

How to Increase SAT Participation Rate?

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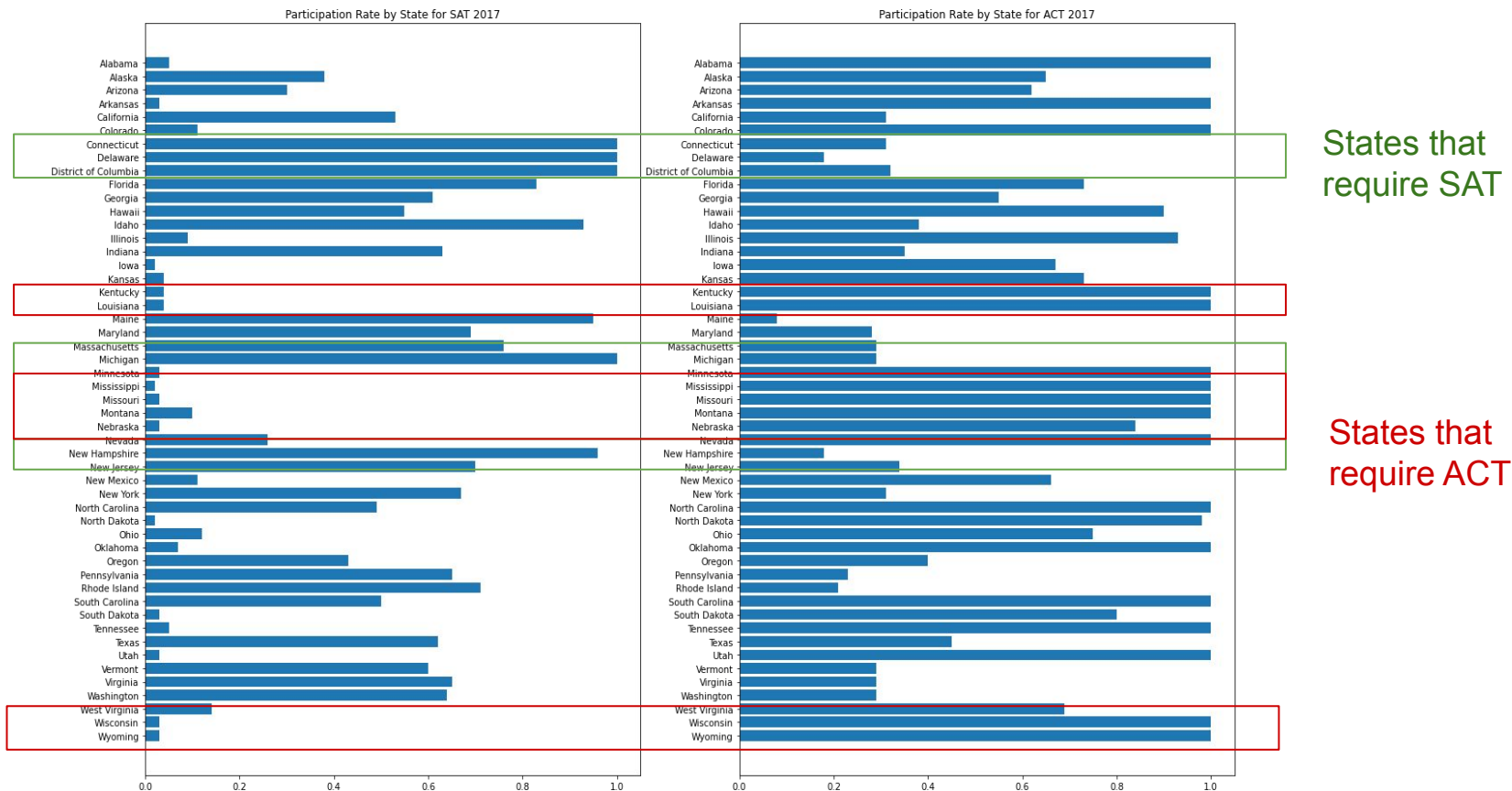
Problem Statement

- As an employee of the SAT College Board and part of a team to monitor statewide participation, this study aims to:
 - Explore trends in the participation of SAT, as well as ACT, over years from 2017-2019; and
 - Identify and provide recommendations on the states which we can focus our resources to improve SAT participation rates.
- Target Audience: College Board (i.e. the organization that administers the SAT).

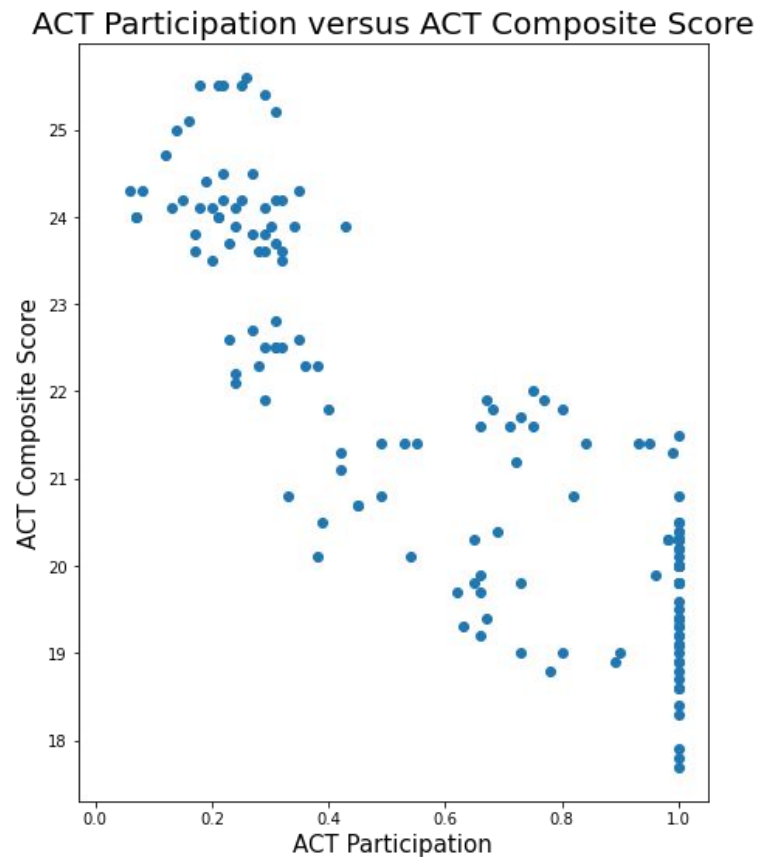
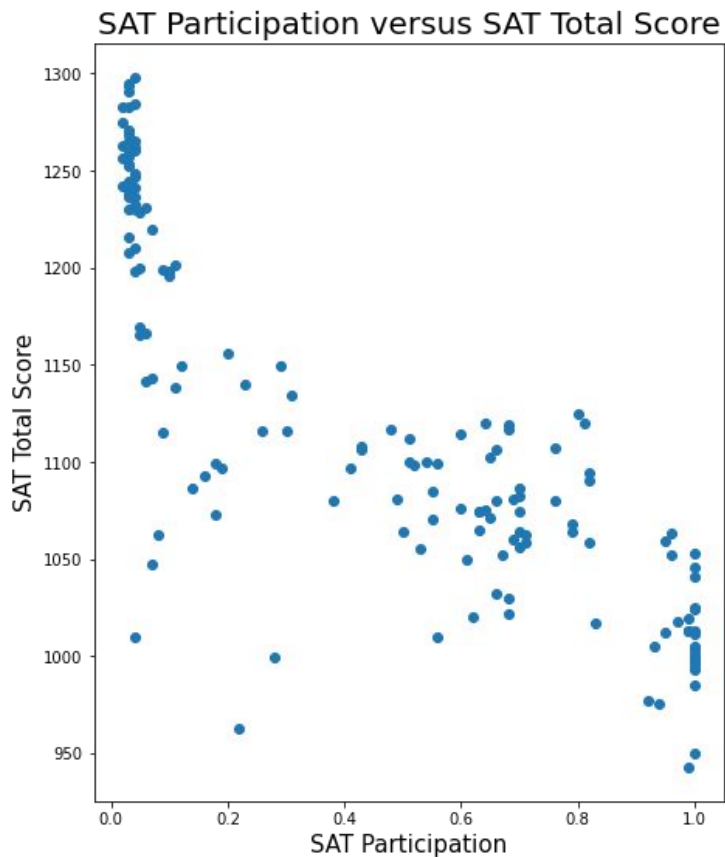
Background

- SAT and ACT are standardized tests that many colleges and universities in the United States require for their admissions process. This score is part of the assessment to determine whether or not a potential student will be accepted to the university.
- SAT and ACT are made mandatory for public school juniors in some states by their respective State Boards of Education, as the results can be used to determine statewide scholastic achievement.
- Preference for one standardized test over another tends to be largely geographical in nature. For this reason, states with high SAT participation are likely to have much lower ACT participation, and vice versa.

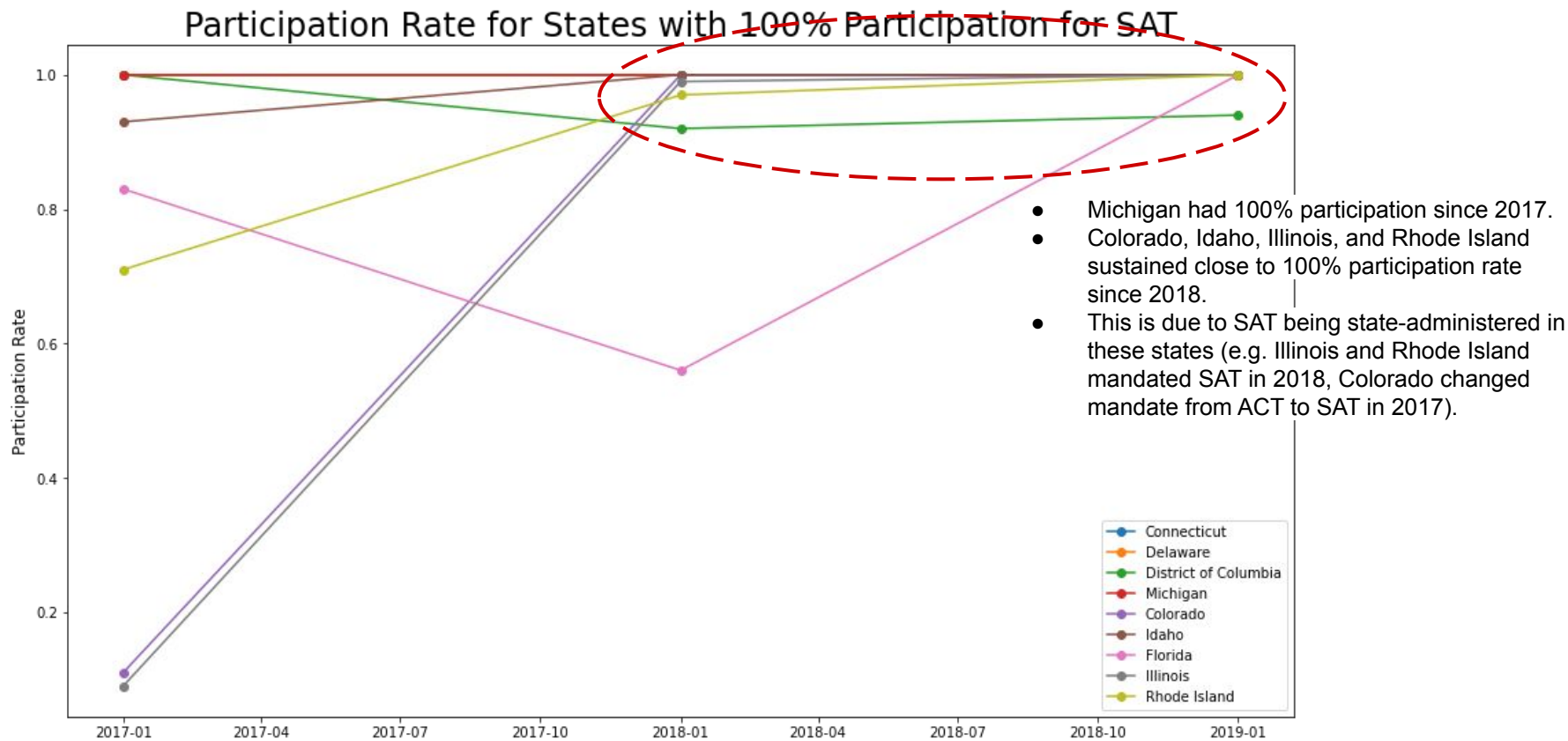
States with high SAT participation are those which made SAT mandatory while those with low participation are those which made ACT mandatory.



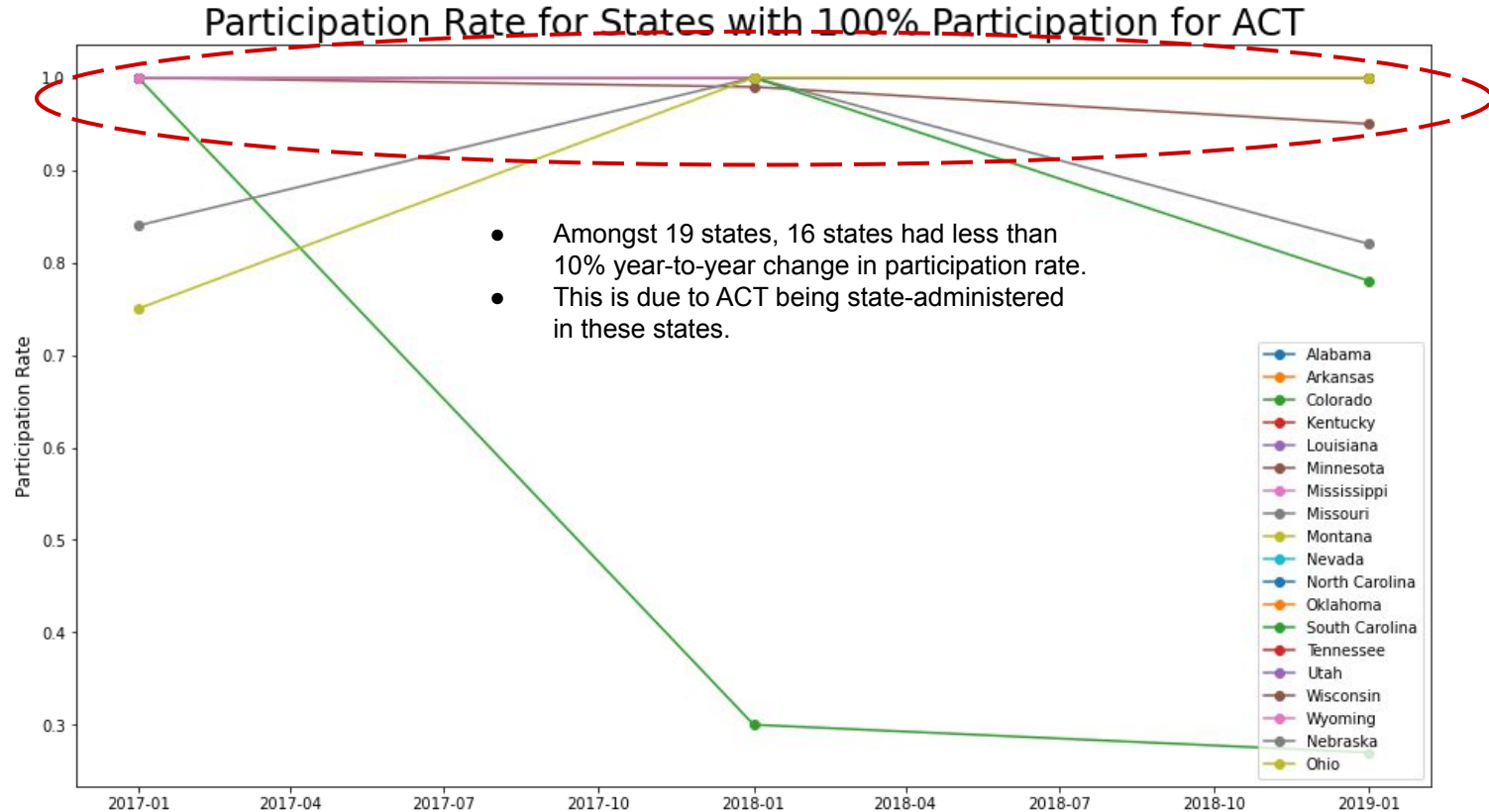
States with low participation generally had high SAT score and high participation had low score. Similarly for ACT.



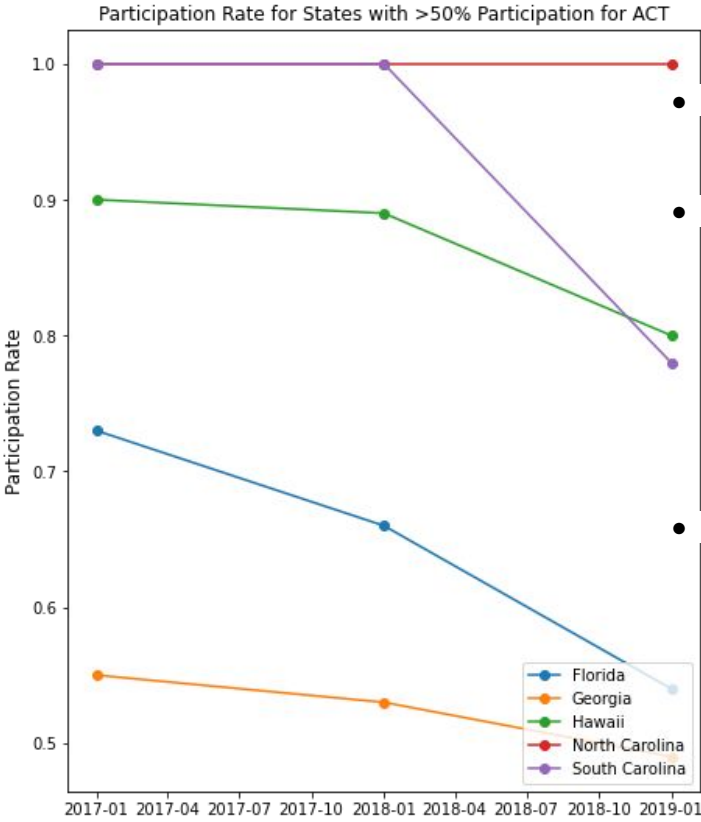
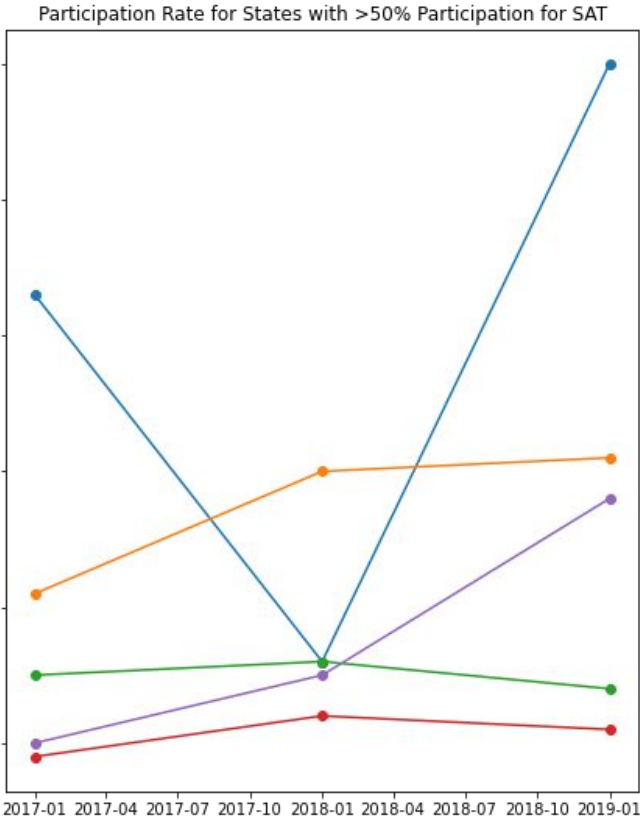
States with 100% participation for SAT typically continue to have high participation thereafter, due to it being made mandatory...



...Similarly, states with 100% participation for ACT had high participation thereafter.



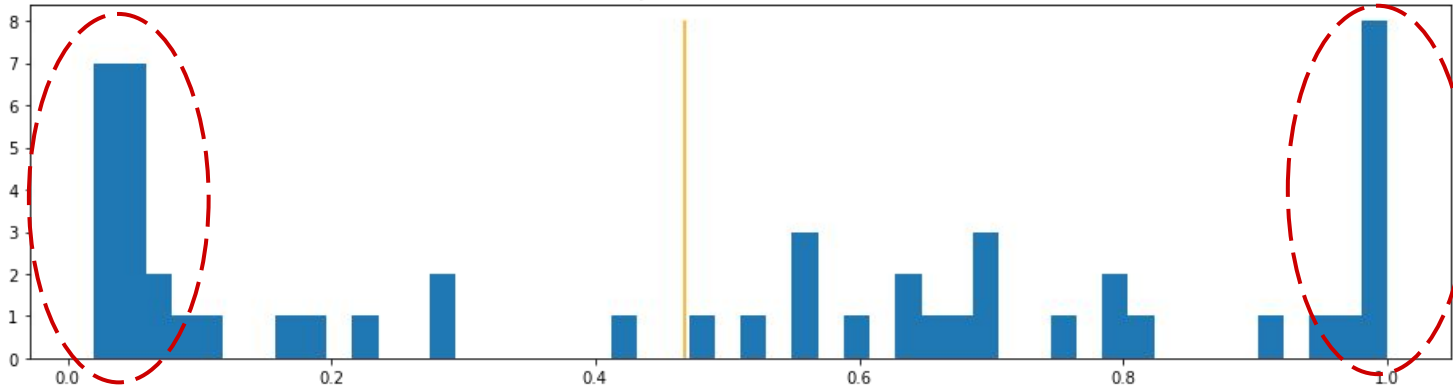
Amongst states with >50% participation for both tests, Florida and Gerogia are currently not mandated to take either test.



- Hawaii, North Carolina and South Carolina are required to take ACT.
- From 2017-2019, their participation was more than 80% for ACT and about 50-60% participation for SAT.
- Participation for Florida and Gerogia was comparable between SAT and ACT but inversely related.

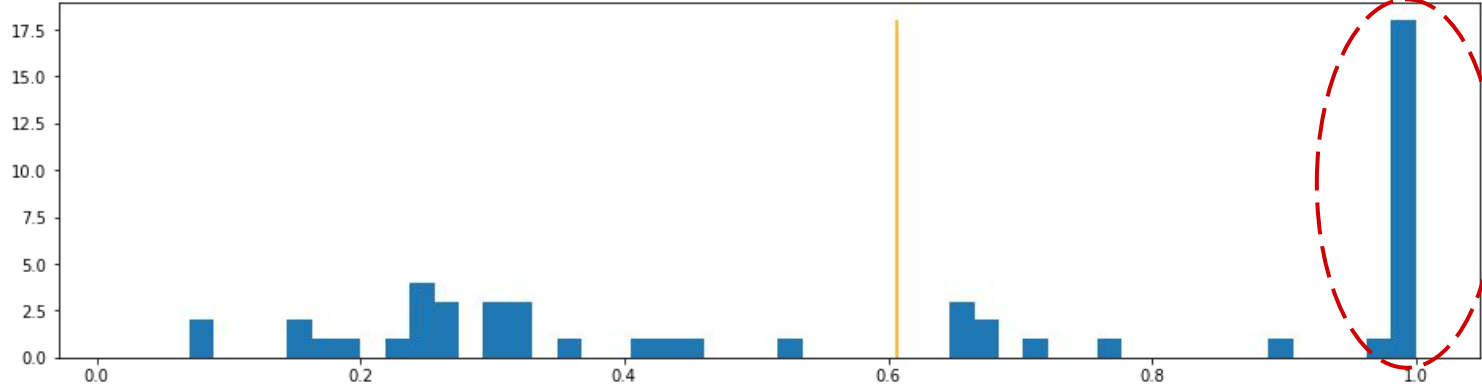
Median participation rate for SAT was relatively low (~55%), as compared to ACT (~65%), suggesting that there is room for improvement.

Participation Rate for SAT in 2018



There are more extreme participation for SAT (about one-third of the states have either 100% or close to 0% participation).

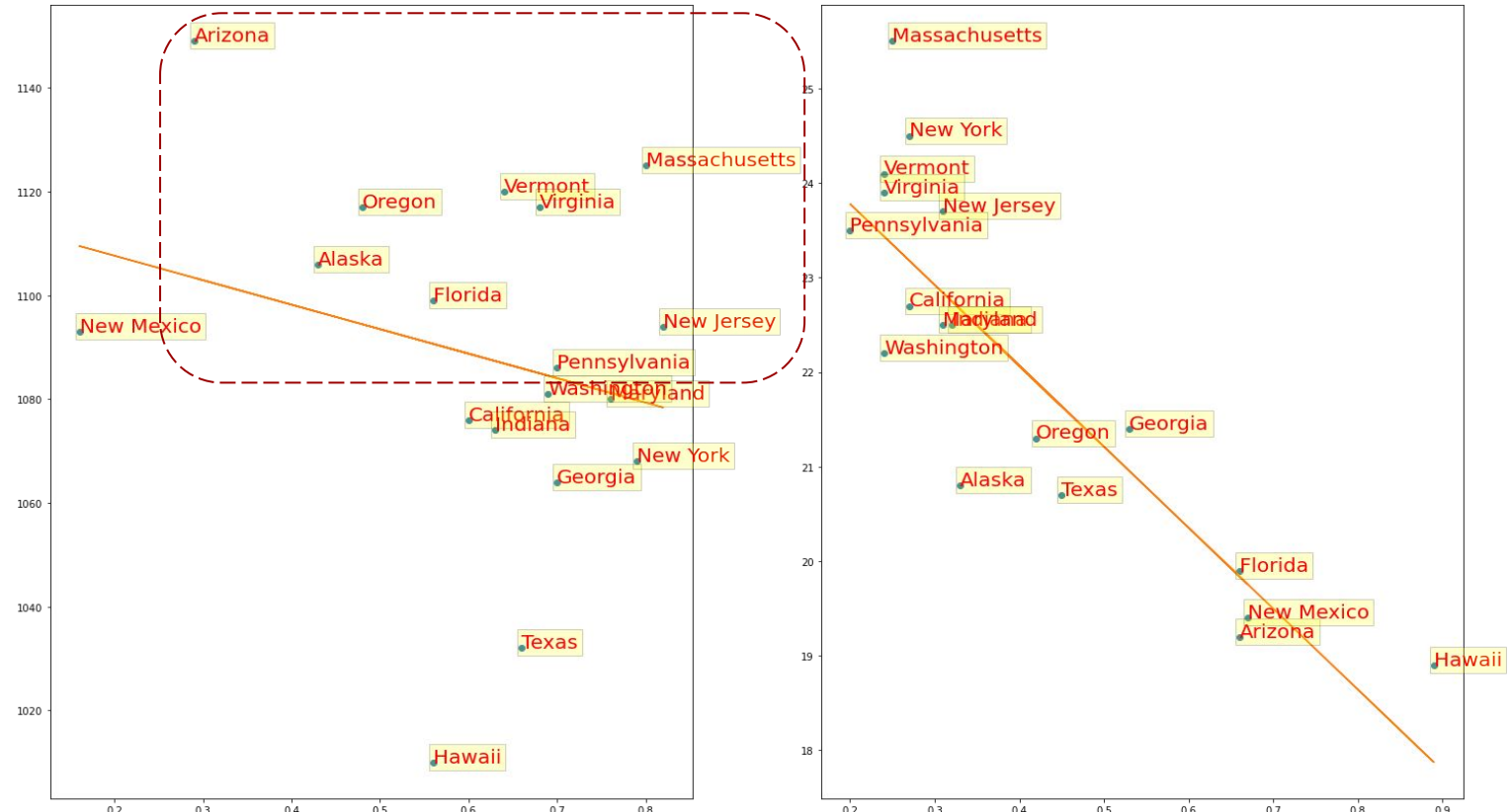
Participation Rate for ACT in 2018



ACT is more widely adopted by states (about one-third of the states having 100% participation).

Excluding states with mandatory tests*, we recommend focusing resources on these states to improve SAT participation.

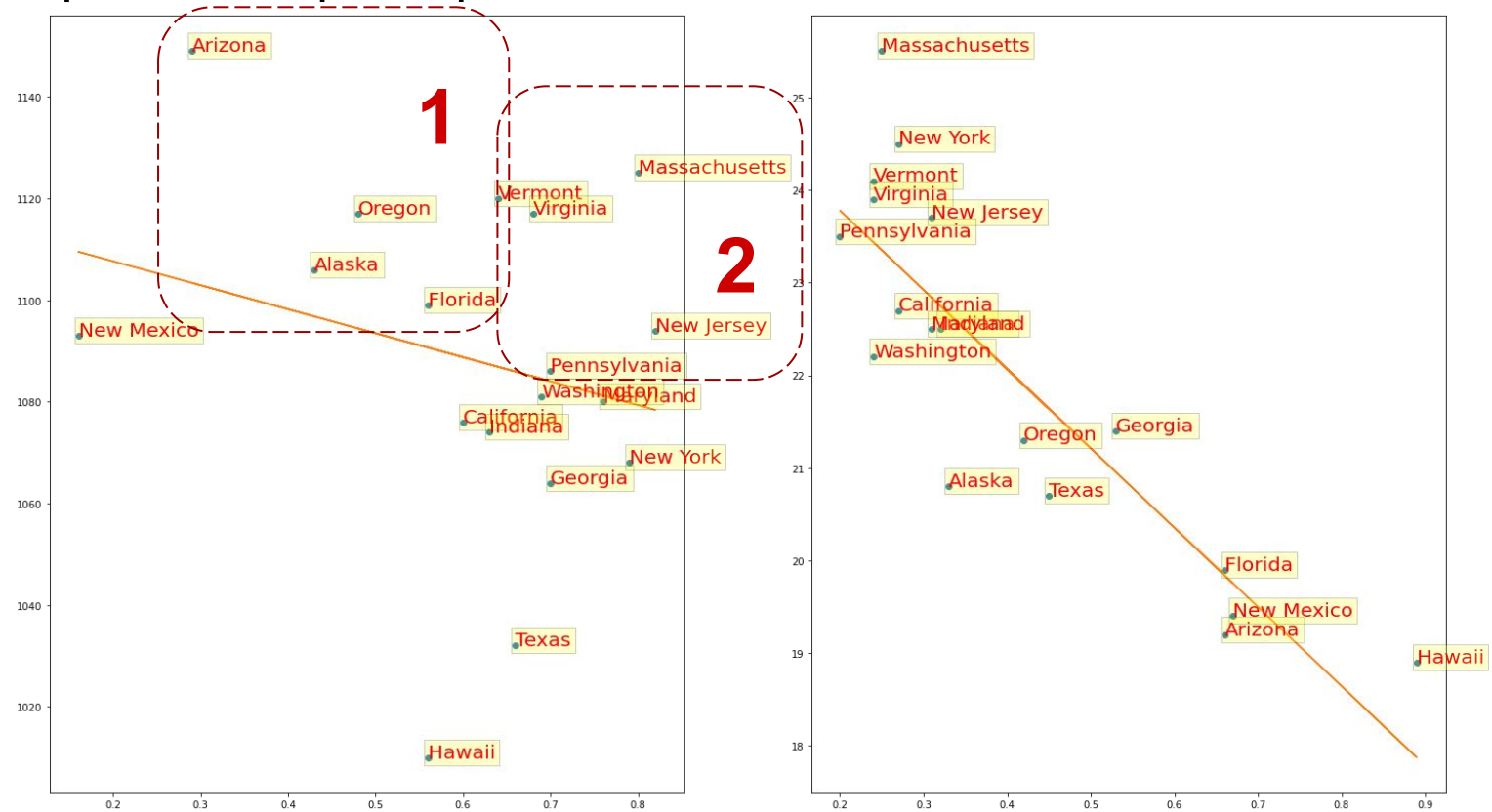
- States above the line had relatively higher SAT participation and score, as compared to the other states.
- These states can be further split into two groups to focus on.



* Excluded states with mandatory ACT/SAT since (a) it is difficult to increase SAT participation for states which have adopted ACT, and (b) states which have adopted SAT are likely to continue to have high participation.

Excluding states with mandatory tests*, we recommend focusing resources on these states to improve SAT participation.

- 1) **Focus first:**
States with relatively high SAT score, as compared to ACT score.
 - As their relative overall score is higher, we can use this as a basis to propose to Boards of Education in these states to make SAT mandatory in their states.
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- 2) **Focus next:**
States with relatively high participation rate, as compared to ACT participation.



* Excluded states with mandatory ACT/SAT since (a) it is difficult to increase SAT participation for states which have adopted ACT, and (b) states which have adopted SAT are likely to continue to have high participation.

Thank You