

Reclaiming the Lead

Back to Relevance for the SAT

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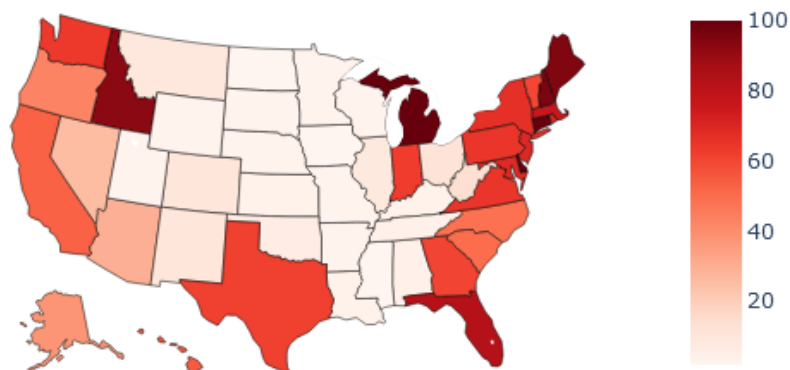
8 Nov 2020

Background

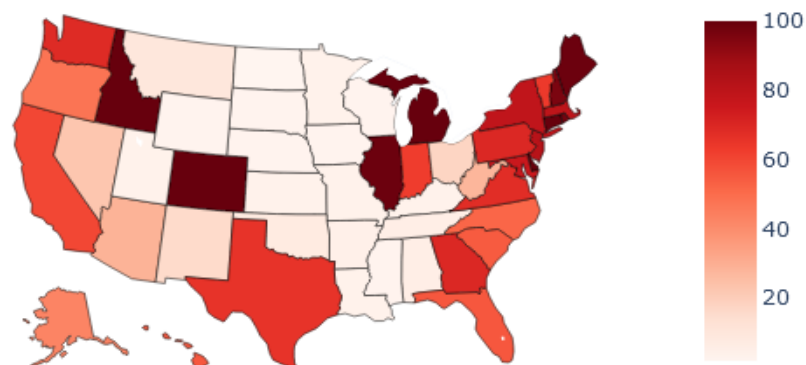
- The SAT was once the most widely used college admission exam in the US
- However, its dominance was lost to the ACT in 2012
- Major design changes to the SAT exam was announced and implemented in 2016
- With a full year after implementation, we analyze the results and success using the SAT and ACT participation and scoring data by states in 2017 and 2018
- From these insights, we suggest strategies and recommendations aiming to reclaim the lead and exert our dominance

Current SAT / ACT Landscape

2017 SAT Participation (%)



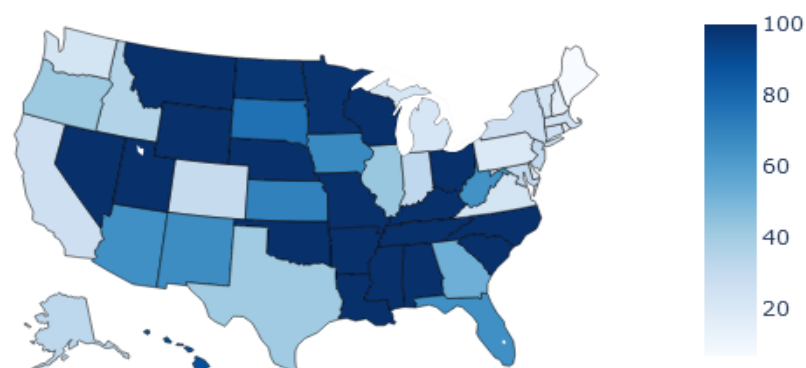
2018 SAT Participation (%)



2017 ACT Participation (%)

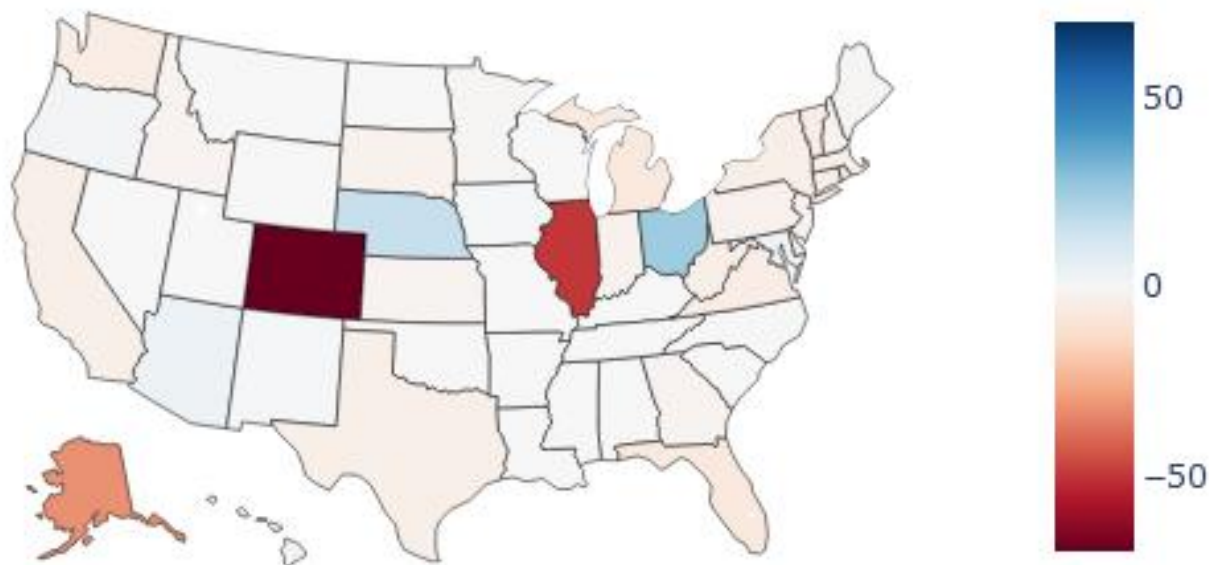


2018 ACT Participation (%)



What changed over the past year...

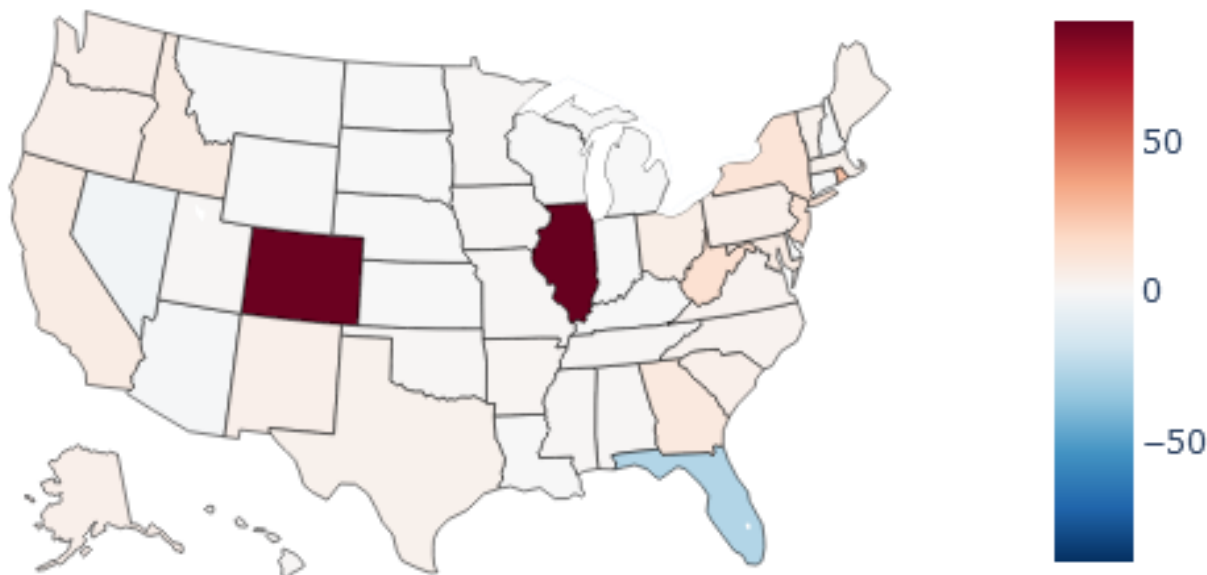
Change in ACT Participation rate, 2017-2018 (%)



- Sharp decline in Colorado (70ppt), Illinois (50ppt) and Alaska (32ppt)
- Made gains in Ohio (25ppt) and Nevada (16ppt)
- Overall, slight decreased in participation rates (<5%) across many of the states

What changed over the past year...

Change in SAT Participation rate, 2017-2018 (%)



- Decline in Florida (27ppt), and only slightly in Nevada (3ppt) and Arizona (1ppt)
- Made major gains in Illinois (90ppt) and Colorado (89ppt)
- Overall, encouraging modest gains (5-10ppt) along the east and west coasts as well

Identify a State

- Frame the selection criteria
- Identify a state to focus on

Working the Grounds

- Collecting focused, detailed data from various stakeholders:
 - Individuals taking ACT and/ or SAT
 - Schools & Educators
 - Parents
 - State

Creating Success Stories

- Creating success stories through support of:
 - The local communities
 - Minorities & Disadvantaged groups

Arizona – The Next Battleground

Criteria

- Low SAT participation (but not non-existent)
- Not currently under ACT statewide contract

Sub-filters

- High addressable market
 - High population / Persons under 18

Result

- Arizona was selected which fits all our criteria and filters

Arizona	
Population	7,278,717
Persons under 18	22.5%
Black or African-American alone	5.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	5.3%
Asian alone	3.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.3%
Hispanic or Latino	31.7%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	54.1%
SAT / ACT Participation Rates (2018)	29% / 66%

Data points

- High school graduates will be the main focus
- Others include high schools, educators, parents and the state itself

Collection Methods

- Detailed interviews / Surveys / Focus Groups
- Reveal underlying motivations to choose SAT / ACT

Analyze & Execute

- Data collected is cleaned and analyzed
- Look for trends in motivating factors (why SAT / ACT ?)
- Look for potential barriers
- Create ease of access and motivation for students to attempt the SAT

Leverage on College Board

- Leverage on College Board's suite of programs and activities
 - SAT School Days
 - Access to the AP Program
 - Scholarships

Advocate for & Support Minority Groups

- Arizona has a diverse population group
- More than 46% are non-White
- Access and support for minorities & disadvantaged groups

Create Success Stories

- Creating success stories that the local communities can identify with
- Position SAT as the assessment of choice for high school graduates

Identify Similar States

- In our initial search, we had a list of 6 states:

States	SAT / ACT Participation (2018)
Arizona	29% / 66%
West Virginia	28% / 65%
New Mexico	16% / 67%
Kansas	4% / 71%
South Dakota	3% / 77%
Iowa	3% / 68%

Replicating Success

- Replicate the strategies from Arizona to these states
- Alleviate SAT to become a unique brand leader in the minds of high school graduates, educators, colleges, and parents
- Increase dominance over the ACT

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