



Successful SAT Preparation Practices in Connecticut

A joint project of the Connecticut Association of Schools and the CT State Department of Education

Compiled by the Professional Studies Committee of the High School Board of Control



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We can be proud of the fact that Connecticut, along with Massachusetts, leads the nation in the percentage of high school graduates who take the SAT — about 8 in 10 — nearly twice the national average. That's encouraging news. It is important that high numbers of our students seek to build upon their high school experience to acquire additional skills and knowledge by attending two and four year colleges and universities. This rate shows that our students have high aspirations and a continuing interest in pursuing higher education. In fact, about 75% of Connecticut's high school graduates go on to some form of higher educational experience - among the highest rates in the world.

For high school seniors, taking the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT I) is one of the most important activities of their young lives. A top score can tip the scales on college acceptance, a low score can diminish a student's options. The SAT I is a high stakes test. Some say the stakes have become too high.

Although there is a great deal of controversy over the emphasis placed on this national assessment, it is clear that student performance on the SAT I is important not only to the student and his or her parents, but also to:

public and nonpublic high schools whose average scores are scrutinized annually;
virtually every major college and university as a measure of admissions standards; and,
every city and town that uses annual scores to promote economic development.

While colleges and universities continue to use grades, extra-curricular, community service and leadership activities as the most critical admissions criteria, increasing competition for limited seats has resulted in a growing emphasis on SAT performance. Many high schools across the nation — both public and private — have added SAT prep to the support and guidance services they provide to students preparing to compete for college admission.

There are many schools that have not yet developed programs to help prepare their students for optimum performance on the test. The following report contains many good and useful strategies employed today in Connecticut and elsewhere. We encourage all educators to consider these and other ways to further enhance the verbal and quantitative skills of our students.

Theodore S. Sergi
Commissioner
State Department of Education

Michael Savage
Executive Director
CAS/CIAC

“ Using SAT or other College Board tests as measures of the overall performance of students, teachers, educational institutions, districts, states, or other groups is a misuse of test scores and should be avoided.”

— *J. Montague of The College Board*

The Scholastic Assessment Test is taken by over two million students every year. The scores are published annually in all major Connecticut newspapers as well as in Strategic School Profiles. High schools are informally compared and evaluated by the public and boards of education based, in part, on the results of these tests.

This monograph on SAT preparation practices in Connecticut high schools represents a two-year, joint effort by the CAS Professional Studies Committee and the Connecticut State Department of Education. CAS wishes to acknowledge the support and contributions of CSDE Associate Commissioner, Dr. Betty Sternberg and State Consultant Dr. Peter Prowda.

The purpose of the CAS/CSDE collaborative effort was to examine SAT preparation practices by Connecticut high schools. In addition to the anecdotal information secured from high-scoring schools, this monograph concludes with a listing of variables which appear to affect student performance on the SAT, as well as practical suggestions for schools to improve their SAT scores at little cost.

In addition to the committee effort, I also thank my secretary, Mrs. Frances Beaumont, for her competent assistance. Members of the Professional Studies Committee appreciate the assistance of Mrs. Karen Natri and Dr. Robert Carroll of CAS for technical and administrative assistance.

We also thank the Connecticut Academy for Educational Leaders for providing funding for the publication of this monograph.

David D. Perry, Chairman
Professional Studies Committee
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In November, 1996, the members of the CAS Professional Studies Committee met with Drs. Betty Sternberg and Peter Prowda of the Connecticut State Education Department to discuss a joint project to research high school SAT preparation practices in Connecticut. A questionnaire (see Appendix B) was developed and sent to 174 public, vocational, and parochial high schools in the state. All schools returned completed surveys. As a result, the findings stated herein are significant for two reasons. First, they represent current practices of all high schools in Connecticut. Second, the level of statistical significance was within recommended limits to an extent that will be of reliable help to many high schools in our state.

The questionnaire contained twenty-five questions which examined every aspect of the SAT from when it was administered to the extent that private, external preparation courses are offered to students. Results were tallied by type of high school, ERG and math/verbal SAT score. The results from the three types of schools suggested conclusions based upon an examination of the data.

The desire to predict student performance based upon such variables as family income, race and extent of preparation was satisfied through this research as well. *“To determine what variables affect student performance on the Sat I, selected questions from the College Board’s Student Descriptive Questionnaire (SDQ) were correlated with the SAT math and verbal performances in 1996, 1995 and 1994....Taken as a whole, the family background characteristics of income, education, sex, best language and race only account for 24 percent of the variation in mathematical scores and 23 percent of the variation in verbal scores.”* As such, the often heard disclaimer that SAT scores in a particular school district are low due to forces beyond their control (e.g., income, education, race) would appear to have limited merit.

One of several concerns expressed by Commissioner of Education, Dr. Theodore Sergi, related to the urban schools and their need to improve SAT scores and, thus, their college entrance competitiveness. Would we undertake research that might be of benefit to these schools? Quoting the survey, *“To determine which of the school practices...made a difference predicted student SAT scores were calculated from student background variables and courses taken...this was then compared to the actual SAT verbal and mathematical scores attained. The residual or difference between actual and predicted scores was aggregated across the classes of 1994, 1995, and 1996 and averaged by school to estimate the effect the school had on the SAT. Mean scores for the 31 schools in ERGs H and I were compared on each of the survey questions to determine which made a difference in SAT performance.”* Results were informative; they include the following:

- Students in the 12 schools where department chairs review PSAT results for indicators of strengths and weaknesses outperformed students from the 19 schools where this was not the case.
- The effect of private, external SAT preparation courses was inconclusive in ERG H and I schools.
- Students from the 8 schools that had required summer reading between ninth and tenth grades outperformed students from the 10 schools that did not require summer reading and the 13 schools that suggested summer reading. The effect did not hold in all ERGs and was much stronger in ERG H than ERG I.

Before attempting to evaluate the effect of any SAT preparation practice, it is important to remember that the rate of test participation by Connecticut students is substantially higher than the national average. Prior research has shown that the higher the participation rate, the lower the score.

The survey results conclude with a look at whether or not Connecticut high school students are properly prepared to take the SAT. *“The expectation that a student, who is taking the SAT and is intending to enter a four-year college or university, has taken a well rounded curriculum, has good grades and has taken the PSAT is not fully met in Connecticut...about one in three takers of the SAT from Connecticut public schools do not have the academic background that the SAT designers anticipated.”* It is this committee’s belief that not all of our high school students have fully availed themselves to the curriculum offerings

SCHOOL PROFILES

The Professional Studies Committee sought to clarify exemplary SAT preparation practices through two approaches. First it examined the practices of the successful schools listed below. Second, it analyzed survey responses for practices utilized by the largest number of schools and having the greatest positive effect on SAT scores.

Regarding the first approach the committee examined the schools in all ERG's who scored within the top three of the schools in their ERG for three years, 1994, 95, 96. A score for all schools within each ERG was developed. This score was based upon the predicted verbal and math score and the actual score achieved. (The predicted scores were based upon many variables: these variables are listed on page 10. The College Board's Student Descriptive Questionnaire (SDQ) was used to correlate demographic variables with verbal and math scores to help determine predictability). Therefore, the three schools in each ERG who outperformed their predicted scores for three years (1994-96), were sent a questionnaire (see Appendix B) to learn more about what preparation methods were used - if any. The questionnaire responses follow this section of the monograph. The schools questioned by ERG were:

ERG A
Staples High School
New Canaan High School
Wilton High School

ERG B
Glastonbury High School
Bethel High School
Amity Reg. High School

ERG C
Wamogo Regional H.S
E.O. Smith High School
Coginchaug Regional H.S.

ERG D
Tolland High School
East Lyme High School
Newington High School

ERG E
Wheeler High School
Nathan Hale Ray H.S.
Parish Hill High School

ERG F
Fitch High School
Rockville High School
Montville High School

ERG G
Stafford High School
Tourtelotte High School
Plainville High School

ERG H
Killingly High School
Norwich Free Academy
Bristol Central H.S.

ERG I
H.S. in the Community
Central High School
New Britain High School

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

The CAS/CSDE questionnaire was primarily interested in identifying strategies used to achieve consistently, scores that were higher than predicted. Listed below are suggestions that summarize the most often-provided responses received from schools with higher than predicted SAT scores:

1. SAT-type questions are reviewed in math and English classes; test-taking skills are emphasized.
2. The curriculum emphasizes, in all academic disciplines, the reasoning skills required by the SAT.
3. In-house SAT practice courses are offered.
4. Inservice instruction is provided by the College Board.

In addition to these general, common strategies, the following is a list of promising techniques used by individual schools:

1. Provide a thorough examination of PSAT item analysis, question by question, over an extended period of time. This will help determine how students in a particular school answer SAT questions. For example, do your students find quantitative comparison questions hard? Do they answer too many of the higher difficulty level questions? Look for those trends which will help your students.
2. Some of the urban schools received free SAT tutorial assistance from local colleges.
3. Administer a SAT practice test. Have the students score the test. This will help you with developing test-taking trends by your students as well as further help students to decide whether or not they should take the SAT. Do the simulation in the morning and use proctors not familiar to the students.
4. Some computer-based SAT practice programs are good.
5. Track the words used on your vocabulary quizzes to see how many appear on the PSAT; adjust as necessary.
6. SAT practice sessions held in lieu of study halls.
7. All students required to take Algebra I.
8. Free diagnostic services provided by Princeton Review might be helpful.
9. Test-taking strategies through the College Board by Jim Montague (tel. no. 617- 890-9150) may be helpful.
10. Eliminate the lower level math courses (e.g., general math, consumer math) and require Algebra, Geometry, etc.
11. The following software programs were recommended by two schools:
 - “Stanford” (Bristol Eastern)
 - “Inside the SAT’s” (Bristol Eastern)
 - “Scorebuilder for the SAT” (Fitch High School)

Survey of School Practices Around the SAT I

District Name _____

School Name _____

Principal Name _____

Date _____ ERG _____

Questions 1-9 deal with the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT).

1. When do your students take the PSAT/NMSQT? (Check one)
 - On a Tuesday during school.
 - On a Saturday in our school.
 - On a Saturday in another school.
2. What percentage of your 10th graders in 1996-96 took the PSAT/NMSQT for practice?

3. What percentage of your 11th graders in 1995-96 took the PSAT/NMSQT?

4. Which statement best describes your school policy on assisting grade 11 students to pay for the PSAT/NMSQT?
 - Students are on their own.
 - Counselors/teachers assist students in getting aid from the College Board.
 - The school has limited funds to assist the most needy students.
 - The school pays for all students to take the PSAT/NMSQT.
5. What statement best describes how the PSAT/NMSQT results are interpreted for students? (Check one)
 - Students interpret their individual results with minimal assistance from our staff.
 - Counselors and/or teachers review the results with any student requesting assistance.
 - Teachers review the results in appropriate math and English classes.
 - Counselors and/or teachers schedule a review of the results with all students in groups or individually.
6. Which statement best describes how the PSAT/NMSQT results are interpreted for parents? (Check one)
 - Counselors and/or teachers are available upon parent request.
 - Counselors invite individual parents to review the results.
 - Counselors and/or teachers schedule a group meeting where results are discussed.
7. Which statement best describes how the PSAT/NMSQT results are used in your schools? (Check one)
 - The results are not used to modify instruction.
 - Teachers informally review the results.
 - Department chairs review the results for indications of strengths and weaknesses.
8. Check all that apply about the PSAT/NMSQT and mathematics instruction.
 - Almost all of my school's math teachers are familiar with the math content of the PSAT/NMSQT.
 - My school's math teachers design some of their test questions similar to the format and structure of PSAT/NMSQT math items.
 - My teachers of sophomores and juniors give sample PSAT/NMSQT items as a part of math instruction.
9. Check all that apply about the PSAT/NMSQT and English instruction.
 - Almost all of my school's English teachers are familiar with the verbal content of the PSAT/NMSQT.
 - My school's English teachers design

Questions 10-25 deal with the College Board's SAT I: Reasoning Test (SAT I).

10. Which statements describe a locally-based SAT I preparation course? (Check all that apply)
- We do not offer a separate SAT I preparation course.
 - We offer a SAT I preparation course after school on site at no cost.
 - We offer a SAT I preparation course after school on site for a fee.
 - Our Continuing Education Dept. offers a SAT I preparation course for a fee.
 - We collaborate with other districts on a SAT I preparation course off site.
 - We offer a SAT preparation course during the school day for credit.
 - We offer a non-credit SAT preparation course during the school day.
11. How many hours of instruction is the SAT course offered by your district or Continuing Education Department? (If both are offered report the hours for the course taken by the most students.)
- _____
12. Estimate the percentage of students who took the SAT I after participating in a SAT I preparation course offered by your district or Continuing Education Department.
- None
 - 1-10%
 - 11-20%
 - 21-35%
 - 36-50%
 - More than 50%
13. Our school has SAT I test preparation books available to students.
- Yes, multiple copies
 - Yes, single copy
 - No
14. Our school has SAT I test preparation computer software available to students.
- Yes, multiple copies
 - Yes, single copy
 - No
15. Check all the statements that apply to a private external SAT I preparation course such as Kaplan or the Princeton Review.
- This course is offered in a school building in our town.
 - We subsidize a student's participation in this type of course.
 - Literature on these courses is available at the counseling office or posted on a bulletin board.
 - None of the above.
16. Estimate the percentage of students who took the SAT I that participated in a private external SAT I preparation course.
- None
 - 1-5%
 - 6-15%
 - 16-25%
 - More than 25%
17. Which statement best describes the availability of calculators on the SAT I? (Check one)
- Students bring their own.
 - The school makes basic calculators available for the SAT I.
 - The school makes graphing calculators available for the SAT I.
18. Estimate the percentage of students who have completed geometry or integrated math 2 by the time they take the SAT I.
- 0-20%
 - 21-40%
 - 41-60%
 - 61-80%
 - 81-100%
19. How many levels of instruction (e.g., honors, semi-honors, college-prep, general, applied, remedial, heterogeneous) are offered in grade 10 English?
- One (heterogeneous, mixed classes)
 - Two
 - Three

20. Which best describes your school's approach to summer reading between 9th and 10th grade? (Check one)

- No school requirements.
- Students are given a suggested reading list.
- Students are given a suggested reading list and recognition is given to students who read a significant number of books.
- Students are required to read from a recommended list and required to submit written materials about what they read.

21. Have your counselors attended in the past 5 years a College Board workshop on the SAT I?

- Yes
- No

22. Have you or your staff set up an in-service workshop on the SAT I in the past 5 years?

- Yes
- No

25. Describe your feelings, as principal, about the SAT I.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Relevant	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Necessary	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Predictive of college success	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Reflection of your school	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Accountability tool	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Public relations tool	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Comments:

23. Which describes your parent outreach program on SAT I? (Check all that apply)

- There is no formal program.
- SAT information included in parent bulletin.
- Separate SAT information mailed to parents.
- Meeting with parents.
- Discussion at parents' night.

24. Which statement best describes the presentation of SAT I results to your Board of Education?

- This is no presentation of SAT I data.
- The Board receives a basic information packet with no scheduled discussion.
- The Board receives a basic report on the results.
- SAT information is presented to Board along with other data on the graduating class.
- The Board receives a report with secondary analyses.

A

ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS

A. Predicting Student Performance

D. What Made a Difference in ERGs H and I Schools

B. Survey Answers

E. Student Preparation for the SAT

C. Summary of Findings

F. Suggestions for ERGs H and I Schools

A. PREDICTING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Please refer to Appendix A for the full text of those variables which appear to affect student performance on the SAT I. The analysis identifies those variables that positively influence SAT scores and, perhaps more importantly, identifies those factors that did not affect the scores.

To determine what variables affect student performance on the SAT I, selected questions from the College Board's Student Descriptive Questionnaire (SDQ) were correlated with SAT mathematical and verbal performance in 1996, 1995 and 1994. (Note the table below)

Correlation between 1996 SAT Performance and Selected Student Background Characteristics and Course Work

(This chart should be used to assess the relative/comparative effect (correlation) between the following variables on SAT scores. For example, it can be determined that the level of course work — i.e. highest level of math, foreign language and English — has a greater influence on SAT scores than race.)

<u>Variable</u>	<u>SAT Math</u>	<u>SAT Verbal</u>
Family Income	.35	.34
Mother's Education	.34	.36
Father's Education	.38	.38
Income below 20,000?	-.23	-.24
Sex	.15	.02
English best language?	.12	.21
Race (American Indian)	-.02	-.02
Race (Asian American)	.09	-.02
Race (Black)	-.28	-.26
Race (Hispanic)	-.15	-.15
PSAT Taken?	.26	.26
Highest Level of Math	.66	
Years of Foreign Language		.42
Honors English?		.49

The level of course work is the single best predictor of a student's SAT mathematical and verbal performance. The best predictor of mathematical performance is mathematics course work, followed by father's education and family income. The top predictor of verbal performance is enrollment in honors English, followed by years of foreign language and father's education. Taken as a whole, the family background characteristics of income, education, sex, language and race

B. SURVEY ANSWERS

The Committee isolated the practices that involve the largest number of schools and appear to have had the greatest influence on SAT scores. Questions and responses are below, as they appear in the survey.

The percentage of schools by type which use the most widespread practices are shown at the left. The column on the right shows the SAT scores which comprehensive high schools can expect as a result of using the respective practices.

Practice	Type of School			By ERG			Comprehensive HS Average SAT 1994-1996	
	Comp HS	RVT	Parochial	A-C	D-F	G-I	Verbal	Math
5. Counselors and/or teachers schedule a review of the results with all students in groups or individually.	69%	65%	75%	68%	71%	66%	504	500
7. Department chairs review the results for indications of strengths and weaknesses.	52%	18%	65%	65%	49%	42%	510	505
10. We offer a SAT I preparation course on site for a fee.	29%	0%	45%	40%	33%	12%	515	512
Our Continuing Education Dept. offers a SAT I preparation course for a fee.	27%	0%	0%	34%	22%	24%	514	511
18. Estimate the percentage of students who have completed geometry or integrated math 2 by the time they take the SAT I.	31%	29%	90%	55%	22%	12%	532	531
20. Students are required to read from a recommended list and required to submit written materials about what they read.	46%	0%	35%	21%	12%	2%	532	530

C. SUMMARY OF SURVEY FINDINGS

I. Schools Responding

1. 137 of 137 Comprehensive Public Schools
2. 17 of 17 RVT schools
3. 20 of 20 Parochial High Schools

II. Practices Around PSAT

1. Overall Summary:

- a. Most schools (63%) administer SAT on Saturday in their own school. (Q1)
- b. The median percentage of 10th graders who took the PSAT in 1995-96 for practice was 23.5. (Q2)
- c. The median percentage of 11th graders taking the PSAT was 65. (Q3)
- d. In 40 schools (23%) there are some funds to pay for students to take PSAT. (Q4)
- e. Most (69%) schools review PSAT results with all students in groups or individually. (Q5)
- f. In only 12% of schools are parents invited or group meetings scheduled to discuss PSAT results. (Q6)
- g. In 30% of schools, PSAT results are NOT used to modify instruction. (Q7)
- h. In 77% of schools most math teachers are familiar with the math content of the PSAT. In many schools (59%), sample PSAT items are part of math instructions; in 45% of schools math teachers design their own test questions to be similar in structure and content to PSAT math items. (Q8)
- i. In 79% of schools most English teachers are familiar with the verbal content of the PSAT. In many schools (53%), sample PSAT items are part of English instructions; in 45% of schools English teachers design their own test questions to be similar in structure and content to PSAT verbal items. (Q9)

2. Differences Among Types of Schools:

- a. Most comprehensive public high schools offer PSAT on Saturday, while most RVT and parochial HS offer it on a Tuesday during school. (Q1)
- b. Nonpublic high schools had a greater percentage of 10th graders taking PSAT for practice than comprehensive schools; comprehensive schools had a greater percentage of 10th graders taking PSAT for practice than RVT schools. (Q2)
- c. Nonpublic schools had a greater percentage of 11th graders taking PSAT than comprehensive schools; comprehensive schools had a greater percentage of 11th graders taking PSAT than RVT schools. (Q3)
- d. Students in parochial schools are more likely to get school funds to pay for PSAT than in comprehensive public high schools or RVT schools. (Q4)
- e. Comprehensive high schools and parochial high schools are more likely to use PSAT to modify instruction than RVT schools. (Q7)
- f. Math and English teachers from comprehensive and parochial high schools are more likely to use PSAT questions in class than math and English teachers from RVT schools. (Q8-9)

3. Differences Among Comprehensive High Schools By ERG:

- a. Schools in ERGs G-I are more likely to offer the PSAT on Tuesday in school than schools in other ERGs. (Q1)
- b. The percentage of 10th graders taking PSAT for practice was higher in ERGs A-C than in ERGs D-F; the percentage of 10th graders taking PSAT for practice was higher in ERGs D-F than in ERGs G-I. (Q2)
- c. The percentage of 11th graders taking PSAT was higher in ERGs A-C than in ERGs D-F; the percentage of 11th graders taking PSAT was higher in ERGs D-F than in ERGs G-I. (Q3)
- d. Schools in ERGs G-I had a higher incidence of counselors assisting students in getting College Board

aid

to take the PSAT than schools in ERGs D-F; schools in ERGs D-F had a higher incidence of counselors assisting students in getting College Board aid to take the PSAT than schools in ERGs A-C.

III. SAT Preparation Courses

1. Overall Summary:

- a. Most schools (76%) offer a SAT preparation course. The most prevalent options cited were: after school on site for a fee (28%), continuing education for a fee (21%) and during school for credit (20%). (Q10)

Summary, *continued*

- c. The percentage of SAT takers who had taken a locally-offered SAT preparation course varied widely. Thirty percent of schools estimated that half their students had this preparation while 43% of schools estimated that less than 10% of their SAT takers had this preparation. (Q12)
 - d. Only 6% of schools reported not having SAT preparation books available to students. (Q13)
 - e. About 1 in 5 schools (35 schools) did not have SAT I test preparation computer software available to students. (Q14)
 - f. Almost 80% of schools assist students in contacting private providers of SAT preparation courses. The most prevalent form of assistance was posting Princeton Review or Kaplan literature on bulletin boards (71%) of schools. (Q15)
 - g. In only one-third of schools did more than 6% of SAT takers have a SAT preparation course from a private provider. (Q16)
2. Differences Among Types Of Schools:
 - a. RVT schools are less likely to offer a SAT preparation course than comprehensive or parochial HS. (Q10)
 - b. RVT schools are more likely to have no SAT takers who had taken a local SAT preparation course than comprehensive or parochial HS. (Q12)
 - c. SAT takers from parochial and comprehensive HS are more likely to have taken a SAT preparation course from a private provider than RVT students. (Q16)
 3. Differences Among Comprehensive High Schools By ERG:
 - a. There is no difference among ERGs in percentage of schools offering a local SAT preparation course. There are differences in types of courses, however. ERG G-I schools are more likely to offer after-school, on site, no-cost SAT preparation courses and less likely to offer one for a fee than other ERGs. ERG G-I schools are also more likely to offer a non-credit course during the day than schools in other ERGs (15% v 25%). (Q10)
 - b. Schools in ERGs A-C are more likely to have a private SAT program offered in a school building in town than schools in other ERGs (26% v 9%). (Q15)

IV. School Preparation for the SAT

1. Overall Summary:
 - a. In 86% of schools, students bring their own calculators to the SAT. (Q17)
 - b. Fifty schools (29%) estimated that fewer than 60% of their students had geometry or integrated math 2 by the time they took the SAT I. (Q18)
 - c. Almost 83% of schools offered at least 3 levels of Grade 10 English instruction. (Q19)
 - d. Forty-four percent of schools have required summer reading between 9th and 10th grade. (Q20)
 - e. In all but 10 schools (6%), counselors had attended a College Board SAT workshop within the past five years. (Q21)
 - f. Less than one-half of the schools (45%) had staff that had an in-service workshop on the SAT within the past five years.
 - g. Almost three-quarters of schools (73%) had a formal parent outreach program on the SAT. The most prevalent form of outreach was through a parent bulletin (58%) followed by discussion at Parents' Night (45%). (Q23)
 - h. In most schools (86%), SAT information is presented to the Board of Education. The most prevalent presentation forms are in a report along with other information on the graduating class (36%) and in a report with secondary analyses (27%). (Q24)
2. Differences Among Types of Schools:
 - a. Parochial high school students are more likely to have had geometry of integrated math 1 by the time they took the SAT I than either comprehensive HS or RVT students. (Q18)
 - b. Students in comprehensive HS and parochial HS are more likely to have required summer reading than RVT students. (Q20)
 - c. Parents in comprehensive HS and parochial HS are more likely to receive SAT outreach than RVT parents. (Q23)
 - d. Since boards of education are more associated with comprehensive high schools, a greater percentage of principals of these schools reported that the SAT was presented to their Board than RVT principals or parochial high school principals. (Q24)

Summary, *continued*

3. Differences Among Comprehensive High Schools By ERG:

- a. A greater percentage of schools in ERGs G-I (20%) make basic calculators available than in ERGs D-F (12%) or ERGs A-C (2%). (Q17)
- b. The percentage of students who had taken geometry or integrated math 2 by the time they took the SAT was greater in ERGs A-C than in ERGs D-F; the percentage of students who had taken geometry or integrated math 2 by the time they took the SAT was greater in ERGs D-F than in ERGs G-I. (Q18)
- c. The percentage of schools offering 4 or more levels of 10th grade English instruction was higher in ERGs G-I (66%) than in ERGs D-F (49%) or ERGs A-C (28%). (Q19)
- d. The percentage of schools with required summer reading between 9th and 10th grades was higher in

ERGS

- A-C (57%) than in ERGs D-F (49%) or ERGs G-I (30%). (Q20)
- e. The percentage of schools within ERGs with parent outreach programs is similar, but the type of program differs. ERG G-I are more likely to have parent meetings and less likely to discuss the SAT on Parents' Night than other ERGs. (Q23)

V. Principals' Attitudes Toward the SAT (Q25)

1. Overall Summary:

Almost 78% of principals had a generally positive attitude toward the SAT. The percentage agreeing or strongly agreeing to statements about the SAT are as follows: relevant, 72%; predictive of college success, 50%; reflection of your school, 49%; accountability tool, 38%; and public relations tool, 57%.

2. Differences Among Types of Schools:

A smaller percentage of RVT principals feel that the SAT is predictive of college success, a reflection of their school, an accountability tool, or a public relations tool than public or parochial school principals.

3. Differences Among Comprehensive High Schools by ERG:

There were no statistically significant differences in responses.

D. WHAT MADE A DIFFERENCE IN ERGs H and I SCHOOLS?

To determine which of the school practices related to the PSAT, SAT preparation courses and SAT preparation that made a difference, predicted student SAT scores were calculated from student background variables and courses taken for the classes of 1994, 1995 and 1996. This data was then compared to the actual SAT verbal and mathematical scores attained. The residual, or difference between actual and predicted score, was aggregated across the classes of 1994, 1995 and 1996 and averaged by school to estimate the effect the school had on the SAT. Mean scores for the 31 schools in ERGs H and I were compared on each of the CAS/SDE survey questions to determine the factors that made a difference in SAT performance. The interpretations below are all in terms of actual student performance relative to their predicted performance. In most cases student performance was below projected performance.

Students in the 17 schools which offered the PSAT on Saturday outperformed students from the 14 schools which offered the PSAT on Tuesday during school. (Q1)

The results were inconclusive on school policy on assisting grade 11 students to pay for the PSAT. (Q4)

Students in the 22 schools where teachers or counselors review the PSAT results outperformed students from the 9 schools where there is no scheduled review. Statewide, this effect was minimal. (Q5)

All ERG I schools and 14 of 17 ERG H schools have counselors available upon parent request to interpret PSAT results for parents. (Q6)

Students in the 12 schools where department chairs review the PSAT results for indications of strengths or weaknesses outperformed students from the 19 schools where this is not the case. Statewide this effect was slight and varied by ERG. (Q7)

Student math SAT performance did not seem to be affected by math teachers' familiarity with, or use of, PSAT math questions. (Q8)

Student verbal SAT performance did not seem to be affected by English teachers' familiarity with, or use of, PSAT verbal questions. (Q9)

Students in the 24 schools which offered some locally-based SAT preparation course outperformed students from the 7 schools that offered no SAT preparation course. This pattern did not hold in other ERGs. (Q10)

There was no consistent pattern in percentage of SAT takers who took a locally-based SAT preparation course and student performance relative to predicted performance. (Q12)

All ERG H & I schools had SAT preparation books available to students. (Q13)

The availability of SAT test preparation computer software on SAT predicted performance was inconclusive. (Q14)

The effect of private external SAT preparation courses was inconclusive in ERG H & I schools. (Q15 & 16)

Students from the 7 schools which made calculators available did slightly better on the math SAT than students from the 24 schools where students are expected to bring their own calculators. This effect did not hold statewide. (Q17)

There was no conclusive relationship between the estimated percentage of students who had completed geometry or integrated math 2 by the time they took the SAT and student math performance relative to predicted. (Q18)

Difference, *continued*

There is no conclusive relationship between number of levels of English instruction and student performance relative to predicted on the SAT verbal. (Q19)

Students from the 8 schools which had required summer reading between 9th and 10th grades outperformed students from the 10 schools which did not require summer reading and the 13 schools which had suggested summer reading. The effect did not hold statewide but was much stronger in ERG H than in ERG I. (Q20)

Since most counselors had attended a College Board workshop on the SAT within the past 5 years, its effect could not be ascertained. (Q21)

Students from t
Statewide, this had no effect on student performance. (Q22)

In ERG H & I schools the type of parent outreach program had no consistent impact on student performance relative to predicted. (Q23)

The effect of Board presentation of SAT results on student performance was inconclusive. (Q24)

E. STUDENT PREPARATION FOR THE SAT

Students take the SAT with different levels of preparation. In the past, a student taking the SAT intended to enter a four-year college or university, took a well rounded and rigorous curriculum, had good grades, and had taken the PSAT. With greater percentages of students taking the SAT, it is not surprising that many now lack some traditional prerequisites of SAT preparation. To determine how well the 1996 graduates from Connecticut public schools were prepared to take the SAT, student data from The College Board's Student Descriptive Questionnaire (SDQ) were examined. The State Department of Education's Graduate Follow-Up, ED540, provided the number of graduates going on to four-year colleges and universities. Table A presents the results of that examination statewide and for each ERG.

TABLE A. STUDENTS PREPARED TO TAKE SAT

ERG	SAT Total Score	SAT % to 4-Year Colleges	% Taking PSAT	% in College-Prep Curriculum	% with Formal Math 3 or Higher	% with GPA of C or Better	% Prepared for SAT
A	1129	89.8	92.7	82.3	92.5	98.4	77.4
B	1065	85.9	90.2	82.8	89.2	97.1	74.7
C	1058	76.7	88.5	72.7	88.9	97.1	66.8
D	1010	78.7	83.3	76.7	88.0	97.9	65.6
E	1022	69.8	84.8	72.7	88.3	97.6	66.2
F	983	71.7	80.7	75.8	84.3	97.3	62.6
G	982	69.6	87.8	72.0	87.8	98.4	65.5
H	965	73.1	82.7	77.5	84.3	96.1	62.9
I	822	63.2	71.6	67.1	77.5	96.1	51.5
STATE	1002	76.1	84.1	75.9	86.6	97.2	65.7

About three-quarters (76.1%) of SAT takers planned to attend four-year colleges after graduation, according to counselor reports of student plans on the State Department of Education's Graduate Follow-Up. The percentages varied from 89.8 percent in ERG A to 63.2 percent in ERG I. Some students planned to attend two-year colleges before enrolling in four-year colleges.

Only 84.1 percent of students who took the SAT also took the PSAT, according to student responses on the SDQ. This question was answered by 87.2 percent of the students. Students who responded "I don't know" were counted as not taking the PSAT. Participation rates ranged from 92.7 percent in ERG A to 71.6 percent in ERG I.

About three-quarters of students who took the SAT had completed a curriculum that included at least 3 years of a foreign language and 3 years in the natural sciences. Since it is a requirement for graduation in Connecticut, these students also had at least 4 years of English, 3 years of mathematics and 3 years of history or social studies. This information was extracted from the SDQ curriculum questions which ask whether a student has taken or *plans to take* a particular subject area or course. Many students reported less than the state minimum graduation requirements. These responses were treated as invalid. Only 77.5% of students provided valid responses to these questions. College-bound students from the more affluent communities were more likely to have taken a traditional college-preparatory curriculum than students from poorer communities. Only ERGs A and B had rates above 80 percent while ERG I was the only one below 70 percent.

A second measure of college-preparatory curriculum is the percentage of SAT takers who completed three or more years of mathematics. Statewide, 86.6 percent of SAT takers had the equivalent of formal math 3; the rates varied from 92.5 percent in ERG A to 77.5 percent in ERG I.

Preparation, *continued*

The final component of the percent prepared for the SAT is the percentage with GPA of C or better. This is the number (from the SDQ) who self-reported GPA was C or better divided by the number responding to this question. The response rate was 88.1%. Most (97.2%) students who took the SAT reported a GPA of C or better. There were no significant differences among ERGs.

The percent prepared for the SAT is defined as the number taking the PSAT and taking a college-prep curriculum and taking at least formal math 3 and with grades of C or better divided by the number of valid responses. About three-quarters (71.3%) of the responses were valid. Approximately 1 in 3 takers of the SAT from Connecticut public schools did not have the academic background that the SAT designers anticipated. Only 65.7 percent of the 1996 graduates who took the SAT had taken the PSAT, taken a college-prep curriculum with at least three years of formal math , and had grades of C or better. The percentage varied from 77.4 percent in ERG A to 51.5 percent in ERG I.

F. SUGGESTIONS FOR ERGs H AND I SCHOOLS

1. The State Department of Education approached the Professional Studies Committee to collaborate on a study of SAT preparation practices in our high schools. It was hoped that the insights of high scoring schools might benefit the H and I schools which were struggling with test scores.

2. The results of our research indicated that the schools in Connecticut who were creatively examining SAT preparation practices were in fact the ERGs H and I schools.

Please refer to the Appendix A for the full text regarding ERGs H and I schools.

Of the twenty suggestions made in this section, six have been outlined below. It is our belief that these recommendations can be easily implemented at little or no cost by the urban high schools.

1. Statistic

“Students in the 22 schools where teachers or counselors review the PSAT results out performed students from the 9 schools where there is no scheduled review.”

Recommendation

The PSAT review should be conducted in small groups and on an individual basis. The group setting is best selected for a general explanation of the scores and their relevance to the SAT I. Counselors should meet with students individually to discuss their strengths and weaknesses. An individual test-taking plan should be developed.

2. Statistic

“Students in the 12 schools where department chairs review PSAT results for indications of strengths or weaknesses outperformed students from the 19 schools where this is not the case.”

Recommendation

The overall school performance trends as determined through the PSAT item analysis and similar SAT practice tests administered in-house can be valuable tools.

It is suggested that PSAT item analysis data be gathered for at least a five-year period. If this is not available, take the most recent data available and contrast this with data generated from an in-house administered practice test.

Examples of the trends to look for on the verbal test are:

- a. On which of the three sections do the students show the greatest strength/weakness?
Knowing that the Analogy Section is the most test coachable and the one where most students score better, should you spend time developing this fully or should you devote more time to working on the other two more difficult sections?

Suggestions, *continued*

- b. Are your students disregarding the fact that on the Analogy and Sentence Competence Sections, the questions are graduated in order of difficulty? Are they answering those questions they are most likely to get wrong as well as the initial easier questions? Does the data show that your students answer more or less than the national average? Adjust accordingly.

3. Statistic

“Students in the 24 schools which offered some locally-based SAT preparation courses outperformed students from the 7 schools that offered no SAT preparation course. This pattern did not hold in other ERGs.”

Recommendation

Locally-based SAT preparation programs take many forms. They are scheduled differently as well. It is clear from the responses from high scoring SAT schools that the systematic integration of SAT-type questions into the English and math lessons is an important factor. It is recommended that consideration be given to test-taking skills as well as to the subject content. Two of the principals who sit on the Professional Studies Committee have secured free services from the Princeton Review Company. This company emphasizes test-taking skills. It conducted a practice SAT; scored the test and then returned to discuss the results with the students. It provided group and individual suggestions for improving scores.

Our survey results show that most SAT prep programs are offered -

- after school for a fee (.29)
- by continuing education for a fee (.27)
- during school day for credit (.23)

4. Statistic

“The effect of private external SAT preparation courses was inconclusive in ERG H and I schools.”

Recommendation

Because expensive, private programs might not be of clear benefit to schools, it is recommended that locally based programs be fully developed at much less cost so that specific needs of a school’s population can be better addressed.

5. Statistic

“Students from the 8 schools which had required summer reading between 9th and 10th grades outperformed students from the 10 schools which did not require summer reading and the 13 schools which suggested summer reading. The effect did not hold statewide but was much stronger in ERG H than I.”

Recommendation

In view of the fact that strong reading comprehension skills are essential for success on the verbal and math SAT tests, it is not surprising that required summer reading is beneficial. Perhaps the Governor’s Summer Reading Challenge program should be better promoted in ERG H and I schools to help improve their scores.

Suggestions, *continued*

6. Statistic

“Students from the 14 schools which had staff participate in SAT in-service outperformed students from the 16 schools which did not. Statewide, this had no effect on student performance.”

Recommendation

Here again is another suggestion which appears to only benefit the ERG H and I schools. Many Connecticut high schools have used the cost-free services of College Board spokesman, Jim Montague (tel. no. 617- 890-9150). Jim will provide in-service for your staff relative to the test taking tips that the College Board has found useful.

APPENDICES

A

PPENDIX A

CAS-SDE SURVEY RESULTS

Comprehensive
High School
Average SAT
1994-1996

	Type of School			A-C	By ERG			Comprehensive High School Average SAT 1994-1996	
	Comp HS	RVT	Parochial		D-F	G-I	Verbal	Math	
1. When do your students take the PSAT/NMSQT?									
• On a Tuesday during school.	19%	94%	100%	0%	14%	46%	452	443	
• On a Saturday in our school.	79%	0%	0%	100%	84%	51%	512	508	
• On a Saturday in another school.	1%	6%	0%	0%	2%	2%	479	471	
2. What percentage of your 10th graders in 1995-96 took the PSAT/NMSQT for practice? (Median: 23.5)									
• Less than 10%	8%	29%	10%	0%	10%	15%	472	467	
• 10-19.9%	31%	53%	5%	23%	37%	32%	491	486	
• 20-29.9%	26%	6%	20%	11%	29%	41%	497	490	
• 30-39.9%	15%	6%	0%	21%	12%	12%	517	512	
• 40% or more	20%	6%	65%	45%	12%	0%	533	532	
3. What percentage of your 11th graders in 1995-96 took the PSAT/NMSQT? (Median: 65)									
• Less than 25%	3%	35%	0%	0%	4%	5%	430	425	
• 25-39.9%	11%	35%	0%	4%	12%	17%	482	482	
• 40-54.9%	20%	24%	0%	6%	16%	39%	483	476	
• 55-69.9%,	28%	0%	0%	21%	33%	29%	496	491	
• 70-84.9%	24%	6%	0%	36%	24%	10%	515	510	
• 80 % or more	15%	0%	100%	32%	10%	0%	539	535	
4. Which statement best describes your school policy on assisting gr. 11 students to pay for the PSAT/NMSQT?									
• Students are on their own.	38%	24%	45%	53%	43%	13%	521	518	
• Counselors/teachers assist students in getting aid from The College Board.	40%	65%	20%	17%	39%	68%	478	471	
• The school has limited funds to assist the most needy students.	14%	0%	5%	23%	12%	5%	525	520	
• The school pays for all students to take the PSAT/NMSQT.	9%	12%	30%	6%	6%	15%	485	480	
5. Which statement best describes how the PSAT/ NMSQT results are interpreted for students?									
• Students interpret their individual results with minimal assistance from our staff.	5%	12%	0%	6%	6%	2%	505	497	
• Counselors and/or teachers review the results with any student requesting assistance.	21%	24%	15%	23%	14%	27%	501	497	
• Teachers review the results in appropriate math and English classes.	5%	0%	10%	2%	8%	5%	505	496	
• Counselors and/or teachers schedule a review of the results with all students in groups or individually.	69%	65%	75%	68%	71%	66%	504	500	
6. Which statement best describes how the PSAT/ NMSQT results are interpreted for parents?									
• Counselors and/or teachers are available upon parent request.	87%	94%	90%	83%	86%	93%	503	498	
• Counselors invite individual parents to review the results.	5%	0%	5%	6%	4%	5%	502	498	
• Counselors and/or teachers schedule a group meeting where results are discussed.	8%	6%	5%	11%	10%	2%	517	516	

Survey Results, *continued*

School	Type of School						Comprehensive High	
	Comp HS	RVT	Parochial	A-C	By ERG D-F	G-I	Average SAT 1994-1996 Verbal	
Question								
Math								
7. Which statement best describes how the PSAT/NMSQT results are used in your schools?								
• The results are not used to modify instruction.	28%	53%	20%	22%	23%	41%	499	496
• Teachers informally review the results.	19%	29%	15%	13%	28%	17%	488	481
• Department chairs review the results for indications of strengths and weaknesses.	52%	18%	65%	65%	49%	42%	510	505
8. Check all that apply about the PSAT/NMSQT and mathematics instruction.								
• Almost all of my school's math teachers are familiar with the math content of the PSAT/ NMSQT.	77%	82%	70%	83%	82%	66%	508	504
• My school's math teachers design some of their test questions similar to the format and structure of PSAT/NMSQT math items.	50%	24%	30%	51%	55%	41%	506	501
• My teachers of sophomores and juniors give sample PSAT/ NMSQT items as a part of math instruction..	63%	24%	65%	62%	63%	63%	500	495
9. Check all that apply about the PSAT/NMSQT and English instruction.								
• Almost all of my school's English teachers are familiar with the verbal content of the PSAT/NMSQT.	80%	82%	70%	83%	86%	68%	505	501
• My school's English teachers design some of their test questions similar to the format and structure of PSAT/NMSQT verbal items.	48%	24%	40%	55%	51%	37%	508	504
• My 10 th and 11 th grade English teachers give sample PSAT/NMSQT in class..	55%	18%	65%	51%	61%	54%	505	499
10. Which statements describe a locally-based SAT I preparation course? (Check all that apply).								
• We do not offer a separate SAT I preparation course.	25%	59%	35%	21%	29%	24%	508	502
• We offer a SAT I preparation course after school on site at no cost.	11%	18%	0%	6%	4%	24%	474	468
• We offer a SAT I preparation course after school on site for a fee.	29%	0%	45%	40%	33%	12%	515	512
• Our Continuing Education Department offers a SAT I preparation cost for a fee.	27%	0%	0%	34%	22%	24%	514	511
• We collaborate with other districts on a SAT I preparation course off site.	7%	18%	10%	4%	6%	10%	434	434
• We offer an SAT preparation course during the school day for credit.	23%	0%	10%	17%	27%	27%	489	484
• We offer a non-credit SAT preparation course during the school day.	7%	41%	0%	2%	4%	15%	496	489
11. How many hours of instruction is the SAT course offered by your district or Continuing Education Dept.? (If both are offered report the hours for the course taken by the most students.)								
• 1-10	46%	82%	65%	53%	45%	39%	508	504
• 11-20	21%	6%	15%	28%	18%	17%	518	512
• 21-30	14%	0%	15%	11%	12%	20%	482	480
• 31-40	6%	6%	0%	4%	6%	7%	501	500

Survey Results, *continued*

Question Math	Type of School			A-C	By ERG		Comprehensive High School Average SAT Verbal	
	Comp HS	RVT	Parochial		D-F	G-I		
12. Estimate the percentage of students who took the SAT I after participating in a SAT I preparation course offered by your district or Continuing Education Department.								
• None	16%	47%	17%	16%	18%	13%	509	502
• 1-10%	26%	20%	17%	11%	33%	36%	492	484
• 11-20%	16%	7%	11%	30%	9%	10%	518	515
• 21-35	6%	0%	6%	9%	2%	8%	503	503
• 36-50%	5%	7%	11%	5%	2%	8%	491	487
• more than 50%	30%	20%	39%	30%	36%	26%	502	499
13. Our school has SAT I test preparation books available to students.								
• Yes , multiple copies	86%	71%	80%	87%	82%	90%	503	498
• Ye s, single copy	9%	18%	15%	6%	10%	10%	503	500
• N o	5%	12%	5%	6%	8%		513	511
14. Our school has SAT I test preparation computer software available to students.								
• Yes, multiple copies	53%	65%	45%	55%	51%	51%	499	494
• Yes, single copy	28%	24%	25%	28%	24%	32%	510	505
• No	20%	12%	30%	17%	24%	17%	505	501
15. Check all the statements that apply to a private external SAT I preparation course such as Kaplan or the Princeton Review.								
• This course is offered in a school building in our town.	15%	6%	15%	26%	10%	7%	522	520
• We subsidize a student’s participation in this type of course.	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	2%	481	477
• Literature on these courses is available at the counseling office or posted on a bulletin board.	71%	71%	75%	68%	78%	66%	503	498
• None of the above	23%	29%	15%	19%	20%	29%	499	495
16. Estimate the percentage of students who took the SAT I that participated in a private external SAT I preparation course.								
• None	12%	65%	5%	2%	8%	27%	468	461
• 1-5%	55%	29%	55%	39%	60%	63%	491	483
• 6-15%	15%	0%	20%	22%	19%	2%	516	513
• 16-25%	8%	6%	10%	12%	10%	2%	511	510
• more than 25%.	10%	0%	10%	24%	2%	5%	534	533
17. Which statement best describes the availability of calculators on the SAT I ?								
• Students bring their own.	85%	82%	95%	89%	88%	78%	505	501
• The school makes basic calculators available for the SAT I.	11%	18%	5%	2%	12%	5%	484	478
• The school makes graphing calculators available for the SAT I.	4%	0%	0%	9%	0%		516	509
18. Estimate the percentage of students who have completed geometry or integrated math 2 by the time they take the SAT I.								
• 0-20%	2%	29%	0%	0%	4%	5%	506	507
• 21-40%	8%	29%	0%	4%	4%	17%	454	451
• 41-60%	19%	24%	0%	9%	16%	34%	486	478

Survey Results, *continued*

Comprehensive High School

Question	Type of School			A-C	By ERG			Average SAT 1994-1996	
	Comp HS	RVT	Parochial		D-F	G-I	Verbal	Math	
19. How many levels of instruction (e.g., honors, semi-honors, college-prep, general, applied, remedial, heterogeneous) are offered in grade 10 English?									
• One (heterogeneous, mixed classes)	3%	6%	5%	0%	6%	2%	498	497	
• Two	12%	0%	35%	21%	12%	2%	532	530	
• Three	38%	53%	50%	51%	33%	29%	516	513	
• Four	37%	35%	10%	26%	41%	46%	491	486	
• Five or more	9%	6%	0%	2%	8%	20%	479	474	
20. Which best describes your school's approach to summer reading between 9th and 10th grade?									
• No school requirements.	19%	82%	15%	21%	6%	30%	494	491	
• Students are given a suggested reading list.	26%	18%	15%	19%	36%		496	491	
• Students are given a suggested reading list and recognition is given to students who read a significant number of books.	9%	0%	0%	2%	9%	18%	479	469	
• Students are required to read from a recommended list and required to submit written materials about what they read.	46%	0%	70%	57%	49%	30%	514	511	
21. Have your counselors attended in the past 5 years a College Board workshop on the SAT I?									
• Yes	95%	88%	95%	96%	94%	95%	504	500	
• No	5%	12%	5%	4%	6%	5%	477	474	
22. Have you or your staff set up an in-service workshop on the SAT I in the past 5 years?									
• Yes	46%	18%	60%	50%	45%	43%	503	498	
• No	54%	82%	40%	50%	55%	58%	505	501	
23. Which describes your parent outreach program on SAT I?									
• There is no formal program.	22%	71%	20%	13%	27%	27%	491	483	
• SAT information included in parent bulletin.	63%	18%	60%	65%	61%	61%	508	504	
• Separate SAT information mailed to parents.	18%	0%	20%	28%	16%	7%	518	514	
• Meeting with parents.	32%	18%	20%	58%	24%	22%			
• Discussion at parents' night.	49%	29%	35%	54%	47%	44%	506	502	
24. Which statement best describes the presentation of SAT I results to your Board of Education?									
• There is no presentation of SAT I data.	2%	65%	59%	0%	2%	3%	469	457	
• The Board receives a basic information packet with no scheduled discussion.	2%	0%	6%	2%	4%	33%	523	521	
• The Board receives a basic report on the results.	22%	6%	18%	18%	17%	36%	498	490	
• SAT information is presented to Board along with other data on the graduating class.	40%	24%	18%	42%	43%	28%	505	503	
• The Board receives a report with secondary analyses.	34%	6%	0%	38%	34%		506	500	
25. Principals' attitudes about the SAT I (A composite based upon feelings that the SAT I is relevant, necessary, predictive of college success, reflection of school, and accountability tool)									
1.00 - 1.99 Strongly Disagree to Disagree	3%	19%	5%	0%	2%	8%	480	477	
2.00 - 2.99 Disagree to Neutral	18%	25%	10%	22%	22%	8%	513	511	

A PPENDIX B

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questions on the Successful Practice Questionnaire (below) were asked over the phone of representatives from all of the top scoring schools listed on page 4.

Listed below are the questions to ask the representative of the schools in your designated ERG. Please bring your responses to the meeting on October 10, or fax them to me if you cannot attend at (203) 484-1233. Please begin your conversation with an explanation of our project and how this particular school was selected.

Please list and explain the three most important strategies your school uses to prepare students for the S.A.T. (If the program is more extensive, please record all strategies employed).

How long has this program been in use?

Who is the contact person for this program?

How do you account for the difference between the verbal and math scores?

Do you counsel certain students out of the S.A.T. process? If so, how is this done?

Do you plan any changes in the current S.A.T. preparation program? If so, what are they?

A PPENDIX C

CONNECTICUT EDUCATION REFERENCE GROUPS

ERG=A

Avon	Redding	Westport
Darien	Ridgefield	Wilton
Easton	Simsbury	Woodbridge
New Canaan	Weston	Region 9

ERG=B

Bethel	Greenwich	Newtown
Brookfield	Guilford	Orange
Cheshire	Madison	South Windsor
Fairfield	Marlborough	Trumbull
Farmington	Monroe	West Hartford
Glastonbury	New Fairfield	Region 5
Granby		

ERG=C

Andover	Litchfield	Woodstock
Barkhamsted	Mansfield	Region 4
Bethany	New Hartford	Region 6
Bolton	Oxford	Region 7
Bozrah	Pomfret	Region 8
Canton	Preston	Region 10
Cornwall	Salem	Region 13
Deep River	Salisbury	Region 14
East Granby	Sherman	Region 15
Ellington	Somers	Region 17
Essex	Suffield	Region 18
Hebron	Westbrook	Region 19
Ledyard		

ERG=D

Berlin	Hamden	Shelton
Branford	Newington	Southington
Clinton	New Milford	Tolland
Colchester	North Branford	Watertown
Columbia	North Haven	Wethersfield
East Hampton	Old Saybrook	Windsor
East Lyme	Rocky Hill	Region 12

ERG=E

Ashford	East Haddam	Portland
Brooklyn	Franklin	Scotland
Canaan	Hampton	Sharon
Canterbury	Hartland	Union
Chester	Kent	Region 1
Colebrook	Lebanon	Region 11
Coventry	Lisbon	Region 16
Cromwell	Norfolk	Woodstock Academy
Eastford	North Stonington	

ERG=F

Bloomfield	Naugatuck	Vernon
Enfield	Seymour	Wallingford
Groton	Stonington	Waterford
Manchester	Stratford	Windsor Locks
Milford	Torrington	Wolcott
Montville		

ERG=G

Chaplin	Plainville	Thomaston
East Haven	Plymouth	Thompson
East Windsor	Sprague	Voluntown
Griswold	Stafford	Winchester
North Canaan	Sterling	Gilbert School
Plainfield		

ERG=H

Ansonia	Killingly	Putnam
Bristol	Meriden	Stamford
Danbury	Middletown	West Haven
Derby	Norwalk	Norwich Free Acad.
East Hartford	Norwich	

ERG=I

Bridgeport	New Haven	Waterbury
Hartford	New London	Windham
New Britain		