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SUPERINTENDENT
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STATEMENT REGARDING SCORES: *Several districts in the metro area have expressed concern about the accuracy of the scores being reported by the College Board to the schools and districts. Our Accountability Office is currently in the process of verifying scores and calculations for each school and the district and, if discrepancies exist, will post corrected scores on the district web site within the next few days.*

Cobb SAT Scores Continue to Top State, Nation

Cobb County's senior class of 2008 weathered a 10-point drop in their average SAT scores by still outperforming their peers across the state and nation. According to recently released scores, this year's graduating class in Cobb had an overall average (Reading, Math, Writing) of 1524, which was 10 points lower than the class of 2007, but still beat the national average by 13 points and the state average by 58 points.

National scores in the three areas tested, Reading, Math and Writing, were unchanged. State scores declined in all three areas. In Cobb County, Reading scores declined by 4 points, while Math and Writing each dropped 3 points.

Fewer seniors took the SAT this year than last year, decreasing the percentage of participants to 77 percent from last year's 80 percent (See Table I). One possible explanation for the decline in SAT takers is that more seniors this year took the alternative ACT college preparation test. A recent release of Cobb County ACT scores indicated that participation on that test had increased three percentage points to 39 percent of Cobb seniors – the highest percentage of ACT takers in recent history.

On this year's SAT, seven of Cobb's 14 high schools had combined totals higher than the national average of 1511. Kell High School had the biggest gain by posting an average score of 1537, which is a 23-point improvement over 2007, and 26 points higher than the national average. Scores for Pope and Walton high schools each were up by more than 10 points over 2007. Those two schools combined with Lassiter High School top the national average by an average of 153 points.

"I don't like to see our scores drop," said Superintendent Fred Sanderson, "but I am most concerned about ensuring that Cobb County students get the preparation they need to be successful in college. The SAT is a college preparation test, and when you compare our seniors' scores to their peers across the nation, our students continue to excel. We want our students to stay ahead, so we have taken steps to see that a greater number of high school students are exposed to more rigorous AP classes. And thanks to the support of the Board of Education and

the Chamber of Commerce, Project 2400 is a growing program that will help our students succeed in the future by providing intense preparation for the SAT.”

Beginning in 2007, the Cobb County School District, in cooperation with the Cobb Chamber of Commerce, implemented Project 2400, an SAT preparation program targeting 11th grade students. Approximately 10 percent of the Class of 2009 participated in the program last spring.

“The number of participants in the Project 2400 program increased from 206 in 2007 to 510 in 2008,” said Robert Benson, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. “As a district, we are certainly encouraged since the SAT scores of our Project 2400 participants of 2008 were on average 38 points higher than the scores for participants of 2007. Planning is under way to continue Project 2400 in the spring of 2009 for our high school juniors.”

Scores of the 2008 class of Project 2400 are not included in this year’s SAT report since those students were juniors at the time they took the test. Their scores will be included in next year’s SAT report.

The SAT is one way to predict a student’s potential for success in the first year of college and is required for admission to most colleges and universities. The three broad academic areas included in the assessment are Reading, Math, and Writing. The writing section of the test asks students to write an essay that requires them to take a position on an issue and use reasoning and examples to support their position. The Math section of the test includes topics from third-year college-preparatory math, such as exponential growth, absolute value, functional notation, and negative and fractional exponents. The Critical Reading section, previously known as the Verbal section, includes short and long reading passages. Analogies were eliminated, but sentence-completion questions remain.

High school students take the SAT test voluntarily. In Cobb, 5,422 students out of 7,086 graduating seniors, or 77 percent, took the SAT at least once during their four years of high school. In contrast, only 45 percent took the test nationally. This represents an overall decline in participation by graduating seniors nationwide.

Many factors affect SAT scores from year to year, including the percentage of students taking the test, student academic preparation, knowledge of English, parents’ education, and locality. Cobb information shows that the higher the grades and rank-in-class achieved, generally the higher the mean SAT scores.

Parents who desire more information about their student’s SAT scores should contact counselors in the local high school who can provide proper interpretation to help make the best use of test results.

Individual school SAT scores are listed in Table II. A comparison of changes to the new SAT can be found in Attachment I.

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Quick Facts about the Cobb County School District Seniors taking the 2008 SAT

- ✪ The overall total SAT score for the District was 1524. This is 58 points higher than the State's score of 1466, and 13 points higher than the National average of 1511.
- ✪ A total of 5,422 graduating seniors voluntarily took the SAT in 2007. This represents 78% of the total graduating senior class.
- ✪ The number of male students taking the SAT was 2548, (47%). The number of females taking the test was 2874 (53%).
- ✪ 83% of the test takers were English-only speaking students. 10% identified themselves as speaking English and one other language. Seven percent of the testing seniors identified themselves as speaking a language other than English.

✪ Seniors taking the SAT identified their ethnicity as:

	2008	2007
Asian	325	324
Black	1220	1054
Hispanic	322	242
Native American	24	17
White	3156	3190
Other / Multiracial	210	172
No Response	165	219
	5422	5218

- ✪ 32% of the test takers indicated their parents had a high school diploma or associate degree. 40% indicated their parents had a Bachelor's or 4-year degree. 26% of the testing seniors indicated their parents had a graduate or professional degree.
- ✪ The majority of seniors identified their family income as \$100,000 or higher (40%). 35% of the test takers indicated their family income in the \$50,000 to less than \$100,000 range. 25% of participants said their family income was less than \$50,000.
- ✪ District-wide, the overall GPA for the seniors taking the SAT was 3.23.
- ✪ Where will they go? Seniors taking the SAT requested their scores be sent to the following institutions:

Kennesaw State University	47%
University of Georgia / Athens	42%
Georgia State University	31%
Georgia Southern University	25%
Georgia Institute of Technology	23%

**A FIVE YEAR COMPARISON OF SCHOLASTIC ASSESSMENT TEST (SAT)
SCORES FOR COLLEGE BOUND SENIORS*
2004 to 2008**

READING

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NATIONAL</u>	<u>COBB COUNTY</u>	<u>GEORGIA</u>
2008	502	511	491
2007	502	515	494
2006	503	517	494
2005	508	525	497
2004	508	521	494

MATHEMATICS

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NATIONAL</u>	<u>COBB COUNTY</u>	<u>GEORGIA</u>
2008	515	514	493
2007	515	517	495
2006	518	517	496
2005	520	522	496
2004	518	519	493

WRITING

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NATIONAL</u>	<u>COBB COUNTY</u>	<u>GEORGIA</u>
2008	494	499	482
2007	494	502	483
2006	497	504	487

Scale: 200 - 800

Percentage of Students Taking the SAT:

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
NATIONAL	48%	49%	48%	48%	45%
GEORGIA	70%	75%	70%	69%	70%
COBB COUNTY	77%	81%	77%	80%	78%

* All scores are reported on the recentered SAT score scale.

** Estimated percentage of Georgia graduating seniors.

Data Source: 2008 College Board Highlights

**COBB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOLASTIC ASSESSMENT TESTS (SAT) SCORES*
2006 to 2008**

AREA/ SCHOOL	PERCENTAGE TESTED**			Critical Reading Scores			Mathematics Scores			Reading & Math Total			Writing Scores***			New Total		
	2006	2007	2008	2006	2007	2008	2006	2007	2008	2006	2007	2008	2006	2007	2008	2006	2007	2008
NATIONAL	48%	48%	45%	503	502	502	518	515	515	1021	1017	1017	497	494	494	1518	1511	1511
COBB COUNTY	77%	80%	78%	517	515	511	517	517	514	1034	1032	1025	504	502	499	1538	1534	1524
GEORGIA	70%	69%	70%	494	494	491	496	495	493	990	989	984	487	483	482	1477	1472	1466
CAMPBELL	60%	71%	69%	482	496	497	471	491	486	953	987	983	474	480	488	1427	1467	1471
HARRISON	81%	83%	85%	530	528	529	522	529	528	1052	1057	1057	512	513	514	1564	1570	1571
HILLGROVE	--	--	70%	--	--	487	--	--	482	--	--	969	--	--	473	--	--	1442
KELL	78%	80%	79%	510	509	513	519	511	525	1029	1020	1038	504	494	499	1533	1514	1537
KENNESAW MTN.	74%	82%	82%	527	521	519	524	515	520	1051	1036	1039	510	500	503	1561	1536	1542
LASSITER	87%	96%	92%	540	544	545	564	560	560	1104	1104	1105	533	532	530	1637	1636	1635
MCEACHERN	76%	81%	73%	496	481	483	476	473	467	972	954	950	481	465	463	1453	1419	1413
NORTH COBB	70%	68%	70%	496	495	477	480	475	469	976	970	946	480	484	467	1456	1454	1413
OSBORNE	52%	54%	53%	420	431	411	415	429	418	835	860	829	420	417	408	1255	1277	1237
PEBBLEBROOK	60%	58%	62%	461	455	436	433	437	427	894	892	863	440	439	432	1334	1331	1295
POPE	100%	100%	93%	543	545	545	555	553	559	1098	1098	1104	536	536	542	1634	1634	1646
SOUTH COBB	64%	57%	64%	472	460	443	471	458	442	943	918	885	458	447	432	1401	1365	1317
SPRAYBERRY	74%	76%	75%	511	506	500	504	506	492	1015	1012	992	500	496	489	1515	1508	1481
WALTON	99%	100%	98%	566	562	564	585	580	586	1151	1142	1150	554	555	562	1705	1697	1712
WHEELER	81%	79%	74%	531	533	525	535	550	538	1066	1083	1063	514	519	511	1580	1602	1574

Score range 200-800 for all tests

-- No scores for Hillgrove prior to 2008

* All Scores are reported on the recentered SAT score scale.

** Estimated percentage of Georgia graduating seniors.

*** No Writing scores are available prior to 2006. New Total include Reading, Math, and Writing.

Data Source: 2008 College Board Highlights
2008 College Board Profile