

Introducing the PSAT and SAT in Colorado

Delivering more opportunities for all students

The PSAT and SAT exams will provide Colorado's 10th- and 11th-graders with more useful assessments aligned to the Colorado Academic Standards and better benefits, such as free, high-quality practice tools and scholarship opportunities.

Why the PSAT and SAT?

In 2015 the legislature passed House Bill 1323, requiring the state to competitively bid for a new 10th-grade exam that is aligned to the Colorado Academic Standards and an 11th-grade college entrance exam. The selection committee chose the PSAT for 10th-graders and the SAT for the 11th-grade college entrance exam because of their alignment to the high school Colorado Academic Standards and because the College Board's reports and free test preparation services could be more useful to students. The College Board's system can connect students with resources and activities designed to help identify next steps for extra support or possible acceleration.

Tenth-graders in Colorado will begin taking the PSAT in the spring of 2016 and will no longer take the CMAS tests in English language arts and math. The CMAS English language arts and math tests have also been discontinued for 11th-graders, who will take the ACT this year. Next year's 11th-graders, however, will transition to the SAT. The PSAT and SAT will be given each spring for the following five years.

Improving outcomes for all students

The PSAT and SAT focus on concepts and skills that matter most for college and career readiness. They are designed to inform instruction and ultimately help improve student outcomes. The tests can help identify students who are falling behind so teachers can intervene, and they can provide indicators to students' readiness for AP coursework and to keep them on target for college.

Free personalized SAT study plan

Interested students taking the PSAT will be able to get a personalized SAT study plan based on their test scores. Free resources from Khan Academy include interactive questions, video instruction sessions, thousands of practice questions, a mobile app for daily practice and the ability to scan and score practice tests.

Scholarship and college opportunities

Every income-eligible student who takes the SAT will directly receive four college application fee waivers, which may be used to apply to 2,000 participating colleges. All students can opt in to a service to receive free information about admission and financial aid opportunities from colleges, universities and scholarship programs.

PSAT and SAT Information

- Colorado 10th-graders will begin taking the PSAT in spring 2016.
- PSAT is not an exact replica of the SAT. Rather, it serves as an introduction to the test because the questions and format are similar.
- PSAT is shorter than the three-hour SAT, clocking in at two hours and 45 minutes.
- PSAT includes three tests: reading, writing and language and mathematics.
- Colorado 11th-graders will take the ACT this year. Next year's 11th-graders will begin taking the SAT in spring of 2017.
- The SAT is accepted for admission and placement purposes at all public colleges and universities in Colorado.
- The SAT consists of three scored sections, each on a 200-800 point scale.
- About 2 million students take the SAT every year worldwide.