
SAT vs Act Deep Dive

Overview and Strategies for Increasing SAT Adoption

General Assembly 9.19

Executive Summary

Topline Trends





2017 Wins

2019 Targets

Findings and Implications

Topline Trends: SAT vs ACT across Key KPIs

- **Participation:** SAT has made **strong gains** +15% YoY in country wide participation rate, while the ACT has seen a **slight pullback**
- **Scores:** Both tests have not seen any meaningful variation in total or composite scores, at the aggregate level

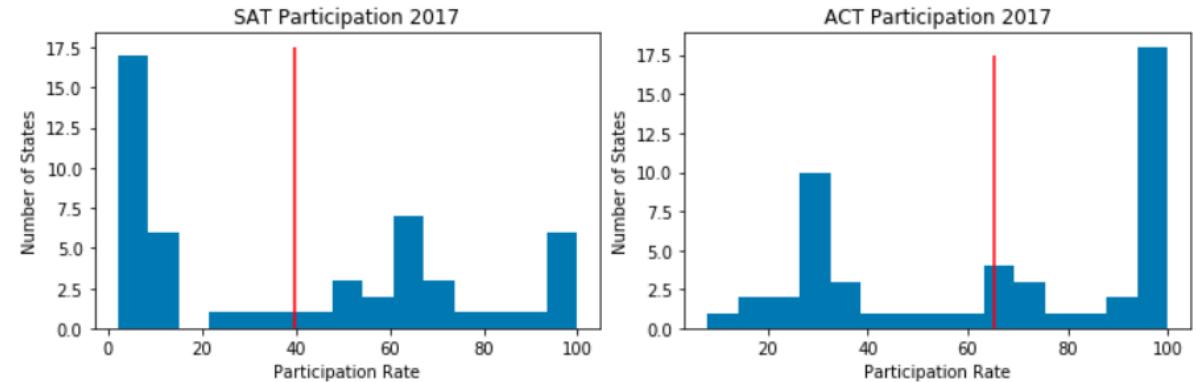
	Avg Participation Rate			Avg Total Score		
	2017	2018		2017	2018	
 CollegeBoard	40%	46%		1126	1120	=
	65%	62%		21	22	=

No meaningful variation at the subtest level year over year.

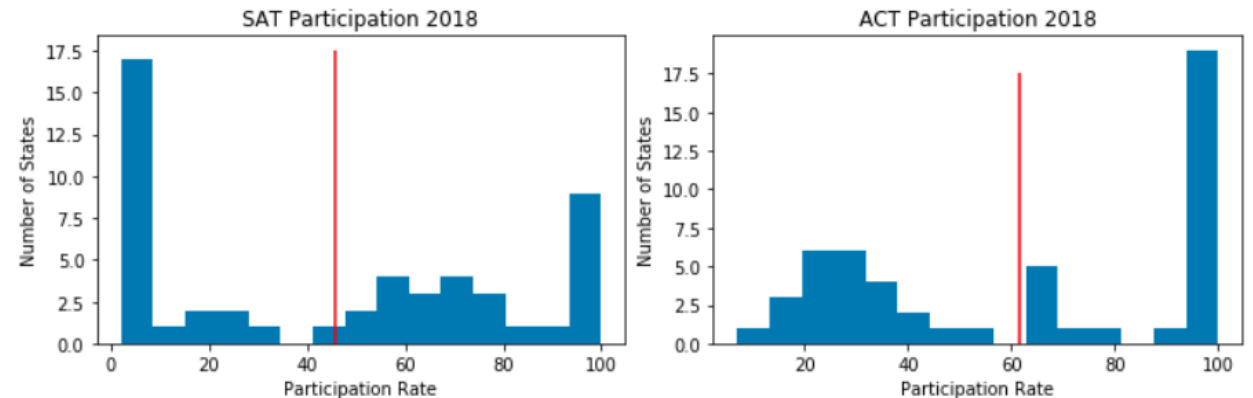
Topline Trends: Participation

- Let's dig deeper into participation rates by assessing distribution state by state
- **Note the extremes for the SAT and ACT distributions.** We can see a greater count of 100% participation states in 2018, and a slight decline in low participation states in 2018
- This is a consequence of state to state regulation/contracts in place

Distribution of State Participation Rates 2017



Distribution of State Participation Rates 2018



Topline Trends: Participation by Geo



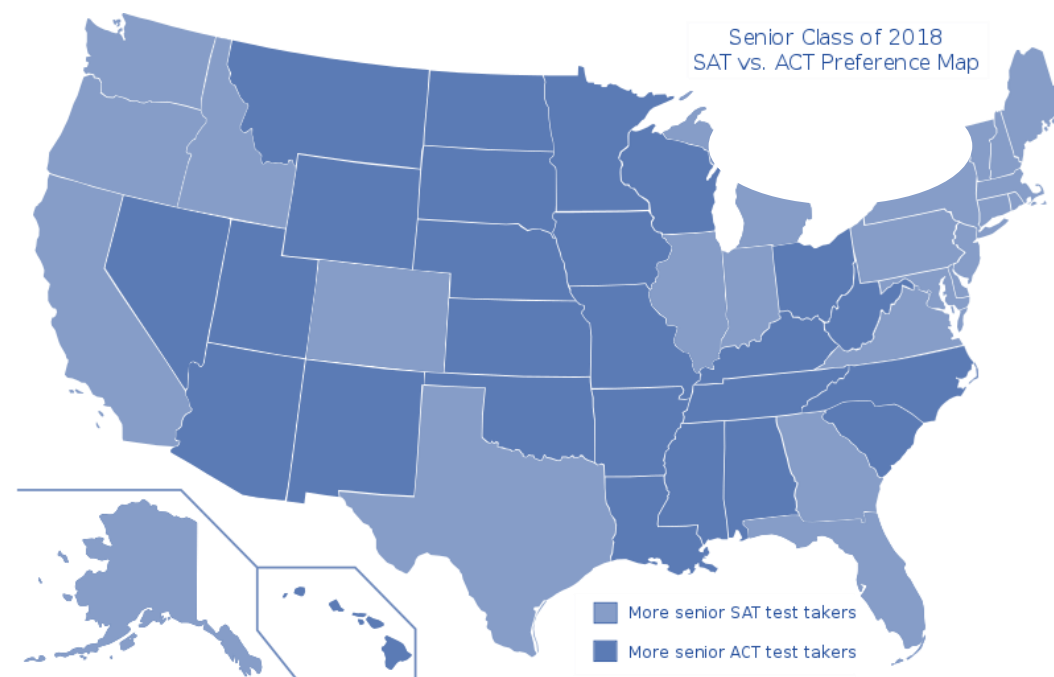
Top States by Participation Rate 2018

Colorado	100%	Alabama	100%
Connecticut	100%	Wisconsin	100%
Delaware	100%	Utah	100%
Michigan	100%	Tennessee	100%
Ohio	100%	Oklahoma	100%

Bottom States by Participation Rate 2018

N. Dakota	2%	Maine	8%
Mississippi	2%	RI	15%
Iowa	2%	NH	16%
Missouri	3%	Delaware	17%
Utah	3%	PA	20%

- Looking at top and bottom states by participation rate for each test further demonstrates **regional preference**
- SAT Preference:** New England / West Coast
- ACT Preference:** Great Plains / Midwest / South



Topline Trends: Participation by Geo



Top States by Participation Rate 2018

Colorado	100%
Connecticut	100%
Delaware	100%
Michigan	100%
Ohio	100%

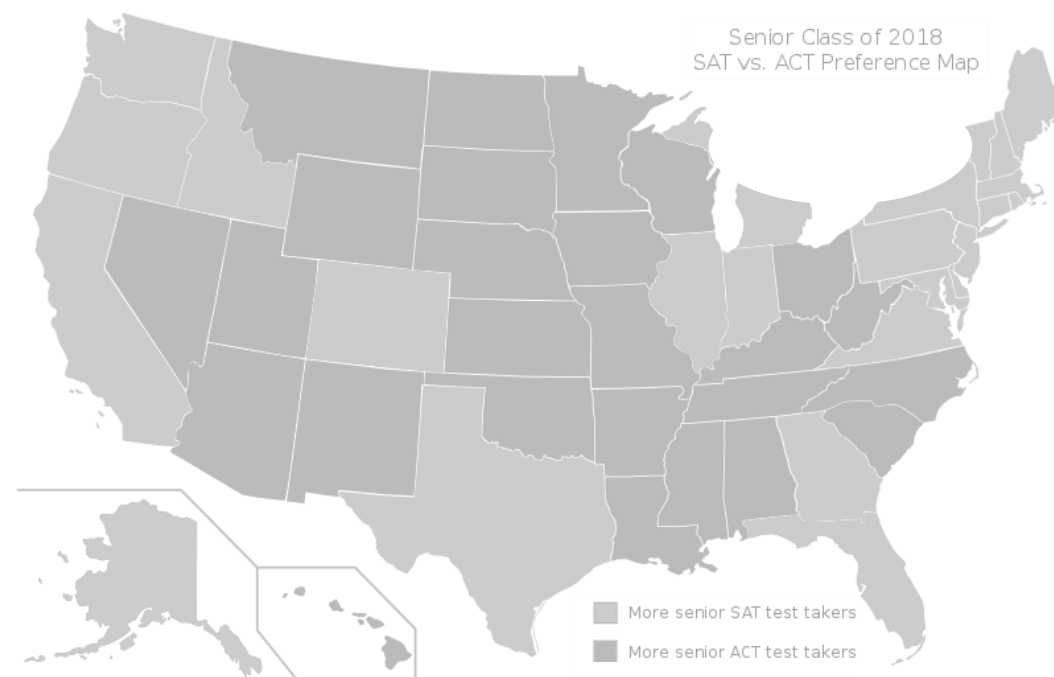
Alabama	100%
Wisconsin	100%
Utah	100%
Tennessee	100%
Oklahoma	100%

Bottom States by Participation Rate 2018

N. Dakota	2%
Mississippi	2%
Iowa	2%
Missouri	3%
Utah	3%

Maine	8%
RI	15%
NH	16%
Delaware	17%
Pennsylvania	20%

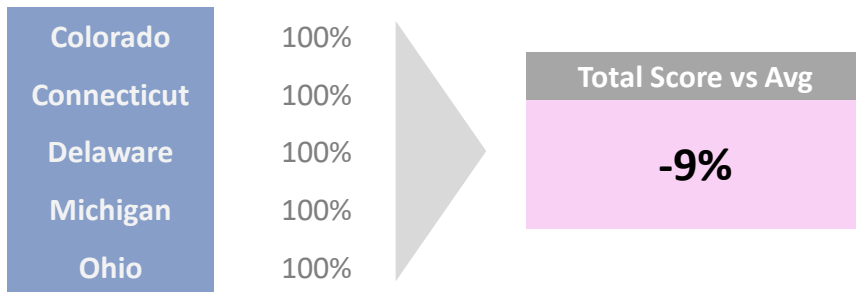
- Looking at top and bottom states by participation rate for each test further demonstrates **regionalization**
- SAT Preference:** New England / West Coast
- ACT Preference:** Great Plains / Midwest / South



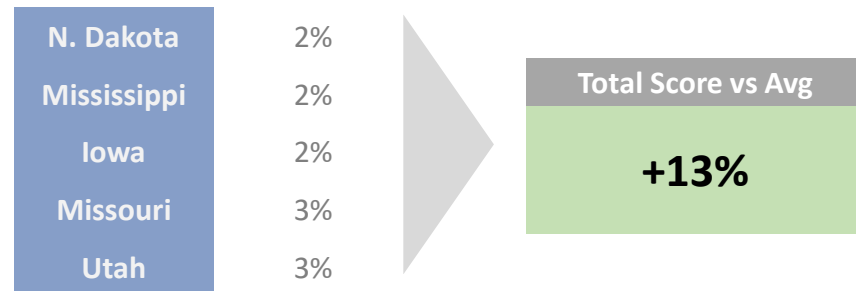
Topline Trends: Participation vs Performance



Top States by Participation Rate 2018

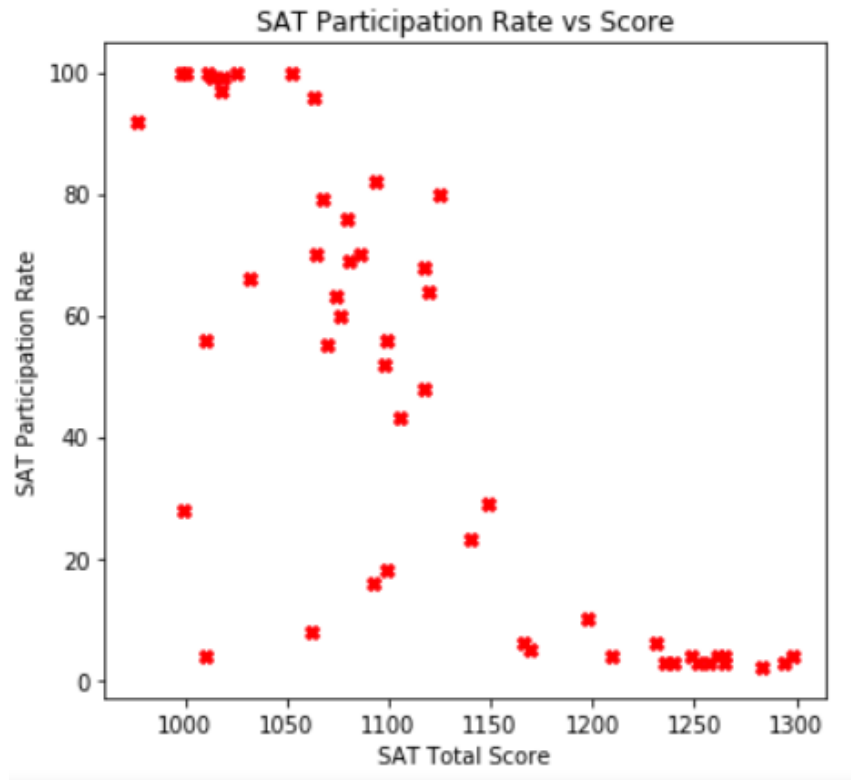


Bottom States by Participation Rate 2018



- Comparing Total SAT scores against 2018 for both buckets, we see an interesting trend emerge: **Top Participating States show lower scores, and Bottom Participating States show higher scores**
 - **Bottom States:** Low participation means SAT not required. Students taking the SAT optionally to bolster their applications for college
 - **Top States:** High participation states means SAT required by all or most high schools. Greater variation student background / motivations

Topline Trends: Participation vs Performance



- Comparing Total SAT scores against 2018 for both buckets, we see an interesting trend emerge: **Top Participating States show lower scores, and Bottom Participating States show higher scores**
 - **Bottom States:** Low participation means SAT not required. Students taking the SAT optionally to bolster their applications for college
 - **Top States:** High participation states means SAT required by all or most high schools. Greater variation student background / motivations
- **Takeaway:** need to think through implications of suffering average scores before boosting participation. What are our score targets, by state, for the next 3-5 years?

2017 Wins

	Virginia	Maine	Colorado	Illinois
2017 Participation Rate	65%	95%	11%	9%
YoY Change	+3pp	+4pp	+89 pp	+90pp
Strategy Employed	Community Outreach	Staff Training	Mandates	Mandates
Details	Increased efforts on outreach and requirements education , particularly among Hispanic population	Introduction of free PSAT coursework and online SAT prep courses administered by staff	State began requiring juniors to take SAT in Spring 2017.	State began requiring seniors to take SAT in Spring 2017.

<https://www.ewa.org/blog-latino-ed-beat/sat-scores-show-hispanics-lag-college-readiness>

<https://www.ewa.org/blog-latino-ed-beat/sat-scores-show-hispanics-lag-college-readiness>

<https://www.chalkbeat.org/posts/co/2019/08/15/sat-scores-are-slightly-down-colorado-find-your-schools-2019-results/>

<https://radio.wosu.org/post/some-students-ohios-college-testing-requirement-gets-pass#stream/0>

2019 Targets

Bifurcated Strategic Approach To Growing Participation

States Using SAT Already

Family / Community Outreach

High School Staff Training

Branded Career Readiness Classes

States with ACT Preference

Monitor Bid Opportunities / Expirations

Waive Fees

“SAT School Day”

Looking Ahead to 2019

Priority Targets

States Using SAT Already				
State	Current Participation	Estimated Participation	High School Population*	Est Incremental Revenue
California	60%	63%	2,322,076	\$71,694,117
Pennsylvania	70%	90%	767,420	\$27,339,353
Washington	69%	90%	422,815	\$14,861,977
Mass	80%	90%	405,475	\$16,371,073

States with ACT Preference				
State	Current Participation	Estimated Participation	High School Population*	Est Incremental Revenue
Wisconsin	3%	90%	345,076	\$15,571,568
Kentucky	4%	90%	264,624	\$11,941,198
Louisiana	4%	90%	278,927	\$12,586,617
Missouri	4%	90%	363,480	\$16,402,072

Looking Ahead to 2019

Priority Targets

States Using SAT Already				
State	Current Participation	Estimated Participation	High School Population*	Est Incremental Revenue
California	60%	63%	2,322,076	\$14,861,977
Pennsylvania	70%	90%	767,000	\$27,339,353
Washington	69%	90%	22,815	\$14,861,977
Mass	80%		405,475	\$16,371,073

States with ACT Preference				
State	Current Participation	Estimated Participation	High School Population*	Est Incremental Revenue
Wisconsin	3%	90%	345,076	\$15,571,568
Kentucky	4%	90%	264,624	\$11,941,198
Louisiana	4%	90%	278,927	\$12,586,617
Missouri	4%	90%	363,480	\$16,402,072

Work with Ops, Marketing Depts to overlay costs at state level

Findings and Implications

Findings

- SAT has seen growth in participation rate, but lags ACT
- Regionalization as it relates to test preference. SAT States Middle America/South
- Need to remember as we boost participation, score averages likely to fall
- College Board saw success leveraging both Direct and Indirect methods for boost participation in 2017
- Major revenue opportunities: CA, WI, WA, MA; WI, KY, LA, MO

Implications

- Incorporate deeper view of participation rates at district level to identify problem areas
- Deploy two pronged approach for boosting participation rates
 - **For states where SAT well established,** leverage community outreach / career-training initiatives
 - **For states major ACT preference,** identify new contractual opportunities and leverage “SAT Day” / Fee omission to boost participation