



Standardized Tests

Which test should I take? Most colleges and universities accept either the SAT or the ACT. Check the website for each college. Students sometimes have a preference for the format of one or the other; if you have tried both in the past, you should have an idea of which one suits you. Check the percentiles, if you took both tests; use the test for which your percentiles are highest.

If I take a standardized test more than once, can I choose which scores to submit to colleges? For both the SAT and ACT, you will be able to choose which testing date you will report scores from. You cannot, however, construct a score report that combines scores from more than one administration.

What are the SAT II Subject Tests? These are one-hour, multiple-choice exams in specific fields. You can take up to three of them in one testing day. Check each college's website to see if these are required; some require two or three, and some don't require any. Some colleges don't require SAT II Subject Tests if you submit ACT scores.

Are these standardized tests given at MCDS? No.

When and where are the tests given? The ACT, SAT, and SAT II subject tests are administered on Saturdays, according to a schedule that is posted in room 127. MCDS does not administer these tests. They are usually given at area high schools. Sunday administrations are available to students who observe Saturday Sabbath restrictions. You must provide documentation from your clergyperson to be eligible for Sunday testing.

How do I sign up for the tests? To find the schedule for the year, learn more about the tests, and to sign up, for the SAT and SAT II, go to www.collegeboard.com. For the ACT, go to www.actstudent.org.

What about SAT II Foreign Language Tests? The foreign language with listening tests are given only once each year, generally in November. The foreign language tests given at other times of the year do not include the listening component.

Most colleges require that you take a one-year course in a foreign language as a requirement for the B.A. degree. Some schools will waive their foreign language requirement if you submit a qualifying score on an SAT II Language with Listening Test.

Can I take the SAT Reasoning Test and the SAT Subject Tests on the same day? No. So do not plan to take the November SAT if you want to take a Foreign Language with Listening test.

When should I take the test(s)? Many students take the ACT or SAT in May or June of eleventh grade, planning to take the test again in the fall if their scores are not as high as desired.

Should I retake the exams if I'm not satisfied with my scores? Talk with Mrs. Schweber about this. It isn't unusual for a student's scores to go down when repeating a test. Since both ACT and SAT will now send whatever set of scores you wish, you can choose the best (you may not split scores, however; i.e., you can't ask them to send Math from October and Verbal from November). But consider whether the expense of time and money is worthwhile. **If you do nothing to change your level of preparation, your scores aren't likely to improve just because you took the test again.**

Should I prepare for these tests? It is a good idea to do at least one of the practice tests provided when you register. If you plan to do some serious preparation for the ACT or SAT, consider doing so in the summer, rather than cramming in the fall. There are a variety of test-prep books available in Room 127, or you can buy your own online or in a bookstore.

When is the last possible moment to take standardized tests? Depending on your deadlines, it may be possible to take the ACT or SAT as late as December or even January of senior year. However, most deadlines make it necessary to be finished with all exams by mid-November. You are responsible for knowing what is required and when it must be completed.

How do I submit test scores to the colleges? When you sign up for a standardized test, you have the opportunity to list colleges that should receive your scores. (This is a good reason for knowing early on at least some of the colleges to which you will be applying.) If you need additional score reports later, you can order them online. Go to www.collegeboard.com (SAT and SAT II) or www.actstudent.org (ACT). Keep in mind that if you did not designate a college to receive your scores when you registered for the test, you will have to do so later. Don't forget to take care of this.

What about AP scores? You must request AP scores to be sent to each college. Go to www.collegeboard.com. MCDS does not submit AP scores to colleges.

Are there any colleges that do not require standardized tests? Yes, and the list is growing each year. Twice each year, FairTest publishes a list of colleges that do not require standardized tests. There is a current list in the vertical file in Room 127, or go to www.fairtest.org.

What if I need accommodations for a disability? See Mrs. Schweber. You must file an application with ACT or the College Board that includes the professional documentation (diagnosis and recommended accommodations) of your disability. The application must be filed several months prior to the test date. You should take care of this during your junior year if at all possible.