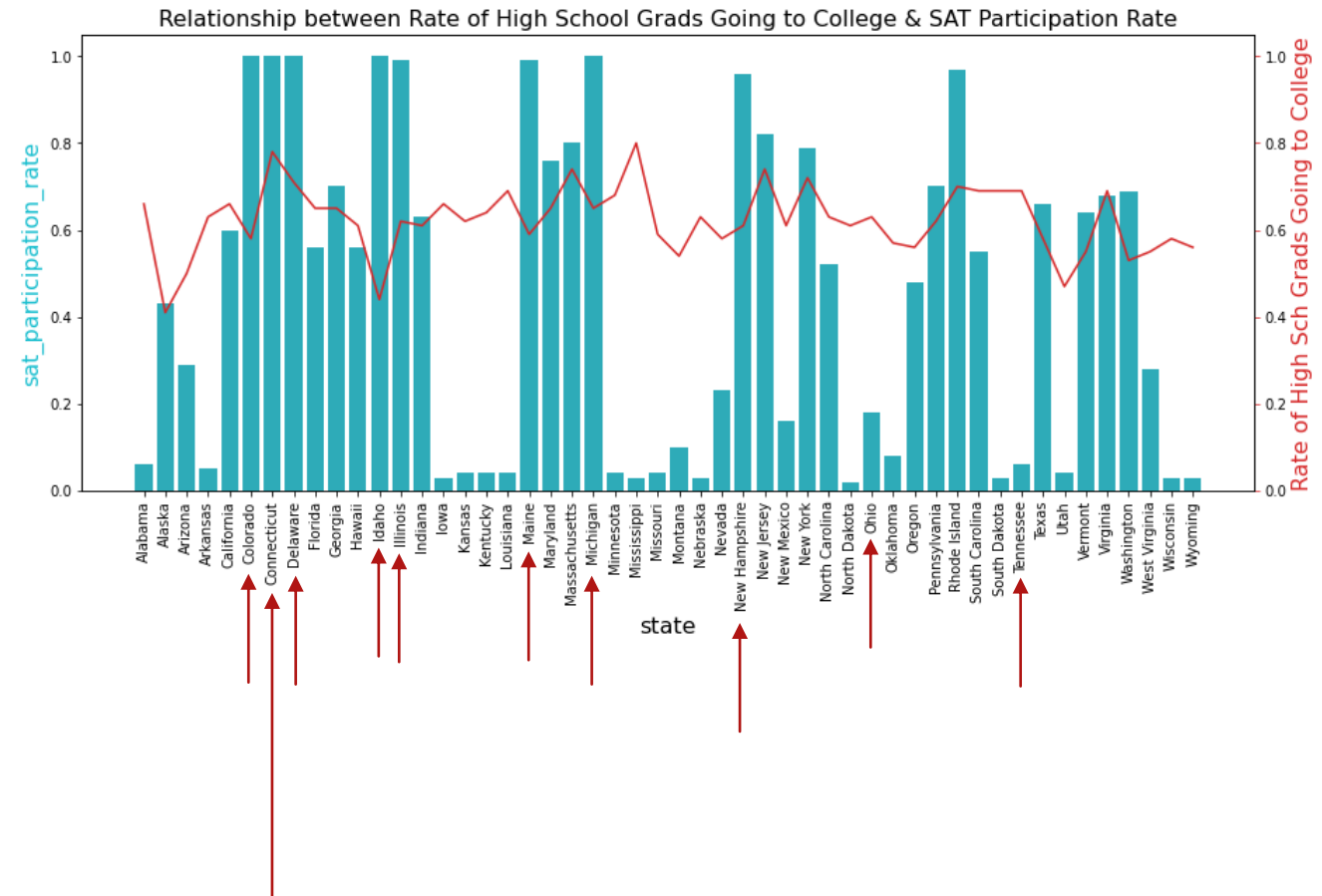
# ACT-mandated states' performance in College admission

- ▶ Only 5 / 18 states had 65% or more high school graduates get into college
- ▶ Mississippi the only exceptional performer



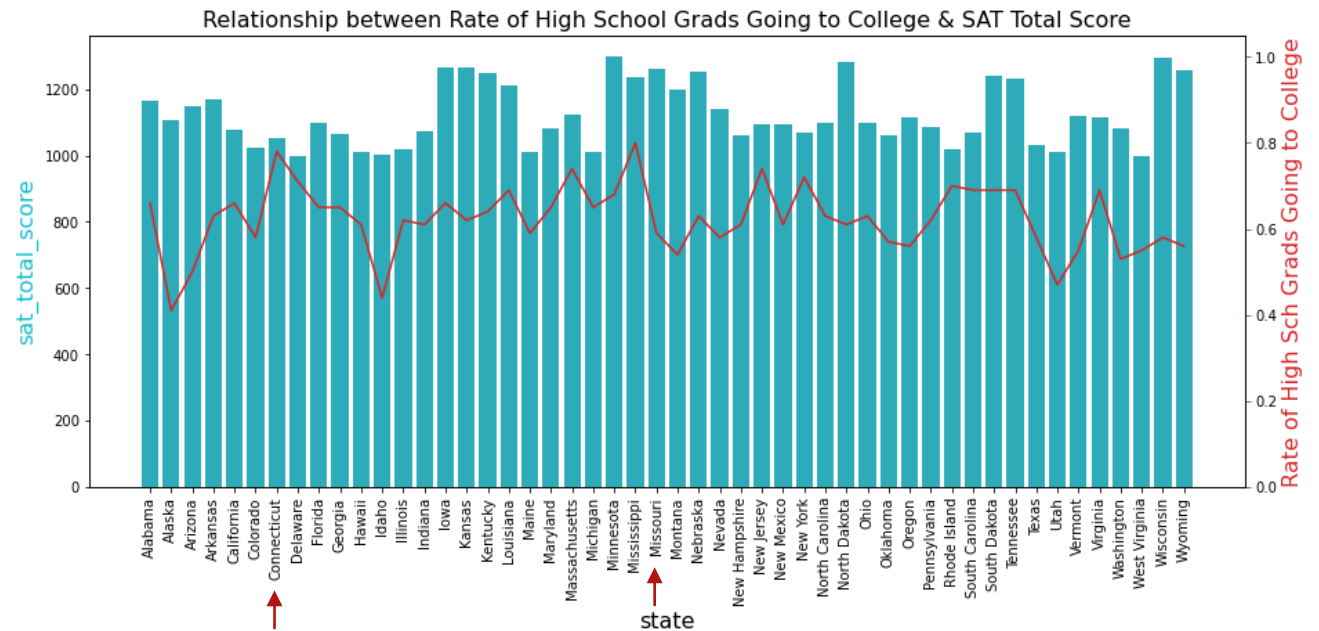
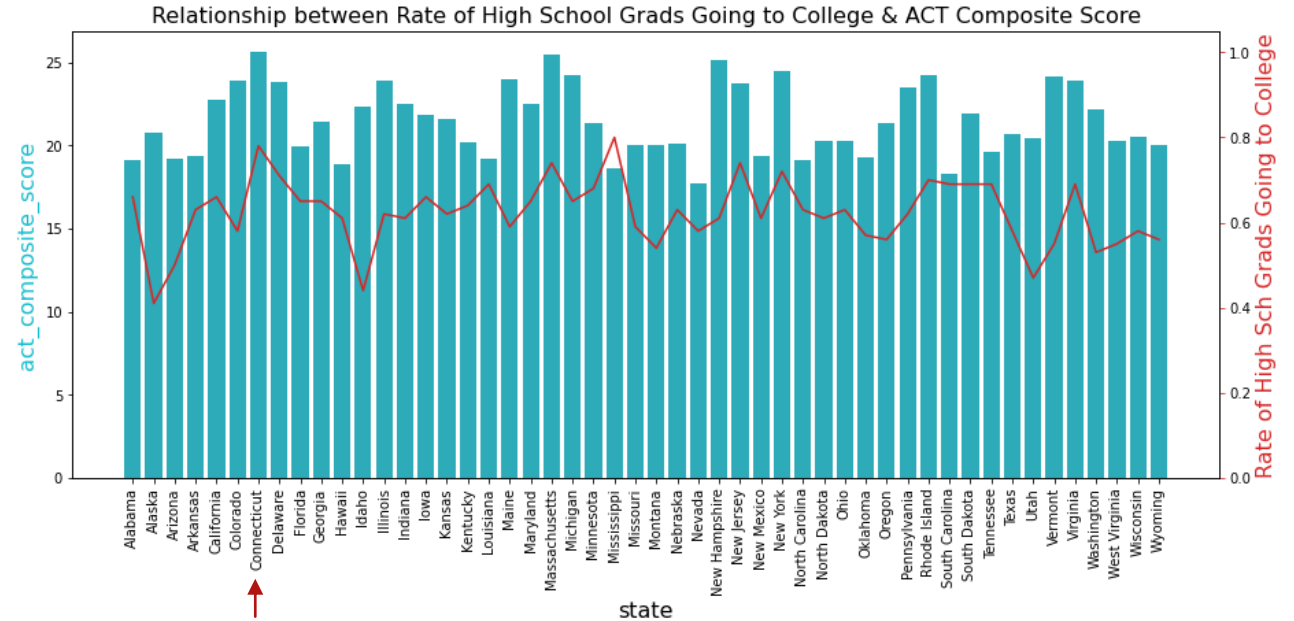
# SAT-mandated states' performance in College admission

- ▶ Only 3 / 11 states had 65% or more high school graduates get into college
- ▶ Connecticut the only exceptional performer



# College Admission Rates vs ACT and SAT Scores

- ▶ Connecticut and Missouri the only outstanding states with high test participation rates, high test scores, and high college admission rates.
- ▶ There is no data amongst other states to support any basis for the mandate of one standardized test over another.



# EMPOWER students to choose their state-sponsored test?

- ▶ Having studied the relationships between percentage of college going high school graduates, standardised test participation rates, and standardised test scores, other than the “outliers” of Connecticut and Missouri (who have done exceptionally in all three categories), there is no evidence to support why certain states enforce upon students only one type of mandatory test.
- ▶ States like Idaho and Tennessee are leading by example in making it mandatory for students to sit for either ACT or SAT as part of their high school graduation requirement. This gives students the fair choice of being able to sit for a test that they feel more capable of excelling in.
- ▶ We can understand the need for standardised tests as a level playing field for students from different backgrounds, but we cannot understand the state’s decision to enforce which test they should take.