

## SMCPS Students Increase SAT Results by 27 Points

Posted by [petehurrey](#) On 08/27/2009

St. Mary's County Public Schools' students exceeded national and state averages on the Scholastic Achievement Tests with an average combined score of 1559 out of 2400.

"We are extremely proud of our students' performance on this year's SAT," said Dr. Michael J. Martirano, superintendent of schools. "The county average of 1559 surpasses our 2006 county average of 1534 which was an all-time high for the school system. Our students, parents, teachers, counselors, and administrators are to be commended for their hard work that contributed to higher levels of student performance on the SAT this year."

The SAT Reasoning Test is a measure of the critical thinking skills students need for academic success in college. The SAT assesses how well students analyze and solve problems. The tests are typically taken by high school juniors and seniors, and are designed for students who plan to attend four-year colleges. Results of these tests are used by colleges and universities to make decisions about the admission of individual students to their programs and to assess a student's academic potential for success in college.

The SAT includes a Critical Reading, Math, and Writing section, and includes expanded math topics such as exponential growth, absolute value, and functional notation. The SAT places greater emphasis on topics such as linear functions, manipulations with exponents, and properties of tangent lines. The critical reading section, formerly known as the verbal section, includes short reading passages along with the existing long reading passages. Analogies have been eliminated, but sentence-completion questions and passage-based reading questions remain. The writing section includes both multiple-choice questions and a direct writing measure in the form of an essay.

SMCPS continues to have a large portion of its senior class take the SAT. The College Board reported that 44.9 percent of the school system's seniors were administered the SAT assessment this year. This marks the fourth consecutive year that SMCPS had over 450 seniors participate in this assessment.

Great Mills High School administered the SAT assessment to 52.6 percent of its senior class. Great Mills seniors scored a 473 average on the mathematics portion. This combined with a 469 average critical reading and a 460 average writing score gave Great Mills a 1402 composite average.

Leonardtown High School seniors posted scores above the state and national averages. Over 52.2 percent of the senior class took the SAT. Leonardtown posted a critical reading average score of 547, a writing average score of 530, and a mathematics average score of 554, which gave Leonardtown a 1631 composite average.

Chopticon High School seniors also posted scores above the state and national averages. Their average critical reading score of 528, average mathematics score of 554, and average writing score of 523 led to a 1605 composite average.

To encourage continued gains on the SAT, the school system has adopted the Official SAT Online Course through the College Board. This program, accessible by any high school student through any internet-based computer, allows students access to eight real SAT exams to help practice and refine critical reading, math, and writing skills, as needed. The program also offers eight real SAT essay prompts with instant scoring. The program can be accessed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by visiting [www.collegeboard.com/satonlinecourseshool](http://www.collegeboard.com/satonlinecourseshool).

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