



May

## Understanding Your PSAT 10 Scores

All Zeeland 10th graders took the PSAT 10 in April. The PSAT 10 is part of the College Board's "SAT Suite of Assessments" including the

- PSAT 8/9 - preliminary SAT test for all freshmen; taken in April
- PSAT 10 - preliminary SAT test for all sophomores; taken in April
- PSAT/NMSQT - an *optional* preliminary SAT test taken most often in October of the junior year; students who score high enough can qualify for National Merit Scholarships
- SAT - state required test for all juniors as part of the Michigan Merit Exam; taken in April

This newsletter is an effort to help students and parents better understand the scores once they are released, typically a few weeks after test administration.

These tests measure students' college and career readiness. The SAT is one of two standardized tests widely accepted by colleges and universities for college admission. The ACT is the other.

Scores from the PSAT 10 will be available in the near future, through the College Board's website - <https://studentscores.collegeboard.org>. This is the same website you would have viewed PSAT 8/9 scores through last year after creating a College Board account. If you did not create a College Board account last year, those wishing to view scores now must "Create Account" (Student) to get registered. **PLEASE NOTE:** Students should create only ONE College Board account for use throughout high school. If you choose to create an account now to view scores it is **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT** to write down the username/email and password and store it in a safe place. Creating multiple accounts can cause numerous problems and lengthy phone conversations with the College Board. Otherwise, scores will be released to high school counselors later on this summer and you can request a pdf file of the results in the fall. This will allow students to create an online account later on in high school when they will more readily utilize it.

### **AN OVERVIEW OF THE SCORE REPORT**

The PSAT 10 measures students' knowledge in the following areas, determined by research to be important for college and career readiness: reading, writing and language, and math. A student's raw score is computed by the number of questions answered correctly (no guessing penalty) and raw scores are converted to section scores between 160 and 760 for the following 2 areas:

- Evidence-Based Reading and Writing
- Math

*Thus, the total PSAT 10 score is reported on a 320-1520 scale.*

Percentiles show the percentage of students nationwide whose scores are equal to or below the student's total score. For example, being in the 60th percentile means that a student did better than or equal to 60% of all 10th graders taking the test.

The PSAT 8/9 and the SAT are scored on a common scale. Therefore, if a student earns a math section score of 500 on the PSAT, he/she would have also earned a 500 math section score on the SAT had he/she taken it on the same test date. The score represents the same level of academic achievement on all three tests.

Here is the link to a [tutorial](#) to better understand PSAT scores.

## **WHY IS THE SAT SUITE OF ASSESSMENTS AN IMPORTANT TOOL FOR COLLEGES?**

The PSAT 10 is a test to help familiarize students with the SAT, a college entrance exam widely used across the country. Colleges use SAT results to:

- Identify applicants for admission (among other factors such as high school classes taken, GPA, extra-curricular activities, essay, etc.)
- Place students in first year college courses.
- Help students develop an appropriate program of study.
- Help scholarship/loan agencies identify qualified applicants.

## **NEXT STEPS**

For students who desire to continue practicing for the SAT, there are a few options. First, the College Board also offers a very detailed and FREE service to help students prepare for the SAT through its partnership with the Khan Academy. Students can work through thousands of practice questions, watch video lessons, get test taking tips, and take full length practice tests. More information is available at <https://www.khanacademy.org/sat>.

Second, current sophomores also have the option to take the PSAT/NMSQT in the fall. The Preliminary SAT<sup>®</sup>/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) is a co-sponsored program by the College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). It's a standardized test that provides first hand practice for the SAT Reasoning Test that all students will take in the spring of the junior year as part of the Michigan Merit Exam and for college admission. It also gives students a chance to enter NMSC scholarship programs. The most common reason students at Zeeland take the PSAT/NMSQT is to enter the competition for scholarships from NMSC. Only the top 1-2% of all test takers qualify for recognition. *Some parents' employers require students to take the PSAT for company scholarships. Please contact the employer directly to inquire.* More information about the PSAT/NMSQT as well as the registration form will be available in late August/early September.

Students interested in learning more about the college planning process and exploring career options are encouraged to utilize the College Board's BigFuture site at <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org>.