

# THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

**DANIEL GOHL**  
**CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER**

*Signatures on File*

DATE: April 15, 2019

TO: All Principals

FROM: Daniel F. Gohl  
Chief Academic Officer

VIA: Valerie S. Wanza, Ph.D., Designee  
Chief School Performance and Accountability Officer

SUBJECT: **PRELIMINARY SAT/NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFYING TEST AND PRELIMINARY SAT 8/9: A THREE-YEAR REVIEW OF DATA, 2016-2017 TO 2018-2019**

This memo and the attached appendices summarize student participation and scores<sup>1</sup> from two types of Preliminary SAT tests offered during the years 2016-2017 through 2018-2019: the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), offered to tenth and eleventh grade students, and the Preliminary SAT 8/9 (PSAT 8/9), offered to ninth grade students. Both PSAT administrations provide essential feedback to students, educators, and parents on reading, writing, and mathematical skills essential for success in college-level coursework. Additionally, the PSAT provides students with early exposure to a college entrance-like exam (similar to the SAT), and helps educators identify students to compete in the National Merit Scholarship Competition, as well as, identify students who may benefit from advanced course opportunities. The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) covers the cost of participation for all tenth grade students in an effort to eliminate obstacles to participation by under-represented groups. Beginning in 2016-2017, Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) offered a PSAT 8/9 administration to ninth grade students at traditional schools, free of charge.

- **Among 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students participating in the PSAT/NMSQT, participation rates were stable** over the 3-year-period, with 87.0% of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students and 33.6% of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students participating in 2017-2018. Eleventh grade students must pay to test, so their participation rates are consequently lower than 10<sup>th</sup> grade students' participation rates (see Appendix A-1).
- Among those students enrolled in schools participating in the PSAT 8/9 contract **90.2% of 9<sup>th</sup> grade students (at traditional schools) participated**. Participation among 9<sup>th</sup> grade students rose from 85.6% in the previous year (see Appendix A-2).
- Among 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students, there was a gap in participation between White and minority students, with White students participating at higher rates than Black or Hispanic students. The gap was higher in 11<sup>th</sup> grade than in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. **Among 9<sup>th</sup> grade students participating in the PSAT 8/9, there was no racial gap between White students and Hispanic students, and the gap between White and Black students was minimal (one percentage-point difference)** (see Appendix B).
- Among 10<sup>th</sup> grade students Broward scores in both Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) and Math were on par with Florida-wide scores, but lagged behind national scores. This difference between national and Florida scores for 10<sup>th</sup> grade students taking the PSAT/NMSQT is likely

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<sup>1</sup> This memo, the snapshot, and the supporting appendices reflect data available from College Board as of 03-11-19.

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attributable to the statewide initiative to fund the test for all students in those grades, thus leading to a greater range of academic success amongst participants in Florida (see Appendix C-1).

- **Scores for 11<sup>th</sup> grade students in Broward taking the PSAT/NMSQT outpaced scores Florida-wide and nationally in EBRW** and outpaced scores Florida-wide but lagged slightly behind national scores in Math (see Appendix C-1).
- Among 9<sup>th</sup> grade students taking the PSAT 8/9, Broward scores were equivalent to Florida scores for Math and slightly lower than Florida scores for EBRW (see Appendix C-2). Both Broward scores and Florida-wide scores were slightly lower than national scores. The difference between national scores and Broward scores was greatest in Math. This lag behind the national average for Broward participants, is again likely attributable to the county initiative that funded the test for all students in 9<sup>th</sup> grade traditional schools, thus accompanying a greater variability in test-taking abilities amongst Broward participants (see Appendix C-2).
- New to the 2018-2019 school year, scores of 430 or higher on the Math section of the PSAT/NMSQT earned concordance for the Algebra I test graduation requirement. A small portion (1,203 in 2018-2019) of 9<sup>th</sup> grade students take the PSAT/NMSQT as well as 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students. In 2018-2019, two hundred and one (201) or 16.7 percent of 9<sup>th</sup> grade students who took the PSAT NMSQT earned concordance on the Algebra I test had not yet met the requirement. Seven hundred and fifty-four (754) or 4.4 percent of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students, and 100 or 1.5 percent of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students met concordance via the PSAT/NMSQT for the Algebra I test graduation requirement who had not yet met the requirement (see Appendix D). Thus, in all, **1,055 students who still needed to pass the Algebra I graduation test requirement earned concordance through the PSAT/NMSQT in 2018-2019.**

Please direct any questions or comments concerning this memo to **Richard Baum, Director, Student Assessment and Research, at 754-321-2500**. This memo, the snapshot, and appendices may also be accessed via the Student Assessment and Research website at <https://www.browardschools.com/sar>. BCPS District staff can view and interact with PSAT data through the Department’s SAT and PSAT dashboard available on the SharePoint link below:

<https://browardcountyschools.sharepoint.com/sites/Intranet/Academics/TSD/SAR/Pages/PSAT-Dashboard.aspx>

VSW/DG/RGB/RAA:rs

Attachment

CC: School Board Members  
Senior Leadership Team  
Directors, School Performance and Accountability