

# Up with SAT<sup>®</sup>

What does the data say about how best to increase SAT<sup>®</sup> participation around the country?

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# Agenda

1. Context and setup (1 min)
2. Executive summary (1 min)
3. Problem statement (1 min)
4. Process (2 min):
  - Data import & cleaning: Quick overview
  - Data analysis & Data visualization
  - Statistical review
5. Observations (2 min)
6. Recommendations (3 min)
7. Questions

# Context and setup

1. At the College Board, we're a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success
2. In service of that mandate, we revamped core aspects of our testing rubric in 2016
3. Now, we have two subsequent years worth of data to help us assess progress and guide our next steps
4. My data-science colleagues and I have been asked to review the aggregate scores and participation rates for SAT and our nearest competitor, ACT – and to incorporate any other necessary research, and share our observations and recommendations with you today

# Executive summary

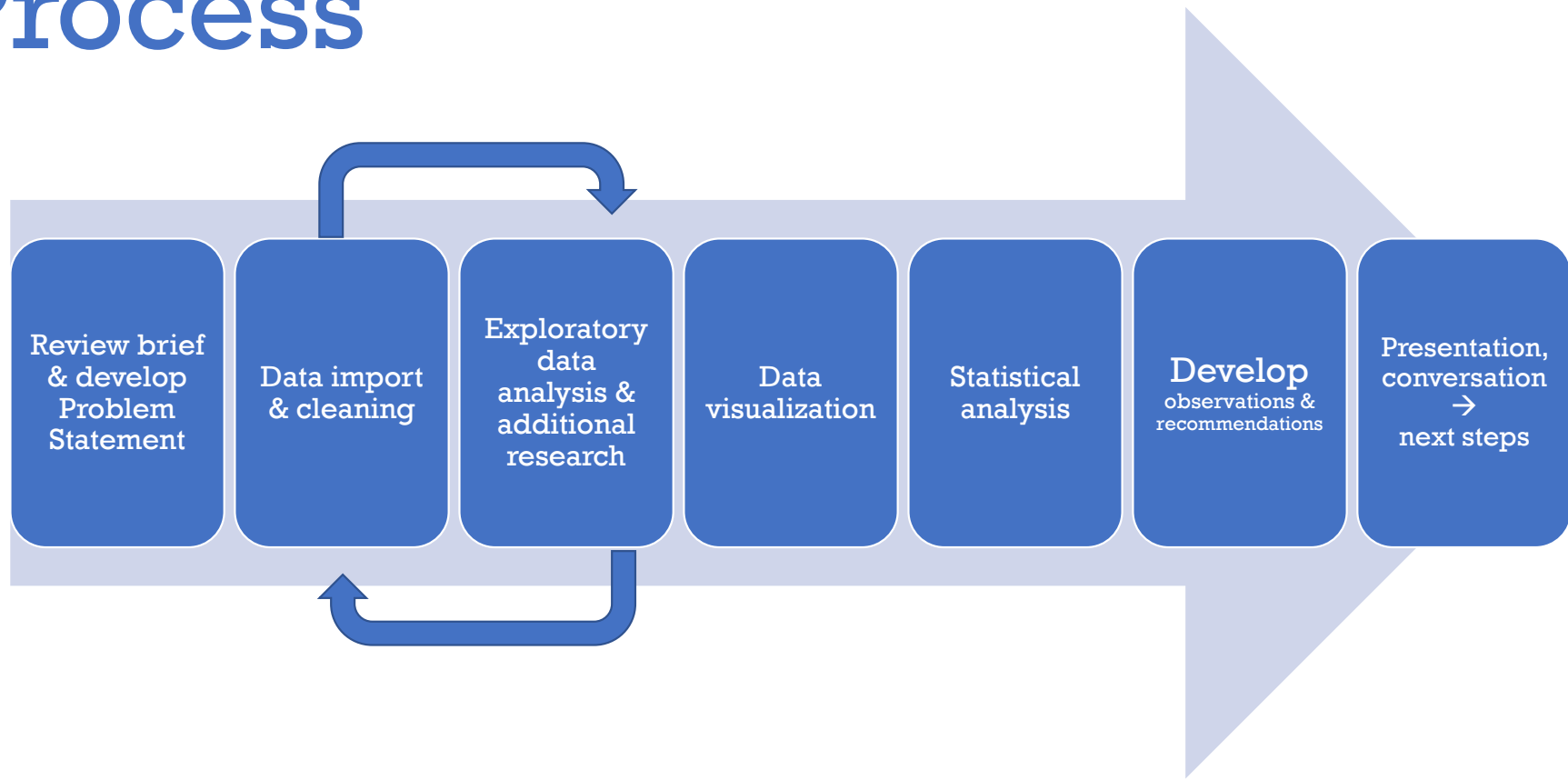
- We possess valuable data on participation rates and test scoring for SAT and ACT (which we will review today)
- We have conducted additional research to plot a secondary dataset that enhances our insights (which we will also review)
- This data charts the regulatory status of SAT and ACT at the state level across the country with regards to:
  1. mandating one test or the other, and
  2. State financial coverage for one, either or both tests
- All of this data informs our recommendations for future action and success

# Problem statement

Given our internal and ACT-published data at hand, as well as supplementary research:

- What observations can be made in relation to scoring, statewide participation metrics, and any other relevant data, that can provide insights for our mission to increase SAT test-taker numbers across the country?
- And what recommendations for action can be drawn from this data?

# Process



# Observations

- Through our research, we determined that we needed to augment our data with an additional dataset: information on state mandating of SAT or ACT and state financial coverage for the tests
- This data provides key context that should inform our recommendations
- Let's take a closer look

# State mandate/coverage

- While it may seem viable to draw conclusions from our existing participation and scoring data, it leaves gaps in our understanding
- For instance, some states report 100% participation in the SAT. We can plot the data for trends over time, but it's critical to know if a state is at 100% because of our own recruitment and marketing efforts, or if it's because the state government says “you must take the SAT, and/or they pay for it



# Recommendations

## 1. Focus on the battleground states:

### Who?

- Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia

### Why?

- These are the states with no regulation whatsoever when it comes to test mandates and financing

### How?

- Lobbying, student education campaigns

# Recommendations

## 2. Secure Ohio

### Why?

- This is the one state where SAT is covered by the state but is not mandatory for students to take. We should change that.

### How?

- Lobbying, working with campus administration

# Recommendations

## 3. Go after ACT states, but strategically

### Why?

- It may look like ACT has a lot more states than we do (well, they do). We should pick them off in priority order. That priority comes from the data.

### How?

- Target states based on student population

# Questions?

# Thank you!