College Entrance Exams

ACT ~ SAT ~ PSAT

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Frequently Asked Questions

- What are the tests?

- When do students take the tests?

- Why take the tests?

- How do you register for the tests?

- How to students prepare for the tests?

What are the tests?

Why take them?

Admission Factors

What colleges consider…
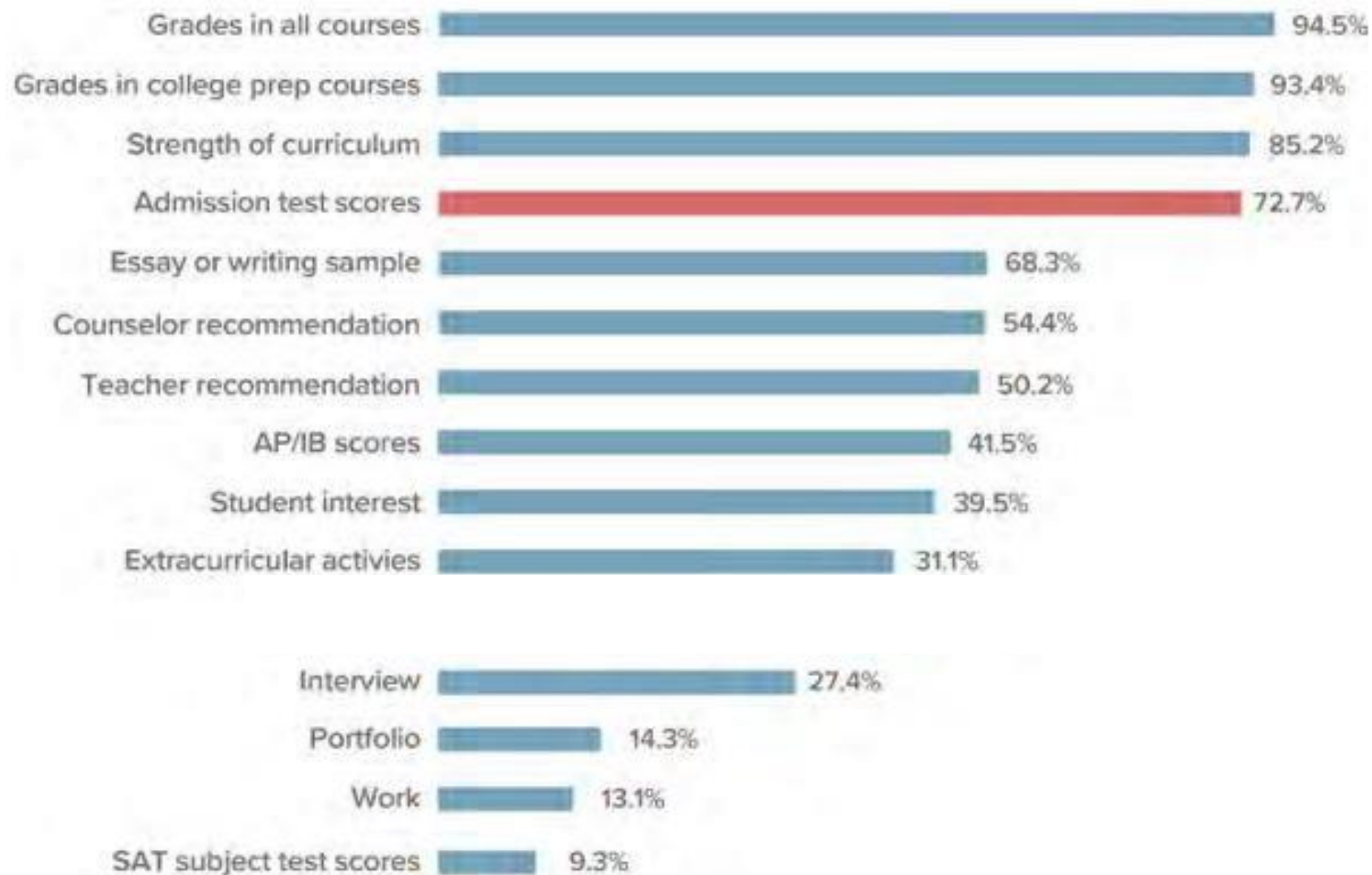
- Primary Factors
    - Grades (not necessarily GPA)
    - Academic courses & strength of curriculum
    - Test Scores

- Additional Factors
    - Essay(s)/Personal Statement
    - Letters of Recommendation
    - Students Demonstrated Interest or "Demonstrated Knowledge"
    - Extracurricular Activities & Awards
    - Interview
    - SAT Subject Test Scores

Admission Factors

Percentage of Colleges Reporting "Considerable or Moderate Importance"

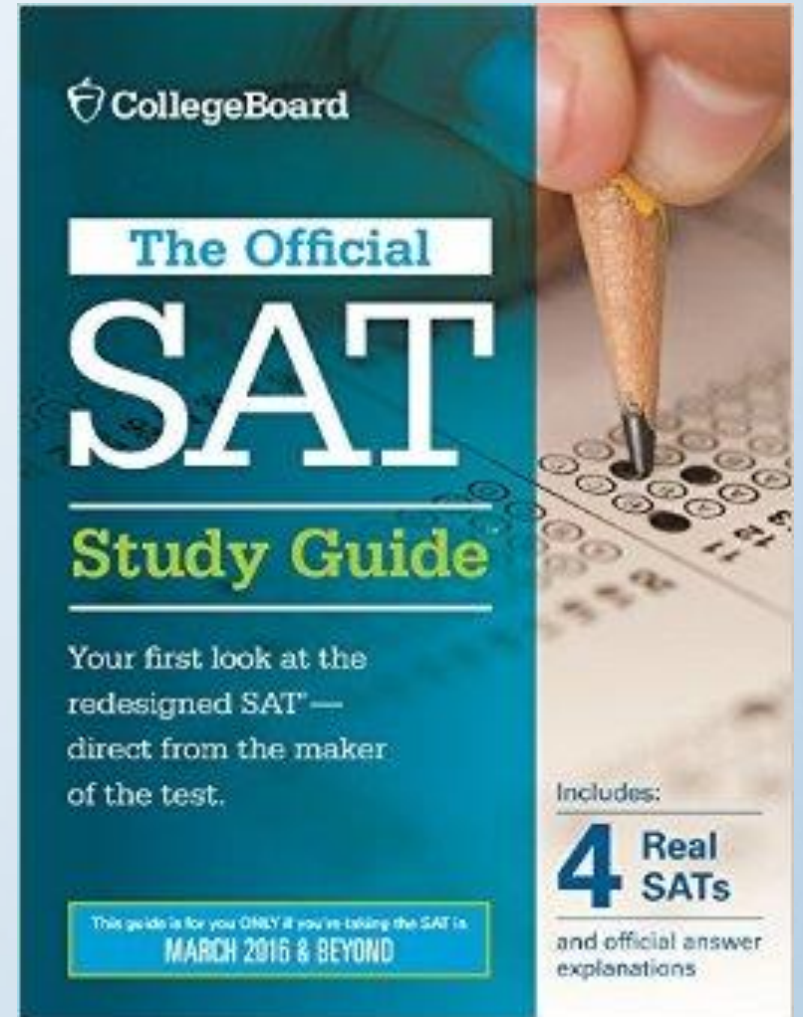| Factor	Percentage
Grades in all courses	94.5%
Grades in college prep courses	93.4%
Strength of curriculum	85.2%
Admission test scores	72.7%
Essay or writing sample	68.3%
Counselor recommendation	54.4%
Teacher recommendation	50.2%
AP/IB scores	41.5%
Student interest	39.5%
Extracurricular activies	31.1%
Interview	27.4%
Portfolio	14.3%
Work	13.1%
SAT subject test scores	9.3%

SAT

SAT

- Redesigned March 5, 2016

- 3 hour (+ 50 minutes optional essay)

- 5 long sections:
  Evidence-Based Reading & Writing
  2 Math Sections
  Essay (optional)

- Test Format:
  - 4 answer choices per question
  - No penalty for incorrect answers

SAT

- Score Range:
  - Composite: 400-1600
  - Evidence-based Reading & Writing: 200-800
  - Math: 200-800
  - Essay score reported separately

- "Cross-Test Scores" report performance on Science & History/Social Science across entire test

- Register online at:
  - CollegeBoard.org
  - Cost: $45; $57 with Essay
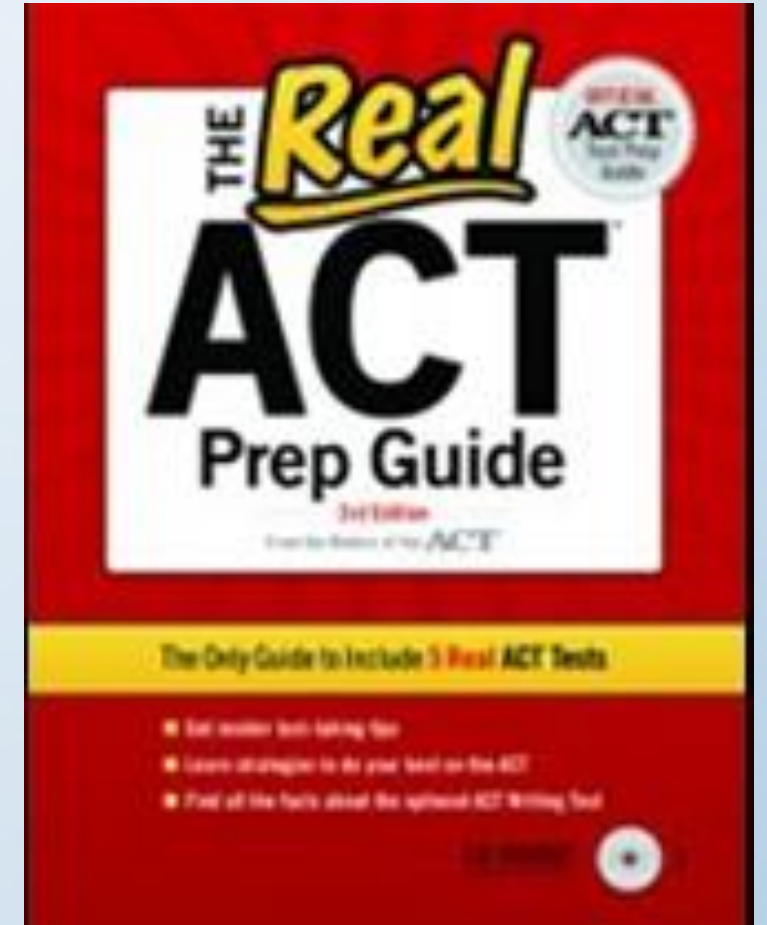 - Fee waiver available for eligible students (see Counselor)

ACT

ACT

- American College Testing

- 2 hours 55 minutes (+40 minute optional essay)

- 5 long sections:
  English
  Mathematics
  Reading
  Science
  Writing (optional essay)

- Test Format:
  – 4 answer choices
  – No penalty for incorrect answers

ACT

- Score Range:
  – Composite: 1-36
  – English: 1-36
  – Math: 1-36
  – Reading: 1-36
  – Science: 1-36
  – Writing (Essay): 2-12; Score not factored into Composite Score

- Register online at:
  – ACTstudent.org
  – Cost: $42.50; $58.50 with Essay
  – Fee waiver available for eligible students (see Counselor)

PSAT

PSAT/NMSQT

- Preliminary SAT

- National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test
  - National Merit Scholarship Program for juniors who meet qualifying requirements

- 2 hours, 45 minutes

- 4 sections: 2 Math Sections, Reading, Writing; no essay

- Test Format:
  - 4 answer choices
  - No penalty for incorrect answers

PSAT/NMSQT

- Score Range:
  - Composite Top Score: 1520
  - All sections scored on a scale of: 160-760

- Register in September:
  - DVHS Web Store or with Bookkeeper, Peggy Thomas
  - Only offered in October
  - Cost: $35 (as of October 2016)

PSAT Scores...Now What?

- **Princeton Review Free Webinar**
  - PSAT Scores—*Now What?*
  - Tuesday, December 13 at 4-5PM
  - Sign up on Princeton Review website or https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4945794005761026597source=website

- **January Parent College Information Session**
  - PSAT Interpretation & Next Steps
  - Monday, January 23 at 4-5PM
  - DVHS Library

Test-Optional

- Some applicants can choose not to submit SAT or ACT scores. The rules vary from college to college.

  - FairTest.org

Suggested Testing Timeline:

- Sophomores:
  - PSAT (optional)
  - Subject SAT tests (only if applicable)
  - AP tests (if applicable)
- Juniors:
  - PSAT- October 2016
  - SAT or ACT – Spring Semester
  - AP (if applicable)- May 2017
  - SAT Subject Tests (if applicable)- May, June, October, or November 2017
  - 2nd Semester Finals- June 2017
- Seniors:
  - SAT or ACT- September - December

Test Preparation:

- Free Practice Materials:
  - Booklets in College & Career Center
  - Online
    - CollegeBoard.org
    - ACTstudent.org
    - KhanAcademy.org

- Test Prep Companies:
  - Classes
  - One-on-one tutoring

Free Resources

- Compass Education Group "The Compass Guide to College Admission Testing 2016-2017
  - http://downloads.compassprep.com/compass_guide_to_admission_testing_2016-17.pdf

- CollegeBoard.org

- ACTstudent.org

- Fairtest.org

- PrincetonReview.com

- Kaptest.org

- KhanAcademy.org

Questions?

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