



How to increase SAT participation rates in South Carolina



Dominic Teo, Desmond Poo & Ray Chia



Problem Statement

In March 2016, the College Board had overhauled the design of the SAT test. Since then, we have evaluated data on the ACT and SAT participation rate by states for year 2017 and 2018.

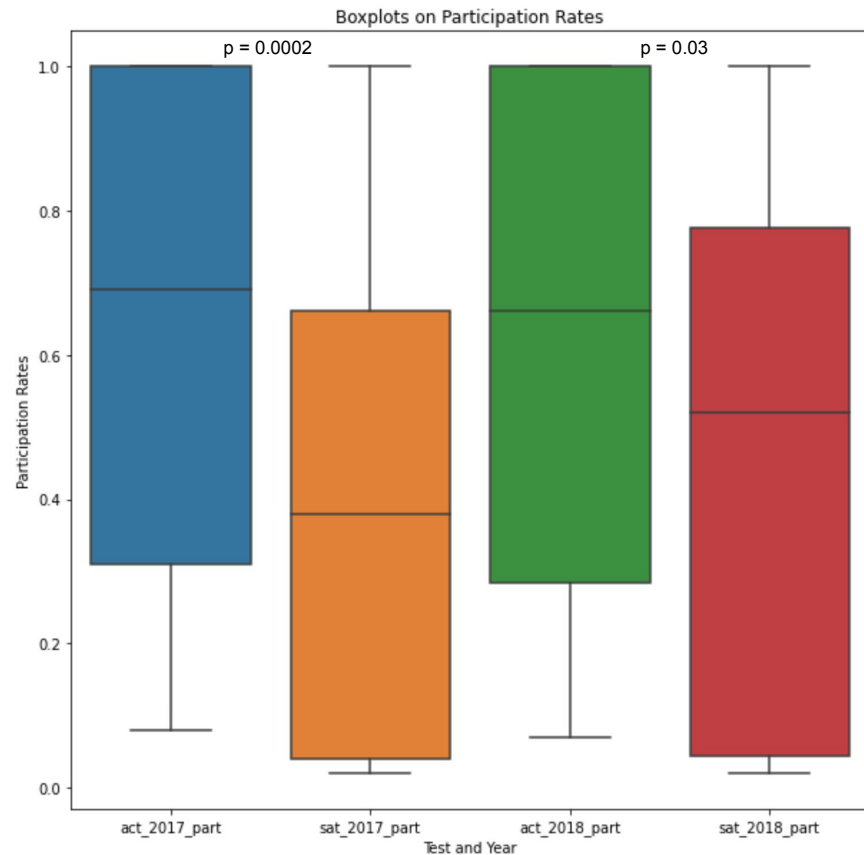
To identify any potential strategies the College Board may employ to further improve SAT participation rates in South Carolina moving forward.



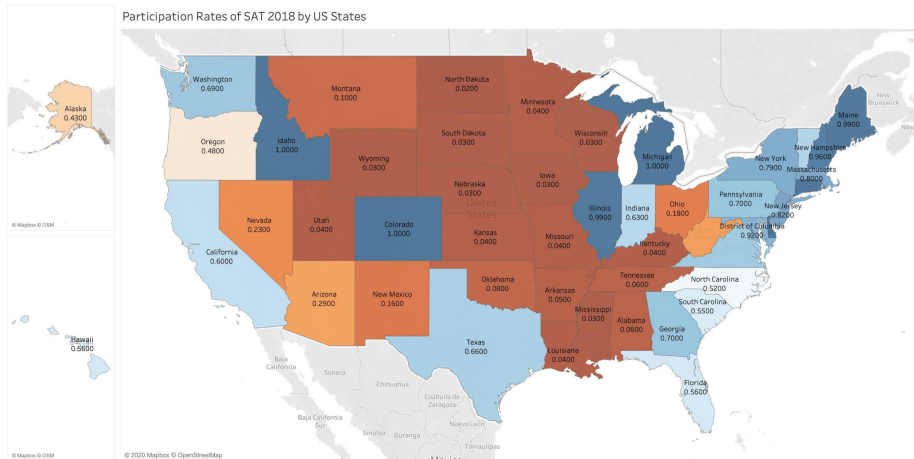


Current State

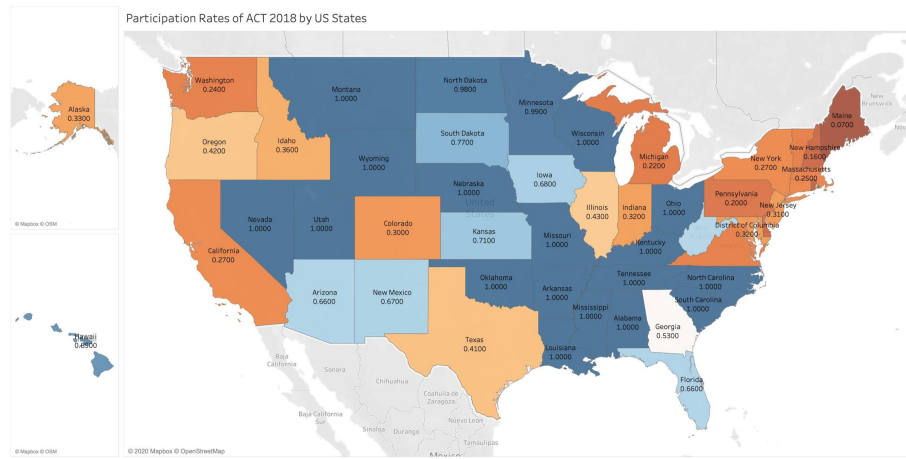
- Currently, it appears that the ACT is leading compared to the SAT in participation rates.
- More states have 100% participation in ACT as compared to SAT.



Participation rates by States



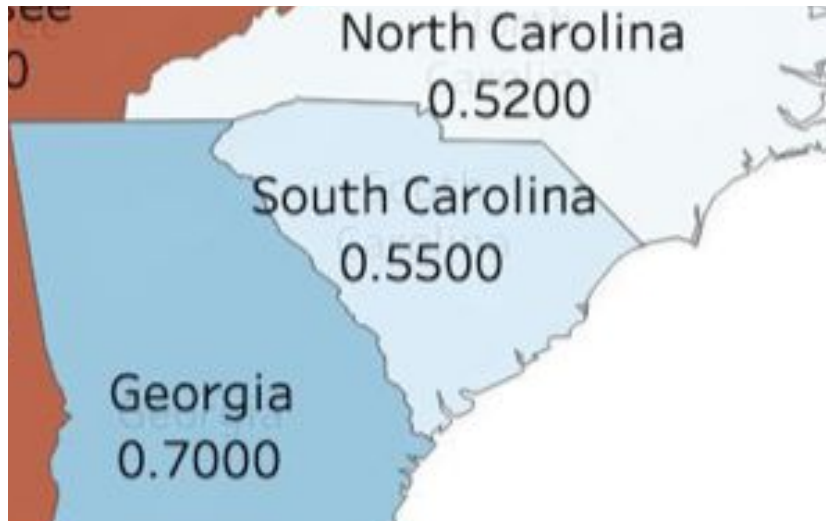
SAT Preferred by Coastal States



ACT Preferred by Midwestern States



Focusing on South Carolina



SAT Participation Rates



ACT Participation Rates



Why target South Carolina?





States that Require Mandatory Testing

ACT

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

SAT

- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Maine
- Michigan
- New Hampshire
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Rhode Island
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- West Virginia

Why South Carolina?

- Leverage on the mandatory testing requirement in South Carolina
- Mandatory testing has proven to be an effective way of improving state participation rates
- Almost all states with mandatory testing requirement reported 100% participation

	state	act_2017_part	act_2018_part
0	Alabama	1.00	1.00
11	Hawaii	0.90	0.89
17	Kentucky	1.00	1.00
18	Louisiana	1.00	1.00
24	Mississippi	1.00	1.00
26	Montana	1.00	1.00
27	Nebraska	0.84	1.00
28	Nevada	1.00	1.00
33	North Carolina	1.00	1.00
34	North Dakota	0.98	0.98
35	Ohio	0.75	1.00
36	Oklahoma	1.00	1.00
40	South Carolina	1.00	1.00
42	Tennessee	1.00	1.00
44	Utah	1.00	1.00
49	Wisconsin	1.00	1.00
50	Wyoming	1.00	1.00

	state	sat_2017_part	sat_2018_part
5	Colorado	0.11	1.00
6	Connecticut	1.00	1.00
7	Delaware	1.00	1.00
8	District of Columbia	1.00	0.92
12	Idaho	0.93	1.00
13	Illinois	0.09	0.99
19	Maine	0.95	0.99
22	Michigan	1.00	1.00
29	New Hampshire	0.96	0.96
35	Ohio	0.12	0.18
36	Oklahoma	0.07	0.08
39	Rhode Island	0.71	0.97
40	South Carolina	0.50	0.55
42	Tennessee	0.05	0.06
48	West Virginia	0.14	0.28



Why South Carolina?

- South Carolina is one of the few states which reported more than 50% participation in both ACT and SAT
- SAT participation rates in South Carolina is still on the rise, increasing from 50% in 2017 to 55% in 2018
- This shows that South Carolina is still favourable towards the SAT and could be swayed back.

	state	act_2018_part	sat_2018_part
9	Florida	0.66	0.56
10	Georgia	0.53	0.70
11	Hawaii	0.89	0.56
33	North Carolina	1.00	0.52
40	South Carolina	1.00	0.55

	state	sat_2017_part	sat_2018_part
40	South Carolina	0.5	0.55



Recommendation 1: SAT school day



What is SAT school day?

- Take SAT on a weekday, in their own school
- Rolled out to 10 states as of SAT 2017-18
- Benefits include:
 - Convenience: no need to worry about locating the right venue
 - Comfort: familiar test environment with people they know
- **South Carolina is not part of SAT school day program yet**



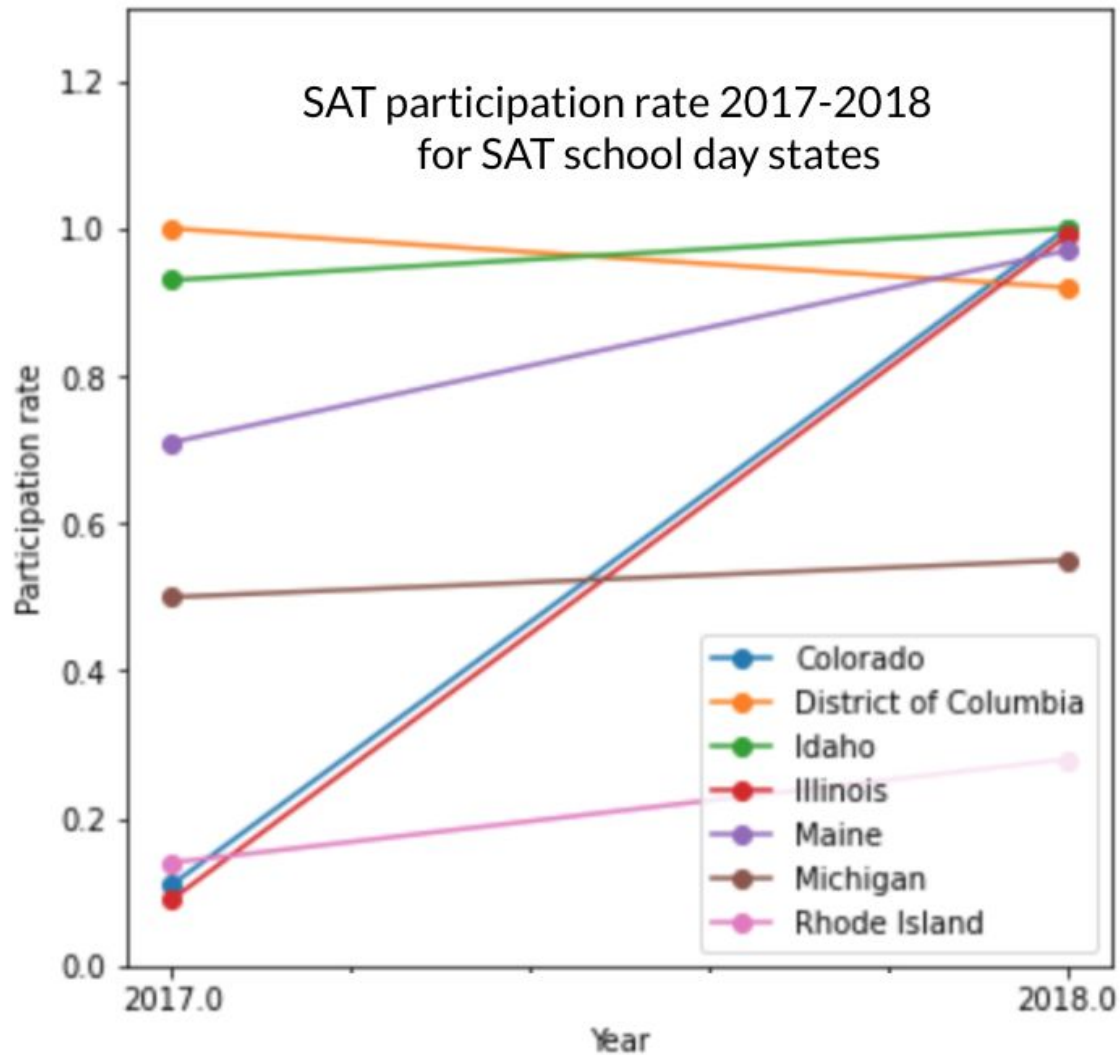


How effective is SAT school day in raising participation rates?



What does the data show?

state	sat_2017_participation	sat_2018_participation	act_2017_participation	act_2018_participation
Colorado	0.11	1.00	1.00	0.30
Connecticut	1.00	1.00	0.31	0.26
Delaware	1.00	1.00	0.18	0.17
District of Columbia	1.00	0.92	0.32	0.32
Idaho	0.93	1.00	0.38	0.36
Illinois	0.09	0.99	0.93	0.43
Maine	0.95	0.99	0.08	0.07
Michigan	1.00	1.00	0.29	0.22
Rhode Island	0.71	0.97	0.21	0.15
South Carolina	0.50	0.55	1.00	1.00
West Virginia	0.14	0.28	0.69	0.65



What does the data show?



state	sat_rate_of_change(%)	act_rate_of_change(%)
Colorado	809.0	-70.0
Connecticut	0.0	-16.0
Delaware	0.0	-6.0
District of Columbia	-8.0	0.0
Idaho	8.0	-5.0
Illinois	1000.0	-54.0
Maine	4.0	-12.0
Michigan	0.0	-24.0
Rhode Island	37.0	-29.0
South Carolina	10.0	0.0
West Virginia	100.0	-6.0




Therefore...

Consider investing in scaling SAT school day program to include South Carolina:

- SAT already gaining traction
- SAT school states shows propensity to switch from ACT





Recommendation 2: Encouraging students to take PSAT early





What is PSAT?

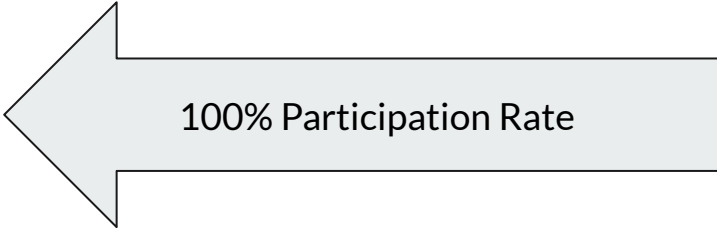
- PSAT is an **Preliminary SAT**, like a practice test
- For 8th - 11th grader
- Students can start practising SAT examinations 4 years before
- basis for the National Merit Scholarship Program



Best practice case study: District of Columbia



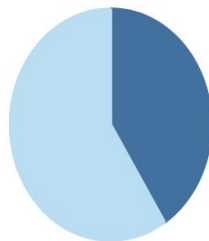
state	percentage_of_sat_students_tested_in_2017
District of Columbia	100.0
South Carolina	50.0



9th Grader PSAT Takers (District of Columbia, 100 % participation rate for SAT)

Class of 2021

PSAT 8/9 Takers ³	2,983
9th-Grade Enrollment ²	7,296
Participation Rate	41%



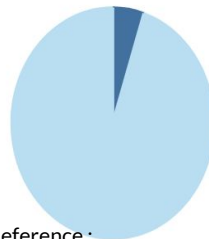
41% of 9th graders
took the PSAT 8/9
in 2017-18

<https://reports.collegeboard.org/pdf/2018-south-carolina-sat-suite-assessments-annual-report.pdf> (page 3)

9th Grader PSAT Takers (South Carolina, 50% participation rate for SAT)

Class of 2021

PSAT 8/9 Takers ³	3,341
9th-Grade Enrollment ²	66,454
Participation Rate	5%



5% of 9th graders
took the PSAT 8/9
in 2017-18

Reference :

<https://reports.collegeboard.org/pdf/2018-district-columbia-sat-suite-assessments-annual-report.pdf> (page 3)

Therefore...

Consider investing:

- Lowering PSAT test fees for younger student to encourage early preparation for SATS
- Creating more school awareness talks on PSAT
- Offering more support on e-learning portals



In conclusion...

Consider investing for South Carolina:

- SAT School Day program
- Encourage PSAT early adoption
- South Carolina is still favourable towards the SAT





Thank you.

