

A Guide to Standardized Tests

PLAN

- The PLAN is an introduction to the ACT. It is given to sophomores during the fall semester. The PLAN is similar to the actual ACT. It consists of study skills and career interest area assessments. The results from the PLAN are NOT sent to colleges. They are used to describe/summarize your interests, abilities, and testing performance, as well as predict your ACT score range.

ACT

- www.act.org
- The American College Testing Program (ACT) consists of English, mathematics, science reasoning, and reading. There is also an optional writing section; we recommend all students take the ACT with writing. Each section is approximately 35-60 minutes in length. Students receive four separate scores plus a composite score. Scores range from 1-36. The writing portion of the test is scored separately and scaled from 2-12. *There is no guessing penalty.*

PSAT/NMSQT

- The Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship is a test given at Sullivan in October of the sophomore year. Juniors who wish to be considered for the National Merit Scholarship should speak with their counselor as soon as possible to sign up to take the PSAT in the fall of their junior year. The PSAT serves as a precursor to the SAT Reasoning Test. It also qualifies students for some merit-based scholarships. Scores are NOT sent to colleges.

SAT I

- <http://www.collegeboard.com>
- The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) is a three-hour test that is divided into 7 sections -- broken into critical reading, mathematical reasoning, and writing. Each of the three areas is scored from 200-800, resulting in a total score of 600-2400. There is a guessing penalty – only make educated guesses.

SAT Subject Tests

- <http://www.collegeboard.com>
- The SAT Subject Tests (formerly known as the SAT II Tests) measure how well you have mastered a variety of high school subjects. Students may register for up to three tests on one date. Each test is one hour in length. Tests are given in a variety of subject areas. You should take a specific SAT Subject Test soon after completing the related course.
- Some schools *require* SAT Subject Tests, some *recommend*, and some tell you that they are *optional*. Others still might change the language about SAT Subject Tests if a student has taken the ACT exam. The best thing to do is make a clear

list of your colleges and write appropriate requirements next to each one. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have satisfied all of your college's testing requirements.

Advanced Placement (AP) Tests

- These are three-hour high school examinations based on a college level course that you've taken in high school. AP exams are administered in May. The scores are primarily used for college placement, credit, or advanced standing. The most highly selective colleges may also consider AP scores as part of the admission decision. Each college evaluates AP Placement differently – check with each college for their policies.

TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)

- The TOEFL is a test for students who have been speaking English for less than 5 years. This test is used to measure English proficiency. Some highly selective colleges may also require students to take the SAT Reasoning Test and submit scores for the mathematics component.

Timeline for taking standardized tests

The PLAN is administered at Sullivan in the fall of a student's sophomore year. The PSAT is likewise administered here in the fall of a student's sophomore year. Sullivan recommends that students take their primary tests (SAT Reasoning Test and ACT) at least once in the second semester of their junior year and again in the fall of senior year, if necessary. The SAT Reasoning Test and SAT Subject Tests are often offered on the same day. If you need to take SAT Subject Tests for highly selective institutions, you may want to take them at the end of junior year when the subject material is still fresh in your mind.

Comparing the two tests: SAT Reasoning Test & ACT

<u>SAT</u>	<u>ACT</u>
• SAT has three components: Critical Reading, Mathematics, and Writing	• ACT has up to 5 components: English, Mathematics, Reading, Science and optional Writing Test
• Math covers algebra, geometry and statistics	• Math covers algebra, geometry and some trigonometry
• There is a penalty for guessing – make only educated guesses	• There is no penalty for guessing

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each test is scored on a 200-800 scale, resulting in a possible total score of 2400 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scores range from 1-36, with a separate score for the Writing Test scaled from 2-12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAT is an aptitude test, measuring a student's ability to process information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT is an achievement test, measuring what the student has learned in school

Check with the schools that you're interested in to find out if they require the SAT.

Reporting scores to colleges

- ACT sends score reports from only the testing date(s) that you specify. You can send scores to four schools for free when you register for the ACT. Additional score reports are \$8.00 per report.
- SAT sends all score reports from all testing dates. Students cannot decide which scores to send. You can send scores to four colleges for free when you register for the SAT. Additional score reports are \$9.50 per report.
- Students are responsible for sending all official score reports to colleges and universities.
- Different from popular opinion, schools on the East Coast and West Coast do not prefer the SAT over the ACT. All colleges accept both tests equally.
- Sullivan High School School Code: 144-403

Fee Waivers for Score Reporting

- You must apply for a fee waiver through the testing agencies by obtaining a fee waiver form from your College Counselor. Please consult the ACT (www.act.org) and SAT (www.collegeboard.com) websites for specific information and talk with your guidance or college counselor for more information before your register.

ACT Test Dates

ACT: www.act.org

Test date	Registration deadline	Late registration period
September 15, 2007	August 10	August 11-14
October 27, 2007	September 21	September 22 - Oct 5
December 8, 2007	November 2	November 3 - 15
February 9, 2008	January 4	January 5 - 18
April 12, 2008	March 7	March 8 - 21
June 14, 2008	May 9	May 10 - 23