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Slight Dip in 2012, But Cobb SAT Scores Continue To Exceed State, National Averages

SAT scores for the Cobb County School District's most recent graduates remain well above averages for the state of Georgia and the nation, despite a 2-point decrease from last year. Seniors in the class of 2012 posted an overall score of 1520 (combined Reading, Math and Writing totals), besting their statewide peers' average by 68 points and the national average by 22 points.

In the SAT's three academic areas, Cobb students' Reading scores increased by two points, while Writing scores decreased three points and Math scores dipped a single point. By comparison, national scores decreased one point in Reading, one point in Writing and remained flat for Math. Georgia scores increased slightly in all three subject areas.

Eight of Cobb's 15 high schools posted combined totals higher than the national average of 1498, including Harrison, Hillgrove, Kell, Kennesaw Mountain, Lassiter, Pope, Walton, and Wheeler. Hillgrove High School posted the largest year to year gain with an average of 1528, a 58 point increase from last year, while six other schools showed increases of more than 10 points over 2011 scores, including Kennesaw Mountain (34 points), Allatoona (21 points), Sprayberry (20 points), Campbell (19 points), Walton (18 points), and South Cobb (14 points).

The performance and participation rate of specific student groups on college preparation exams such as the SAT are important measures of the District's efforts to narrow the achievement gap. In the diverse class of 2012, Cobb saw an increase in the numbers of African-American, Hispanic and Native American test takers, and slight decline in the numbers of Asian and White students taking the test. Eleven (11) percent of SAT test takers identified themselves as speaking English and one other language, while 7 percent of seniors tested identified themselves as native speakers of a language other than English. The 2012 average score for African-American students increased by 14 points to 1336, Native American students posted a 49-point increase to 1528, and the average for Asian students increased by 31 points to 1707. Hispanic students showed a 26-point drop in average score to 1403 in 2012, and the average score for White students declined by one point to 1618.

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“These scores tell me that our students are well-prepared to compete at the college level,” said Superintendent Dr. Michael Hinojosa. “We know that the district’s SAT average isn’t going to increase every year, but we did see marked improvement in several of our student groups as we continue to focus on closing the achievement gap. The scores also show us some areas that need greater attention, including our students whose native language is not English.”

The SAT is designed to predict a student’s potential for success in the first year of college. It tests students’ knowledge and application of Reading, Writing and Math. 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.

Beginning with 2011 results, the College Board changed the way SAT scores are reported, including scores from summer test takers that make up the graduating “cohort” group. In prior years, only scores for test takers through early June were included. In the 2012 release, numbers for 2010 have been revised to reflect the cohort methodology.

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.

SAT scores for individual Cobb high schools are listed in Table II.

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Quick Facts about the Cobb County School District 2012 Seniors taking the SAT

- The overall total SAT score for the District was 1520. This is 68 points higher than the State's score of 1452, and 22 points higher than the National average of 1498.
- Cobb's overall 2012 SAT score declined 2 points from the previous year, while state averages increased 7 points. The national average decreased 2 points.
- A total of 5,790 graduating seniors in Cobb voluntarily took the SAT in 2012. This represents 81% of the total graduating senior class, which is unchanged from 2011.
- Seven Cobb high schools had an increase of more than ten points in the SAT total over last year: Hillgrove (58), Kennesaw Mtn (34), Allatoona (21), Sprayberry (20), Campbell (19), Walton (18), and South Cobb (14).
- Eight Cobb high schools had SAT total scores higher than the national average: Harrison, Hillgrove, Kell, Kennesaw Mountain, Lassiter, Pope, Walton, Wheeler.
- The number of male students taking the SAT was 2734, (47%). The number of females taking the test was 3068 (53%). The average score for male seniors was 1528, ten points lower than last year, while the average for female seniors increased seven points from 1509 in 2010, to 1516 in 2011.
- 81% of the test takers were English-only speaking students. 11% percent identified themselves as speaking English and one other language. 7% percent of the testing seniors identified themselves as speaking a language other than English.

- Seniors taking the SAT identified their ethnicity as:

	2011		2012	
	%	Score	%	Score
Native American	0.4%	1498	0.4%	1528
Asian	7.0%	1676	6.4%	1707
African-American	25.9%	1322	28.1%	1336
Hispanic	6.8%	1429	7.9%	1403
White	54.9%	1618	52.3%	1617
Other / Multiracial	3.6%	1546	3.3%	1500
No Response	1.4%	1416	1.6%	1453

- Seniors identifying themselves as Native American scored 49 points above last year's average for that student group. The total score for African American students was up 16 points, and for White students the score was unchanged.
- 28% of the test takers indicated their parents had a high school diploma or associate degree. 39% percent indicated their parents had a Bachelor's or 4-year degree. 24% percent of the testing seniors indicated their parents had a graduate or professional degree.

- 2012 Seniors taking the SAT identified their family income as:

less than \$60,000	42%
\$60,000 to less than \$120,000	35%
\$120,000 and above	<u>23%</u>

- District-wide, the self-reported overall GPA for the seniors taking the SAT was 3.27.

**A FIVE YEAR COMPARISON OF SCHOLASTIC ASSESSMENT TEST (SAT)
SCORES FOR COLLEGE BOUND SENIORS*
2008 to 2012**

READING

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NATIONAL</u>	<u>COBB COUNTY</u>	<u>GEORGIA</u>
2012	496	512	488
2011	497	510	485
2010	500	511	488
2009	499	514	489
2008	500	510	490

MATHEMATICS

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NATIONAL</u>	<u>COBB COUNTY</u>	<u>GEORGIA</u>
2012	514	514	489
2011	514	515	487
2010	515	516	489
2009	514	519	489
2008	514	512	490

WRITING

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NATIONAL</u>	<u>COBB COUNTY</u>	<u>GEORGIA</u>
2012	488	494	475
2011	489	497	473
2010	491	495	474
2009	492	499	477
2008	493	498	480

Scale: 200 - 800

Percentage of Students Taking the SAT:

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
NATIONAL**	45%	46%	47%	48%	48%
GEORGIA**	79%	77%	74%	80%	80%
COBB COUNTY	80%	68%	71%	81%	81%

* All scores reflect the "full cohort" trend calculation

** Estimated percentage of graduating seniors

**COBB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOLASTIC ASSESSMENT TESTS (SAT) SCORES*
2010 to 2012**

AREA/ SCHOOL	PERCENTAGE TESTED**			Critical Reading Scores			Mathematics Scores			Reading & Math Total			Writing Scores			New Total		
	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012
NATIONAL	47%	48%	48**	500	497	496	515	514	514	1015	1011	1010	491	489	488	1506	1500	1498
COBB COUNTY	71%	81%	81%	511	510	512	516	515	514	1027	1025	1026	495	497	494	1522	1522	1520
GEORGIA	78%	77%	80**	488	485	488	489	487	489	977	972	977	474	473	475	1451	1445	1452
ALLATOONA	66%	85%	81%	484	498	509	488	493	503	972	991	1012	470	483	483	1442	1474	1495
CAMPBELL	53%	66%	72%	496	483	487	486	481	489	982	964	976	485	475	482	1467	1439	1458
HARRISON	82%	91%	92%	531	528	524	535	538	531	1066	1066	1055	509	512	506	1575	1578	1561
HILLGROVE	74%	84%	82%	497	495	516	491	490	513	988	985	1029	480	485	499	1468	1470	1528
KELL	72%	85%	85%	507	510	503	522	515	515	1029	1025	1018	491	487	489	1520	1512	1507
KENNESAW MTN.	69%	84%	83%	520	516	531	530	524	533	1050	1040	1064	505	498	508	1555	1538	1572
LASSITER	88%	95%	98%	547	544	549	564	559	556	1111	1103	1105	526	531	531	1637	1634	1636
MCEACHERN	60%	78%	80%	452	467	457	445	452	440	897	919	897	437	449	429	1334	1368	1326
NORTH COBB	55%	72%	78%	491	492	487	479	485	475	970	977	962	468	471	464	1438	1448	1426
OSBORNE	42%	45%	51%	406	417	414	401	422	418	807	839	832	387	407	398	1194	1246	1230
PEBBLEBROOK	52%	70%	78%	442	439	436	437	430	414	879	869	850	434	432	428	1313	1301	1278
POPE	81%	97%	92%	549	552	545	565	573	562	1114	1125	1107	541	551	538	1655	1676	1645
SOUTH COBB	46%	63%	66%	446	439	450	443	441	441	889	880	891	439	429	432	1328	1309	1323
SPRAYBERRY	56%	72%	80%	497	501	511	492	491	501	989	992	1012	467	483	483	1456	1475	1495
WALTON	94%	100%	100%	566	572	580	592	593	597	1158	1165	1177	555	560	566	1713	1725	1743
WHEELER	68%	79%	80%	556	544	535	566	551	555	1122	1095	1090	539	525	521	1661	1620	1611

Note: All scores have been adjusted to reflect "full cohort" trend calculation. Scores for 2010 were revised by College Board and may not match prior data released by Cobb County School District
Score range 200-800 for all tests

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

** Estimated percentage of graduating seniors.

Data Source: 2012 College Board Highlights
2012 College Board Profile