



NEWS

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SAT scores for Texas students rise on math and reading tests, while writing score drops just as it did nationally

AUSTIN – Scores on the SAT college entrance exam fell nationally in 2007 but Texas students in public and private schools bucked that trend by earning increased scores on the Mathematics and Critical Reading sections of the test. The number of test takers rose both in this state and across the country.

Scores for 2007 graduating seniors from Texas public and private schools rose one point on both the Mathematics and Critical Reading tests, although the scores continue to lag behind the national average. Any change in scores is considered significant by testing experts.

“More Texas students than ever before are college bound. It’s a positive sign that more students took the college entrance test in 2007 than did in 2006 and they are earning higher math scores,” said Robert Scott, acting commissioner of education.

Texas’ public school students in each major ethnic group earned higher average Mathematics scores than did their peer group nationally.

Scott also noted that while Critical Reading scores are up statewide for public and private school students in the Class of 2007, the average score was unchanged for public schools, which saw a 4.5 percent increase in the number of test takers.

Writing scores fell both nationally and in Texas in 2007. This is the second year the College Board, which administers the SAT, has reported Writing scores. Because the Writing test is still relatively new, College Board representatives told Texas Education Agency officials that they didn’t have enough data yet to determine why the scores fell.

Here are the 2007 SAT scores for schools in Texas and the nation. A perfect score on each section of the test is 800.

Student group	Number of test takers	Critical Reading	Mathematics	Writing
Texas - all schools	132,067	492	507	482
Change from 2006	1.80%	+1	+1	-5
Nation - all schools	1,494,531	502	515	494
Change from 2006	2.00%	-1	-3	-3
Texas - public schools	117,776	487	505	478
Change from 2006	4.50%	0	+1	-5
Nation - public schools	1,178,753	498	509	488
Change from 2006	5.50%	-2	-5	-4

Trends on the SAT are similar to those on the ACT, another college entrance exam. Texas students earlier this month learned that they had earned higher scores on that test, which covers reading, English, math and science.

“In recent years, Texas has taken a number of steps to increase the rigor of high school courses. More students are following the Recommended High School Program, which is a

college prep program. Struggling schools have been redesigned and in many cases, small learning communities have been created. More students are taking Advanced Placement or dual credit classes,” Scott said.

The Legislature this spring also passed a sweeping law that is focused on increasing college readiness of students.

“We hope the performance of our students will continue to increase as the students who began ninth grade this week are the first group to follow the ‘4X4’ graduation plan. This plan requires the students to earn 26 credits, instead of 24, and they must receive at least four credits in math, science, social studies and English. This is an effort to increase the number of students who are college ready and workplace ready,” he said.

Students who take more rigorous high school classes earn higher scores on college entrance exams, which help them meet admission requirements for a wider variety of colleges and universities.

Nationwide and in Texas, there continues to be a variation in scores among students in the major ethnic groups. However, Texas’ Asian-American, African-American, Hispanic and white students all earned higher average Mathematics scores on the SAT than did their peer groups nationally. Asian-American students in Texas outperformed their peers nationally on all three parts of the SAT.

Here are the scores for public school students in Texas and nationally, reported by ethnic group.

Student group	Critical Reading	Mathematics	Writing
<i>Texas -public schools</i>			
<i>Asian-American</i>	519	576	514
Change from 2006	0	-1	-4
<i>African-American</i>	430	436	425
Change from 2006	+2	+4	-5
<i>Hispanic</i>	448	466	442
Change from 2006	+5	+6	0
<i>White</i>	520	536	508
Change from 2006	-1	-2	-6
<i>Nation - public schools</i>			
<i>Asian-American</i>	510	566	507
Change from 2006	+2	-1	-1
<i>African-American</i>	429	426	420
Change from 2006	-2	-1	-4
<i>Hispanic</i>	451	459	444
Change from 2006	0	0	-1
<i>White</i>	522	532	512
Change from 2006	-2	-3	-2

Fifty-two percent of the Texas students in the Class of 2007 took the SAT, compared to 48 percent nationally. Forty-seven percent of the students tested in Texas identified themselves as being from an ethnic minority, compared to 38 percent nationally.

Texas students who took the Preliminary SAT exam scored about 60 points higher on each part of the SAT than did students who did not take the PSAT.