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SAT SCORE AVERAGES STAGNATE AS NUMBER OF TEST-TAKERS DECLINES; PERSISTENT RACE, GENDER GAPS SHOW FAILURE OF TEST-DRIVEN SCHOOLING

Fewer students in the high school class of 2013 took the SAT college admissions exam compared to previous years, and test scores remained largely unchanged, according to a report released today. Overall, SAT average scores have dropped by 20 points since 2006, when the test was revised to include a writing section. Gaps between racial groups increased, often significantly, over that period.

Bob Schaeffer, Public Education Director of the National Center for Fair & Open Testing (FairTest), said, “Proponents of ‘No Child Left Behind,’ ‘Race to the Top,’ and similar state-level programs promised the testing focus would boost college readiness while narrowing score gaps between groups. The data show a total failure according to their own measures. Doubling down on unsuccessful policies with more high-stakes K-12 testing, as Common Core exam proponents propose, is an exercise in futility, not meaningful school improvement.” (see <http://fairtest.org/common-core-assessments-factsheet>)

The number of SAT Subject Tests administered to the Class of 2013 also declined from the previous year. At the same time, students taking the rival ACT increased by 133,000 (chart available on request). “No wonder the new College Board president is scrambling to overhaul his company’s flagship exams,” FairTest’s Schaeffer concluded. “The college admissions marketplace is moving away from the SAT.”

FairTest leads the growing test-optional admissions movement. More than 800 accredited, bachelor-degree granting colleges and universities do not require all or many applicants to submit SAT or ACT scores (see <http://fairtest.org/university/optional>). Five more schools – Brandeis, Hood, Lynn, Regis, and St. Joseph’s -- dropped test-score requirements just last month.

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2013 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS SAT SCORES -- with score changes from 2006*