

**THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF STRATEGY & OPERATIONS OFFICER**

**Maurice L. Woods
Chief Strategy & Operations Officer**

Signatures on File

July 8, 2015

TO: All Principals

FROM: Maurice L. Woods
Chief Strategy & Operations Officer

VIA: Desmond K. Blackburn, Ph.D.
Chief School Performance & Accountability Officer

SUBJECT: **PRELIMINARY SAT/NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFYING TEST: A
FIVE-YEAR REVIEW OF DATA 2010-11 TO 2014-15**

The attached Assessment Brief summarizes student participation and scores from the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT) administered from 2010-11 through 2014-15. The PSAT provides students, educators, and parents with feedback on the critical reading, mathematics, and writing skills that are essential for success in college-level coursework.

Students typically take the PSAT for the first time in October of their tenth grade year. This administration provides students their first exposure to a college entrance-like exam (similar to the SAT) and provides critical feedback in the three areas mentioned above. In addition, PSAT scores provide guidance for advanced placement course selection. The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) covers the cost of participation for all tenth grade students who wish to take the exam as part of an initiative to ensure that students from under-represented populations have access to advanced coursework to better prepare them for college.

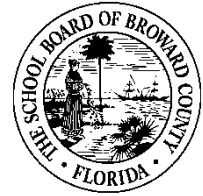
The PSAT serves an additional function for eleventh grade students; it is a requirement of the National Merit Scholarship Competition. In both years, the PSAT provides students with an opportunity to prepare for the SAT and supplies schools with valuable information that can be used to adapt instruction to the needs of the current students.

The attached brief and one-page data snapshot summarize participation and scores for the tenth and eleventh grade PSAT participants. Detailed summaries are included for student racial/ethnic groups and special populations. Staff should review these data to identify opportunities to encourage increased participation, identify students in need of additional support, and identify students who may benefit from advanced course opportunities.

Questions regarding this report should be directed to **Director Richard Baum, Student Assessment & Research at 754-321-2500**. This memo and report may also be accessed via the Student Assessment & Research Web site at: <http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/sar/index.htm>.

DKB/MLW/NB/RGB/RWC/SLS:rs
Attachments

cc: School Board Members
Senior Leadership Team
Directors, School Performance & Accountability



Assessment Brief

PRELIMINARY SAT/NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFYING TEST A FIVE-YEAR REVIEW OF DATA 2010-11 TO 2014-15

Florida Statute 1007.35, entitled the Florida Partnership for Minority and Underrepresented Student Achievement Act, was established with the intention of both providing access to college for all students and ensuring their success once accepted. This act calls for every student enrolled in public secondary school to have access to high-quality, rigorous academics and advanced courses. As part of this initiative, all secondary schools, including alternative sites and centers of the Juvenile Justice, are required to provide for the administration of either the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT) or the Preliminary ACT (PLAN) to all 10th grade students. Districts are required to choose one of the two exams (PSAT or PLAN) for districtwide implementation, with funding for the exam provided by the State of Florida. Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) administers the PSAT to meet this legislative requirement.

The state has underwritten the cost of this exam since 2001, and continued support is contingent upon annual funding in the General Appropriations Act (The Florida Legislature, 2015). Student assessment data from these exams are provided to schools with the expectation that school counselors will use them to identify students who are prepared to enroll, and be successful, in Advance Placement (AP) or other rigorous high school courses. The data are also expected to be used to identify students who show promise for being successful in advanced classes, but need additional preparation first (The Florida Legislature, 2015).

Benefits to Schools

Benefits schools receive from administration of the PSAT go above and beyond identification of students who are ready for more rigorous coursework. After administration of this exam, schools receive a Summary of Answers and Skills (SOAS) report from College Board. This report provides a high level comparison between the individual school, the state, and the nation for the three domains tested on the PSAT (critical reading, mathematics, and writing skills). It also shows the percent of students considered on track for being college and career ready.

Additionally, schools are provided with detailed information as to how their students performed on each of the 19 sub-domains of the test. The report also provides a graphical representation of all of the questions and the percent of students who chose each answer. Explanations for each of the questions are available at the College Board Web site at: <https://www.scores.collegeboard.org> (College Board, 2015a).

In BCPS, the Department of Mathematics, Science, and Gifted provides a spreadsheet template for schools to use along with the information in the SOAS report to quickly identify instructional areas corresponding to student weaknesses. Once a weakness is identified, schools can adjust curriculum to address the current needs of the students. They can also communicate this information to the middle school that the students attended so that gaps in knowledge can be addressed before the students reach high school. Schools that need help in translating the identification of a gap in knowledge to adapted curriculum can contact the Department of Mathematics, Science, and Gifted.

Benefits to Students

Taking the PSAT in tenth grade helps students to prepare for the SAT, which is used by many colleges and universities to support admission decisions. The questions are similar, and feedback is given to students regarding their strengths and weaknesses in the areas of critical reading, writing, and mathematics—essential areas for college-level coursework success. Students are also given recommendations about college-level AP courses for which they are well-prepared. After taking the PSAT, College Board gives students access to an online tool called My College QuickStart™. Through My College Quickstart™, students can see which questions they got correct and incorrect, and what the correct answers are. They are also provided with a practice test. These resources are a tremendous asset for students, providing valuable preparation for future administrations of the PSAT as well as the SAT (College Board, 2015b).

Taking the PSAT in eleventh grade provides additional practice which may help increase SAT scores. Research cited by the College Board claims that taking the PSAT in eleventh grade is associated with higher scores on the SAT. Their studies found that students who take the PSAT in eleventh grade score 131 points higher on the SAT, and students who take two administrations of the PSAT (in tenth and eleventh grades) score, on average, 155 points higher on the SAT¹ (College Board, 2014). Since the PSAT is less expensive than the SAT (\$14.00 vs. \$52.50), it provides a more economical way to practice for the SAT. Students who take the PSAT in eleventh grade are also enrolled in a competition for a National Merit Scholarship. Of the 1.5 million eleventh graders that take the PSAT each year, 16,000 go on to be semi-finalists, and approximately 7,600 ultimately receiving a National Merit \$2,500 scholarship (National Merit, 2015).

Participation and Performance

Nationally, the number of tenth grade students (1,812,143) that took the PSAT in 2015 was slightly larger than the number of eleventh grade students (1,595,486) (College Board, 2015c, College Board, 2015d). However, in Broward County many more tenth grade students (16,847 in 2014-15) take the PSAT than eleventh grade students (4,754 in 2014-15). This is because in tenth grade the State of Florida covers the cost for all students to take the exam, whereas in eleventh grade the District encourages schools to pay for their top-performing students to take the PSAT. Thus, Broward's tenth

¹ Taking the PSAT in eleventh grade may not be the cause of higher SAT scores in the students cited in the College Board research. It may be that it is the higher achieving students who opt to take the PSAT in eleventh grade in order to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship.

grade students represent a much broader range of academic achievement than the eleventh grade group.

This report summarizes PSAT data from the past five years, including participation rates and scores by grade and specific population including the three major racial/ethnic groups, students receiving free and reduced-price lunch (FRL), students with limited English proficiency (LEP), and students with disabilities (SWD).

Method

The test results included in this report are for students who participated in PSAT administrations over the past five years. The Broward County PSAT data summarized herein were obtained by linking PSAT scores from College Board with District demographic and enrollment records. National and State PSAT data is from the PSAT/NMSQT College-Bound High School Sophomores Summary Report and the PSAT/NMSQT College-Bound High School Juniors Summary Report for each year, published by College Board.

Results

Participation Rates

Broward’s participation rates for both tenth and eleventh grades were stable over the five-year period, with tenth grade participation decreasing by 0.6% and eleventh grade participation increasing by 1.5% (Table 1).

Table 1
Broward Enrollment and PSAT Participation, 2010-11 through 2014-15

	Year	Enrollment	Participants	Participation Rate
Grade 10	2010-11	20,534	17,170	83.6%
	2011-12	19,832	16,526	83.3%
	2012-13	20,672	17,334	83.9%
	2013-14	20,187	16,522	81.8%
	2014-15	20,287	16,847	83.0%
Grade 11	2010-11	19,361	4,314	22.3%
	2011-12	20,136	4,308	21.4%
	2012-13	19,385	4,241	21.9%
	2013-14	20,148	4,433	22.0%
	2014-15	19,939	4,754	23.8%

Participation varied dramatically by school type. The State of Florida mandates all secondary schools, including alternative sites and centers of the Juvenile Justice, administer the PSAT in tenth grade. Figure 1 shows that, in Broward, participation rates in charter schools (65%) and center schools (11%) were much lower than at traditional schools (88%).

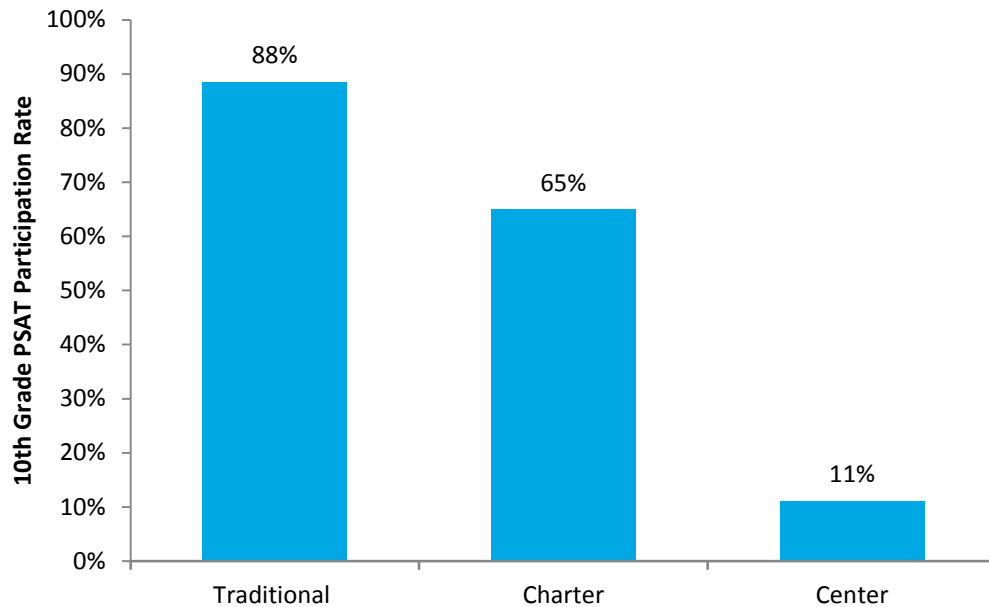


Figure 1. Percent of tenth grade students participating in the 2014-15 administration of the PSAT, by school type.

Participation rates varied by school. School by school participation rates are provided in Appendix A for both tenth and eleventh grades for traditional, charter, and center schools, with schools that had 2014-15 participation rates of at least one standard deviation above or below the mean highlighted². Traditional schools that had tenth grade participation rates of at least one standard deviation above the mean were Atlantic Technical Center, Nova High, and Pompano Beach High. For eleventh grade, in addition to these three schools, College Academy at Broward College and William T. McFatter Technical Center also had higher participation rates.

Traditional schools that had participation rates at least one standard deviation below the mean for tenth grade were Broward Virtual Education, Coconut Creek, Hollywood Hills and Northeast high schools. For eleventh grade, they were Boyd H. Anderson, Hallandale, Monarch, and Northeast high schools.

Participation by Racial/Ethnic Group. Table 2 summarizes participation rates disaggregated by the three largest racial/ethnic groups represented in the District. The percent of students taking the PSAT in tenth grade varied across groups, with **Black students taking the PSAT at a slightly lower rate (80%) than Hispanic (85%) and White (85%) students in 2014-15.** Within each group, participation rates remained stable with no more than a one percentage point change seen across the past five years.

² Standard deviations were calculated using only traditional schools. Charter and center schools, in general, had a much lower rate of participation.

Table 2

Broward Enrollment and PSAT Participation by Race/Ethnicity, 2010-11 through 2014-15

Year	Black			Hispanic			White		
	<i>n</i> Enroll.	<i>n</i> Part.	% Part.	<i>n</i> Enroll.	<i>n</i> Part.	% Part.	<i>n</i> Enroll.	<i>n</i> Part.	% Part.
Grade 10									
2010-11	7,896	6,314	80%	5,617	4,829	86%	5,640	4,852	86%
2011-12	7,702	6,025	78%	5,551	4,692	85%	5,445	4,709	87%
2012-13	8,166	6,428	79%	5,910	5,125	87%	5,212	4,550	87%
2013-14	7,882	6,145	78%	5,808	4,903	84%	5,090	4,290	84%
2014-15	8,057	6,407	80%	5,968	5,082	85%	4,942	4,207	85%
5-Year Change			0%			-1%			-1%
Grade 11									
2010-11	7,244	1,133	16%	5,414	1,103	20%	5,434	1,636	30%
2011-12	7,976	1,185	15%	5,644	1,143	20%	5,429	1,513	28%
2012-13	7,444	1,084	15%	5,427	1,157	21%	5,188	1,518	29%
2013-14	7,968	1,218	15%	5,803	1,310	23%	5,070	1,421	28%
2014-15	7,773	1,321	17%	5,834	1,442	25%	5,002	1,449	29%
5-Year Change			+1%			+5%			-1%

Note: Enroll. = enrollment; Part. = participation.

In eleventh grade, participation rates were considerably lower than in tenth grade, which is not unexpected given that these students must pay to participate. Overall, the participation rate for eleventh grade increased by 1.5 percentage points for this time period. In 2014-15, among the three largest racial/ethnic groups, Black students were the least likely to participate (17%) and their participation was stable over the five-year period. Hispanic students showed the **greatest increase in participation (5 percentage points) with 25% participating in 2014-15.**

Performance

Summaries for the past five years of national, Florida, and Broward County scores are in Table 3.

Table 3

National, Florida and Broward PSAT Mean Scores, 2010-11 through 2014-15.

	Grade 10						Grade 11					
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	5-Year Change	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	5-Year Change
Critical Reading												
Nation	42.5	43.1	43.1	42.6	42.1	-0.4	47.3	47.6	47.7	47.4	46.9	-0.4
Florida	41.1	41.4	41.4	41.0	41.1	0.0	48.6	48.5	48.6	48.3	48.0	-0.6
Broward	40.4	40.9	40.6	40.3	40.4	0.0	50.5	50.0	50.3	49.4	49.9	-0.6
Benchmark	49	49	42	42	42		50	50	45	45	45	
Math												
Nation	44.0	43.1	43.6	43.5	43.4	-0.6	48.9	48.3	48.6	48.6	48.6	-0.3
Florida	41.9	40.5	41.2	41.2	41.3	-0.6	49.2	48.5	48.4	48.4	48.5	-0.7
Broward	42.0	40.6	41.1	41.2	41.0	-1.0	52.0	50.9	50.9	50.3	50.9	-1.1
Benchmark	47	47	44	44	44		50	50	47	47	47	
Writing												
Nation	40.4	40.9	41.8	41.2	40.1	-0.3	45.4	45.6	46.5	45.9	45.3	-0.1
Florida	38.3	38.7	39.5	39.0	38.1	-0.2	45.9	46.0	47.2	46.4	45.8	-0.1
Broward	37.8	38.4	38.6	38.3	37.4	-0.4	47.5	47.4	48.5	47.2	47.5	0.0
Benchmark	48	48	42	42	42		49	49	45	45	45	

In general, the mean scores for all three subject areas showed little change from year to year. Scores for students locally and nationally tend to be highest in mathematics, slightly lower in critical reading, and lowest in writing. In Broward, the 2014-15 math score for tenth grade students was 0.6 points higher than reading and 3 points higher than writing. For the same year in eleventh grade, math scores were 1 point higher than reading and 3.4 points higher than writing.

In all subject areas, Florida and Broward tenth grade scores were slightly lower than the national mean scores. Again, this reflects that most national test-takers plan to attend college, whereas in Florida, because the State funds the exam, a more diverse pool of students participate in the PSAT. **Performance results were strong in eleventh grade, with Broward students surpassing the mean scores of their peers across the state and nation in all three subject areas.**

College Readiness Benchmark

College Board provides an index of college readiness, which they call benchmark scores, based on PSAT performance. Attainment of the benchmark score indicates that a student is “on-track” for college following his or her senior year. The PSAT benchmarks are calculated in the same way as the SAT benchmarks. These scores are designed to predict a first year of college GPA of 2.67 or higher with a 65% probability. PSAT benchmark scores are intended as a tool to help educators in planning instruction and are not included in reports sent to students (College Board, 2014).

Across the five years, the average tenth grade Florida and Broward scores failed to meet the benchmark (Table 3). For eleventh graders, however, the mean scores of Broward students met or exceeded the benchmark scores in both critical reading and mathematics for the past five years, and writing the past three years (Table 3).

Figure 2 shows the percent of tenth grade students meeting or exceeding the college-ready benchmark score for the nation, Florida, and Broward County. While approximately 40% of tenth grade students nationwide met the benchmark, approximately 30% of Florida and Broward County tenth grade students achieved the benchmark score. This difference between the national and state-wide, including Broward, benchmark rates is attributable, in part, to Florida’s initiative to fund the test for all tenth grade students and the resulting greater range of academic success represented in Florida’s and Broward’s participants. This difference is reflected in grades as well, with the average self-reported GPA of Broward students taking the PSAT in 2014-15 being 3.03, while the national average for this same time period was 3.27.

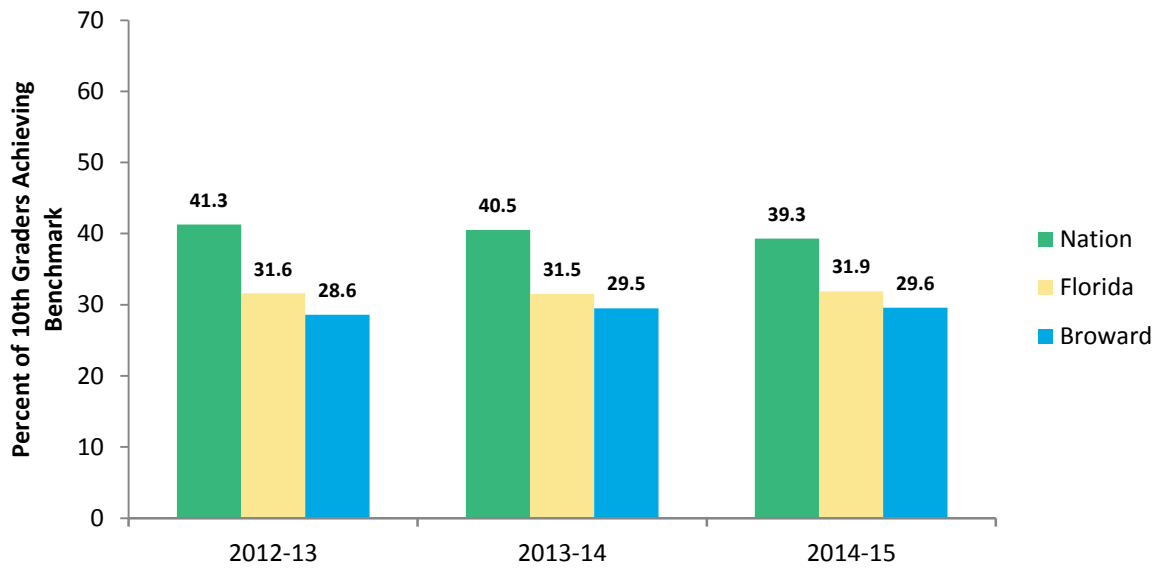


Figure 2. Percent of tenth grade students achieving the college-ready benchmark score for 2012-13 through 2014-15. The benchmark for tenth graders is a composite score of 133.

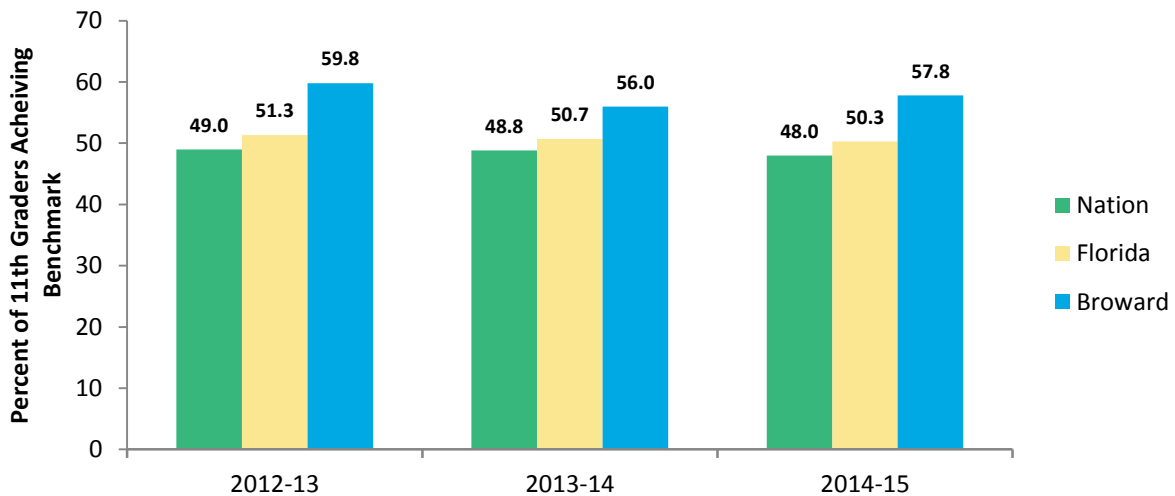


Figure 3. Percent of eleventh grade students achieving the college ready benchmark score for 2012-13 through 2014-15. The benchmark for eleventh graders is a composite score of 152.

Figure 3 shows that over the same three-year period, nearly 60% of Broward students in eleventh grade achieved the benchmark score, compared to approximately 50% for the state and nation. These data suggest that there may be some differences in the population of eleventh grade students that take the PSAT in Broward. However, whatever differences may exist, the GPA of Broward students who took the PSAT in eleventh grade (3.37) was comparable to that of students nationally who took the PSAT (3.37).

Performance Across Student Populations

Table 4 presents mean scores for the three major racial/ethnic groups of students in each of the areas assessed on the PSAT. Within each group, scores remained stable across the five years of the study, with variability not exceeding 1.2 percentage points for any of the three academic areas assessed.

Table 4

Broward PSAT Mean Score by Race/Ethnicity, 2010-11 through 2014-15

Year	Black			Hispanic			White		
	Critical Reading	Math	Writing	Critical Reading	Math	Writing	Critical Reading	Math	Writing
Grade 10									
2010-11	36.6	37.8	34.8	41.0	42.5	37.9	43.9	45.5	40.7
2011-12	37.4	36.3	35.4	41.0	41.0	38.7	44.3	44.3	41.1
2012-13	37.4	37.3	35.4	41.0	41.7	39.4	43.8	44.6	41.4
2013-14	36.8	37.4	34.9	40.9	41.7	39.0	43.8	44.8	41.6
2014-15	37.0	36.9	33.7	40.7	41.3	37.8	44.2	45.5	41.4
5-Year Change	+0.4	-0.9	-1.1	-0.3	-1.2	-0.1	+0.3	0.0	+0.7
Grade 11									
2010-11	46.3	46.3	43.1	50.2	51.6	46.8	53.1	55.2	50.6
2011-12	45.5	44.6	42.5	50.4	51.6	47.9	52.8	54.1	50.4
2012-13	45.9	45.6	43.9	50.1	50.6	48.9	52.7	53.5	50.9
2013-14	45.6	45.0	42.9	49.4	50.4	47.6	51.8	53.4	50.0
2014-15	46.0	45.5	42.6	50.1	51.1	47.7	52.3	54.0	50.9
5-Year Change	-0.3	-0.8	-0.5	-0.1	-0.5	0.9	-0.8	-1.2	+0.3

Achievement Gaps

Composite scores (sum of the three academic scores) were compared between the three major racial/ethnic groups to examine changes in score gaps. As shown in Figure 4 (below), for tenth grade participants, Black students had the lowest average scores (108 in 2014-15), followed by Hispanic students (120 in 2014-15), followed by White students (131 in 2014-15). The gap in composite scores has widened between Hispanic and White students (from 8.8 points to 11.2 points) and between Black and White students (from 20.9 points to 23.4 points) over the five-year period.

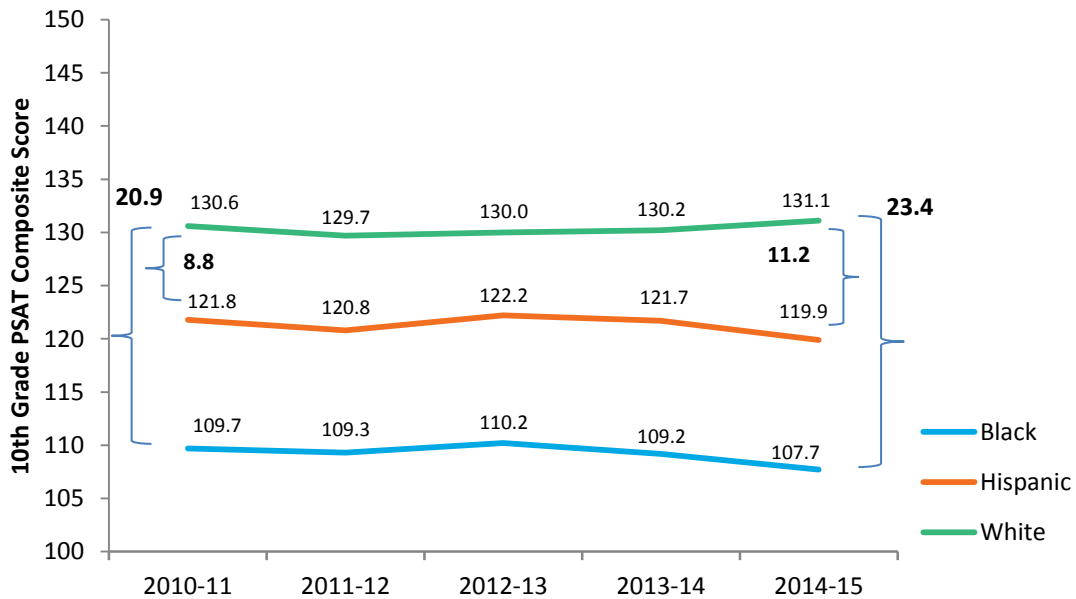


Figure 4. Mean composite scores for tenth grade by three major racial/ethnic groups, with gaps between groups illustrated.

Tenth Grade Benchmark for Student Sub-Populations

Next we examined the distribution of scores for different student populations as compared to the composite college-ready benchmark score for the 2014-15 school year. Figure 5 displays box and whisker plots for Broward’s tenth grade students overall and for subgroups of students. The area within each box represents the scores ranging from the 25th to 75th percentiles computed separately for the group. The dark line within each box represents the median score (half of the students within the group scored above this line and half below). The whiskers (vertical lines above and below the boxes) show the range of scores obtained by the group. The horizontal reference line represents the college-ready benchmark score of 133. Overall, most tenth grade students scored below the benchmark. This is not surprising since, as previously mentioned and shown in Table 3, the mean scores for students nationally only met the benchmark for reading, and the mean scores for students statewide and districtwide did not meet the benchmark score in any area.

The only sub-population of students to achieve a mean score above the benchmark was gifted students. For this group, the entire box in Figure 5 is above the benchmark reference line, illustrating that over 75% of all gifted students exceeded the benchmark. Although none of the other sub-populations of students had median scores above the benchmark, as the box and whisker plot shows, there were successes with at least some students meeting the benchmark score in nearly every group. Among the three racial/ethnic groups, almost half of all White students, slightly over one-quarter of all Hispanic students and close to one-quarter of all Black students met or exceeded the benchmark score. The lowest scores occurred among SWD (mean score = 96.5) and LEP students (mean score = 92.6). LEP students were the only group to have scores that were exclusively below the benchmark.

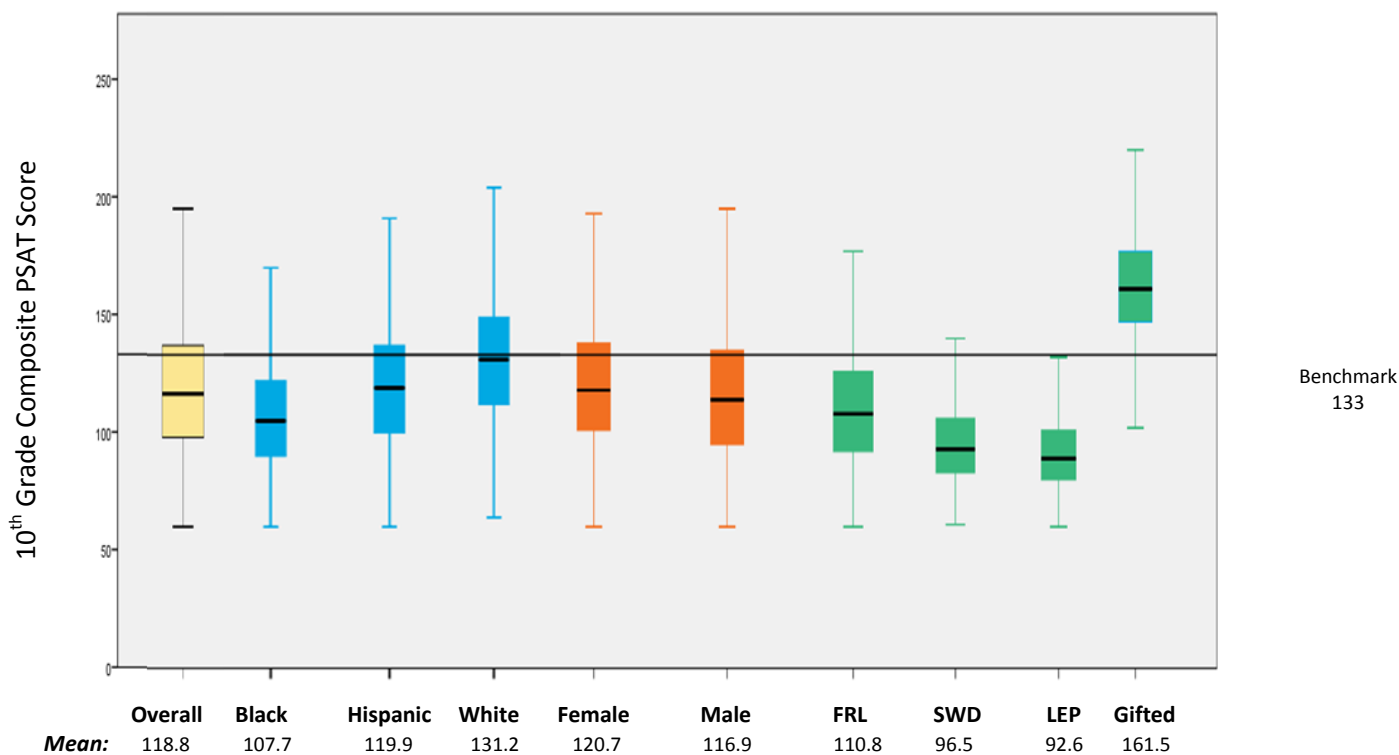


Figure 5. Composite PSAT scores for tenth grade by student sub-population for school year 2014-15.

Eleventh Grade Benchmark for Student Sub-Populations

Of the students who took the PSAT in eleventh grade, male, female, Hispanic, White, and gifted students had an average score above the benchmark score. Black and FRL students came close, with Black students having an average score 8.2 points lower and FRL 3.9 points lower. As was also seen in tenth grade, SWD and LEP students were furthest away at almost 20 and 30 points, respectively. While not all groups met the mean benchmark score, all groups except for LEP had at least 25% of their students achieve the benchmark score. The highest scoring 25% of each group is indicated by the line extending from the top of the box (Figure 6).

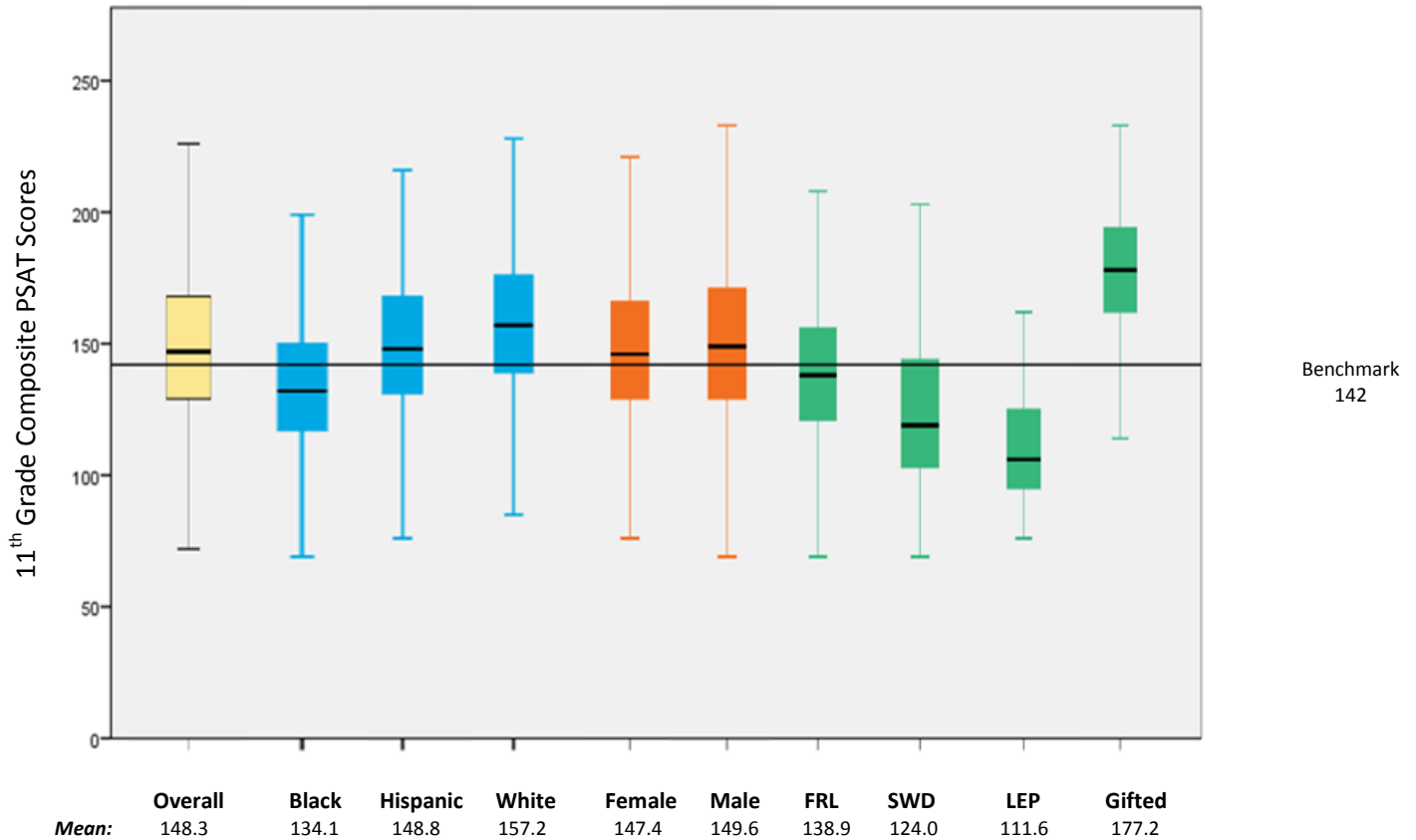


Figure 6. Composite PSAT scores for eleventh grade by student sub-population for school year 2014-15.

National Merit Scholarship

Thirty-four students from 10 BCPS high schools were National Merit Scholarship Semi-finalists in 2015. They entered the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2013 PSAT (school year 2013-14), along with 1.4 million juniors from over 22,000 high schools. National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists represent the highest scoring students from each state, accounting for less than 1% of all high school seniors nationally. In order to become a finalist, they must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be recommended by a high school official, write an essay, and have high SAT scores. National Merit Scholars are selected from the pool of finalists. Scholars are announced in four separate press releases, with the last announcement taking

place in July. As of May 2015, BCPS has eight National Merit Scholars: four from Cypress Bay, two from Marjory Stoneman Douglas, and one each from Miramar and Western high schools.

The 2015 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists came from Cooper City (2), Coral Glades (3), Cypress Bay (12), Charles W. Flanagan (2), Marjory Stoneman Douglas (7), Miramar (2), Pompano Beach (2), South Plantation (1), West Broward (1), and Western (2) high schools.

Two high schools, Cypress Bay and Marjory Stoneman Douglas, consistently have a number of semifinalists each year. Cypress Bay had ten each in 2013 and 2014 and twelve in 2015, and Stoneman Douglas had 21 in 2013, eight in 2014, and seven in 2015.

Summary

Student participation in the PSAT has remained stable over the past five years. There was a slight decrease in tenth grade participation (-0.6 percentage points) and a small increase in eleventh grade participation (+1.5 percentage points). Participation among eleventh grade Black students increased by 1%, and among eleventh grade Hispanic students increased by 5%.

Participation varied dramatically by school type. Tenth grade participation rate in 2015 was highest for traditional schools (88%), followed by charter schools (65%) and center schools (11%).

Benchmark scores were achieved by 30% of 10th graders and 58% of 11th graders taking the PSAT. Because the State of Florida pays for all tenth graders to take the PSAT, a broad range of students with varying ability and aspirations, including those who do not plan to attend college, take the exam, contributing to a lower proportion of tenth graders achieving benchmark scores compared to the national average. The percent of eleventh grade students in Broward achieving the benchmark score is higher than the percent of eleventh graders achieving the benchmark score nationally. Looking at subpopulations of students, in tenth grade, gifted students were the only group to achieve an average score that met the benchmark. In eleventh grade, the overall average, male, female, White, Hispanic and gifted students all exceeded the benchmark, whereas Black and FRL students were slightly below the benchmark, and SWD and LEP students well below the benchmark.

Differences in the composition of tenth and eleventh grade PSAT participants may account for differences in meeting college-ready benchmark. In Broward for school year 2014-15, tenth grade had a greater percentage of participants who were from FRL, SWD, and LEP groups (56%, 8%, and 5%, respectively) compared to eleventh grade (47%, 4%, and 2%). Gifted students also made up a smaller percentage of the tenth grade participants (6%) than the eleventh grade participants (14%).

Differences between the three major racial/ethnic groups in tenth grade were mostly stable, with White students having the highest scores, followed by Hispanic students, followed by Black students. Gaps between the groups were similar throughout the different time points; however, there was a widening of the gap between Black and White students of 2.5 points and between Hispanic and White students of 2.4 points.

Thirty-four students from ten high schools received National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist standing in 2015. Most semifinalists in this and prior years came from Cypress Bay and Marjory Stoneman Douglas high schools.

Discussion and Action Items

Encourage participation in all students. The PSAT is administered in tenth grade to fulfill state legislation mandating that all districts provide advanced coursework and college access to under-represented populations. Participation among centers is low (11%) in Broward County. All schools, including centers, should be administering the PSAT to all students in 10th grade except for those whose parents have specifically requested that their child not take the exam. In addition to identifying students who are likely to succeed in AP coursework, participation in the PSAT in tenth grade helps schools to identify students' strengths and weaknesses in skills essential for college success: critical reading, math, and writing. This information can help inform instruction.

Why should schools encourage students to take the PSAT?

- To fulfill state legislation mandating that all districts administer an exam to identify students from under-represented populations (including centers) who are likely to succeed in advanced coursework (10th grade only).
- To identify students for AP courses that have not been previously identified.
- To guide instruction at the middle and high school levels by identifying school-wide trends in weaknesses in specific domains within critical reading, math, and writing.
- To help students prepare for the PSAT in eleventh grade in order to compete for the National Merit Scholarship.
- To increase SAT scores by providing extra practice and customized study plans for students
- To enroll students in the National Merit Scholarship competition (eleventh grade only).

Although the state only covers the cost of administration of the PSAT in tenth grade, testing coordinators at schools can request fee waivers for their eleventh grade students who qualify for the National School Lunch Program. More information is available on the College Board Web site: (<https://www.collegeboard.org>).

Provide an Opportunity for Students to use My College Quickstart™. Students taking the PSAT are provided with a wealth of online study resources through My College Quickstart™. However, most students do not use this resource. In 2012-13, only 10% of all students who took the PSAT actually logged into My College Quickstart™. Schools are encouraged to facilitate the use of this valuable resource with students. One way to accomplish this is to pick a class (i.e., English Language Arts, Social Studies) and dedicate one (or more) class sessions to student use of My College Quickstart™.

Use the Results to Inform Instruction. Results from the PSAT can help BCPS in its commitment to provide the advanced educational opportunities that give students the skills and knowledge needed for success in college-level coursework. Guidance staff can use the AP Potential report provided by

College Board as a source of information to identify students for participation in upper-level course enrollment. Principals and guidance staff are encouraged to review the SOAS reports provided by College Board and use them, along with the PSAT spreadsheets provided by the Department of Mathematics, Science and Gifted, to develop curriculum geared towards closing the identified gaps in skills-based knowledge. Schools are also encouraged to share this information with the middle schools that their students came from in order to address these gaps in skills-based knowledge before students enter high school. Schools needing assistance in modifying curriculum to address the information provided by these reports can contact Bob McKinney at the Department of Mathematics, Science, and Gifted.

Appendices

Appendix A

PSAT school-level participation and performance for tenth and eleventh grade for school years 2012-13 through 2014-15.

Appendix B

PSAT school-level participation and performance by three major racial groups for tenth and eleventh grade for school years 2012-13 through 2014-15.

Appendix C

PSAT school-level participation and performance by special student sub-population (FRL, ESE, LEP) for tenth and eleventh grade for school years 2012-13 through 2014-15.

Appendix D

PSAT school-level participation and performance by special student sub-population (Female, Male, and Gifted) for tenth and eleventh grade for school years 2012-13 through 2014-15.

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