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FAIRTEST SUPPORTS ADMISSION COUNSELOR'S COMPLAINT ABOUT SPECIAL AUGUST SAT EXAM LIMITED TO WEALTHY STUDENTS; CALLS ON COLLEGE BOARD TO JUSTIFY EXCLUSIVE OPTION

The National Center for Fair & Open Testing (FairTest) today endorsed a complaint to the College Board by San Mateo, California, independent counselor Elizabeth Stone challenging an official SAT exam offered only to students who enroll in a \$4,500 program held on the Amherst College campus this summer. FairTest called on the College Board to respond immediately to Ms Stone and to cancel the special administration of the test.

A recent College Board news release, cited by Stone, revealed the plan for the unprecedented August 3 exam offered only to participants in a National Society for the Gifted and Talented (NSGT) program. All other students, even those enrolled in competing summer test preparation courses, will have to wait until October to take the next regularly scheduled SAT.

"Ms. Stone's letter to the College Board raises several important concerns about the equity of this special, elitist SAT administration," explained FairTest Public Education Director Bob Schaeffer. "She deserves a clear answer as do thousands of other potential test-takers and the admissions offices which still require standardized exam scores."

Among the questions raised by Ms. Stone and FairTest:

- Why is a summer test being made available only to kids whose parents can pay close to \$5000 in tuition and fees? Do not College Board annual reports already demonstrate that students from the highest socio-economic backgrounds significantly out-score other demographic groups on the SAT?
- Why are other students who are preparing for the SAT over the summer also not allowed to take an August test? How does the College Board justify making all these students wait until October?
- Will students who take the August test gain a leg up in the admissions process, particularly at colleges with Early Decision or Restrictive Early Action deadlines in early November?
- Will not this special August test date, offered to an elite group of students, be perceived by the public as giving these students an unfair advantage? If there is no special value in the August test date, than why has College Board created this unique partnership with NSGT?
- Have the nation's colleges committed to accepting these test scores? Will they be allowed to void them if they deem this August test date does not affirm the fairness of their college admissions policies?

FairTest leads the nation's test-score optional admissions movement. More than 850 accredited, bachelor-degree granting colleges do not require all or many applicants to submit SAT or ACT scores before admissions are made. A complete, regularly updated list is online at:
<http://www.fairtest.org/university/optional>

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- Ms Stone's complete letter is available on request
- The news release announcing the special August 3 SAT administration is online at:
http://www.giftedstudy.org/pdf/PR_Amherst_SAT.pdf

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