

# NEWS

Connecticut Department of Education

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Commissioner

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## Connecticut's Class of 2010 Scores Higher on All Components of the SAT Exceeds National Average on Reading and Writing Tests

HARTFORD – Connecticut's 2010 public school graduates maintained the state's record of strong performance on the SAT Reasoning Test, improving **two points in reading and math** and **four points in writing** over last year's scores. The state's 73 percent participation rate among public school students was fourth highest in the nation.

State Education Commissioner Mark K. McQuillan said, "More Connecticut students are getting the message that post-secondary study -- including college and occupational education -- is vital to economic success. Connecticut's trend of increased SAT participation indicates that more students are setting their sights on college and beyond. The 2010 SAT scores also tell us that many of our students are performing at high levels compared with the nation. Connecticut must compete in the global economy, which means we must have a skilled, highly educated citizenry and that we prepare all of our students for success on the college campus and in the world economy."

### Statewide Performance

Table 1 provides the average SAT scores of Connecticut public school graduates for Critical Reading and Math from 2001 to 2010, and Writing scores from 2006 when this section of the test was added.

<b>Year of Graduation</b>	<b>Critical Reading</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Writing</b>
2001	502	503	.
2002	502	503	.
2003	504	508	.
2004	508	508	.
2005	510	512	.
2006	505	510	504
2007	502	504	503
2008	503	507	506
2009	503	508	506
2010	505	510	510

### **Highlights:**

- **Connecticut's average on the Critical Reading section rose two points in the past year to 505** and exceeds the national public school average (498) by seven points. The national average rose by a point this year;
- **Connecticut's average in Math increased by two points in the past year to 510**, within one point of the national public school average score of 511;
- **This was the fifth year that the SAT included a writing component and Connecticut's average score rose four points to 510—which is 22 points above the national average (488) for public school students;**
- **34.8 percent of public school test-takers in Connecticut scored 600 or above** on at least one test.

The SAT Reasoning Test is a standardized test that The College Board administers nationally. It is one of two national tests that colleges use in their admissions process, the other being the ACT, which tends to be more popular in the South and Midwest. The SAT is administered seven times per year. Scores are reported on a scale of 200 to 800. The results reported by the College Board include only the most recent test results for the high school graduating class of 2010.

The top five colleges receiving SAT score reports from CT public school graduates were the University of Connecticut (44.5% of score senders), Central Connecticut State University (23.9%), Southern Connecticut State University (19.2%), Eastern Connecticut State University (14.0%), and Western Connecticut State University (12.4%)

Approximately 75 percent of all test takers in Connecticut are from public high schools. Nine percent of test takers are from private, religiously affiliated high schools, and eight percent are from private independent high schools. This news release focuses on the performance of public school test-takers.

Table 2 provides the number of test-takers and average SAT scores by high school type.

Type of High School	Number	Percent of Test-takers			Reading	Math	Writing
		Percent of Test-takers	Percent Male	Percent Female			
Public	27,044	75	47	53	505	510	510
Religiously Affiliated	3,165	9	55	45	526	530	530
Independent	2,694	7	53	47	592	598	595
Other or Unknown	3,173	9	49	51	457	452	456
Total	36,076	100	48	52	509	514	513

School districts will be releasing individual high school results in the coming weeks.

### **Statewide Participation**

From this year's public high school class, 27,044 students took the SAT, an increase of 3.6 percent, compared to a 2.1 percent increase nationwide. The College Board estimates that Connecticut's public school participation rate is 73 percent, which places Connecticut fourth behind Maine, Massachusetts, and New York (see Table 3). Nationally, an estimated 37 percent of the 2010 public high school graduates took the SAT.

Table 3 provides Connecticut public school graduates' SAT scores relative to other high-participation states.

State	2010				2009			
	Participation Rate	Critical Reading	Math	Writing	Participation Rate	Critical Reading	Math	Writing
Maine	100%	463	460	449	100%	463	460	449
Massachusetts	75%	508	524	504	72%	508	522	504
New York	75%	483	501	476	76%	480	500	473
<b>Connecticut</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>506</b>
New Jersey	68%	496	519	498	65%	493	515	494

Table 3	2010				2009			
State	Participation Rate	Critical Reading	Math	Writing	Participation Rate	Critical Reading	Math	Writing
New Hampshire	65%	513	519	503	64%	513	515	499
Georgia	64%	484	487	471	58%	486	489	475
Pennsylvania	62%	490	502	478	62%	489	500	478
Delaware	62%	478	481	463	57%	478	484	464
Maryland	61%	495	502	488	58%	492	498	488

Because the populations of students tested may not be comparable across states, it is inappropriate to use the SAT or any single assessment result to compare states' scores. Test-taking populations may differ significantly from state to state because of differences in 1) the percentage of graduates who plan to attend college; 2) the percentage of students taking the SAT as opposed to the ACT; and 3) community colleges' admission requirements.

### ACT Participation Increases in Connecticut

While SAT participation increased slightly in 2010, more Connecticut graduates took the ACT than ever before. The ACT is also accepted by colleges and universities in their admissions process. A record number of Connecticut's 2010 graduates took the ACT – 10,453 –up from 9,240 in 2009. Connecticut's ACT composite score in 2010 was 23.7 out of a possible score of 36, up 0.2 points from 2009 and tied for second highest in the nation. Visit [www.act.org/crr/2010](http://www.act.org/crr/2010) for additional information.

**Student Characteristics:** In Connecticut, 53.2 percent of SAT examinees are female as compared to 54.6 percent nationally. 24.1 percent of the 2010 Connecticut graduating class last took the test as juniors.

The percentage of minority SAT test takers in Connecticut was 30.8, which is 14.4 percentage points less than what examinees reported nationally. The number of Hispanic students in Connecticut taking the SAT rose by 5.9 percent, compared to a nationwide increase of 7.3 percent. The number of black students taking the SAT rose by 5.2 percent compared to a nationwide increase of 7.1 percent.

In Connecticut, 83 percent of test takers reported having English as their first language. More than 66 percent of Connecticut's examinees reported having at least one parent with an associate's degree or higher.

### Statewide Subgroup Performance

**Race/Ethnicity:** Performance gaps between minority and non-minority students persisted in 2010, although the gap between black and white students' average scores narrowed on two exams. Table 4 provides average scores of graduates who took the SAT by race/ethnicity from 2001 to 2010. Writing scores are provided since 2006 when the writing test was initiated.

Table 4 provides Connecticut’s SAT scores by race/ethnicity over the period 2001 to 2010.

Table 4 Year of Graduation	Critical Reading				Mathematics				Writing			
	Black	Asian	Hispanic	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	White
2001	416	502	442	523	402	550	439	525	.	.	.	.
2002	410	498	434	521	399	556	430	523	.	.	.	.
2003	416	504	438	523	403	549	434	528	.	.	.	.
2004	415	503	444	524	405	549	441	523	.	.	.	.
2005	417	513	447	528	408	561	445	529	.	.	.	.
2006	418	522	445	523	404	567	441	530	416	526	442	522
2007	416	515	439	522	405	560	434	525	416	522	439	523
2008	409	513	442	524	396	562	437	531	410	523	442	528
2009	408	525	438	526	400	571	435	532	412	535	440	529
2010	413	525	441	527	405	568	440	533	414	536	442	532

- The performance gap between black and white students narrowed in both the Critical Reading and Mathematics tests as black students made substantial gains in both exams.
- The 2010 Critical Reading averages for Hispanic, black, and white graduates improved last year over the previous year, while the average for Asian students remained the same. The average reading score of 413 for black graduates was up five points from last year. The average reading score of 441 for Hispanic graduates was up three points from 2009.
- Black, white and Hispanic graduates all showed increases in their average Mathematics scores. The average SAT math scores were highest for Asian graduates at 568, followed by 533 for white, 440 for Hispanic and 405 for black graduates. Black and Hispanic graduates’ average scores rose by 5 points from 2009. Only Asian students’ average score showed a decline in 2010.
- Students from all of the ethnic/racial categories showed increases in their average Writing scores. The average writing scores in 2010 were 536 for Asian, 532 for white, 442 for Hispanic and 414 for black graduates.

“While there are some gains in their test scores this year,” said Commissioner McQuillan, “I continue to be very concerned that our state’s black and Hispanic students are lagging behind in test performance. Their increasing interest in taking the SAT is encouraging, but we need to do more to help them prepare for and improve their performance on this important college admissions exam. This starts with greater participation in the PSAT, a more rigorous high school curriculum and a better informed parent community. In too many cases, minority students are not exposed to a rigorous, college prep curriculum with support to assure their success. Changing this must be our priority for the next four years as we implement secondary school reform, and involve parents and families in the process.”

The Commissioner also expressed concern about Connecticut’s math scores. “Our students’ mathematics skills, in particular, will have an impact on our future economy. I am concerned that several states with participation rates as strong as Connecticut’s are also scoring well above us. We need to do more in math and science study and I view this with a sense of urgency,” the Commissioner pointed out.

**Gender: The performance gaps between males and females continue with females excelling in writing and males in math; males' edge in reading increased in the last year.**

Table 5 compares the reading and math performance of Connecticut's male and female graduates from 2001 to 2010. Writing scores are reported from 2006.

Table 5 Year of Graduation	Critical Reading		Mathematics		Writing	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
2001	507	498	522	488	.	.
2002	502	501	520	488	.	.
2003	510	499	527	491	.	.
2004	513	503	529	490	.	.
2005	514	507	529	497	.	.
2006	506	504	528	494	497	510
2007	504	500	523	489	497	508
2008	506	500	526	491	500	512
2009	504	502	524	493	497	513
2010	509	502	529	494	503	516

- Males' average scores in Critical Reading rose 5 points to 509, which was 7 points higher than that of females, whose average score remained the same from the previous year. Both averages were slightly above the levels a decade ago.

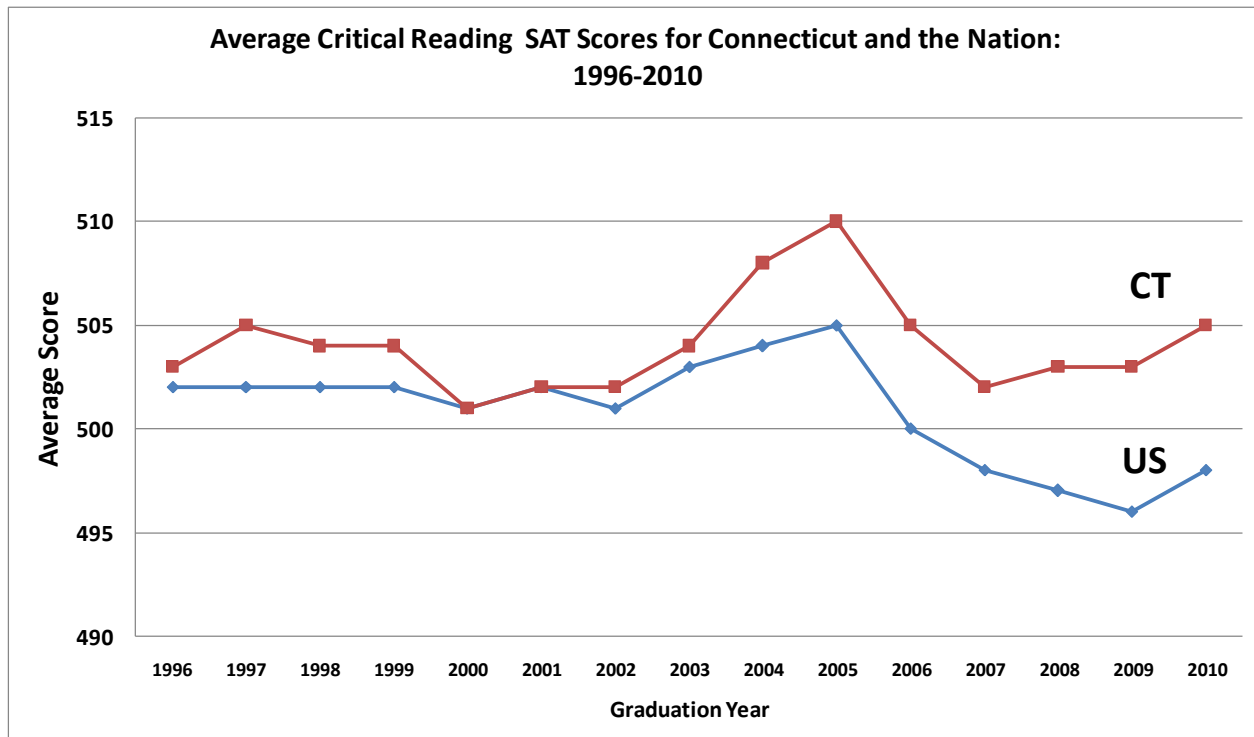
- Males' average score in Math of 529 and females' average score of 494 were both above their averages a decade earlier. The gap between males and females is nearly the same as it was in 2001.

- Males' average score in Writing rose 6 points to 503 and females' average score rose 3 points to 516. Both male and female students from Connecticut public schools outscored their peers nationally.

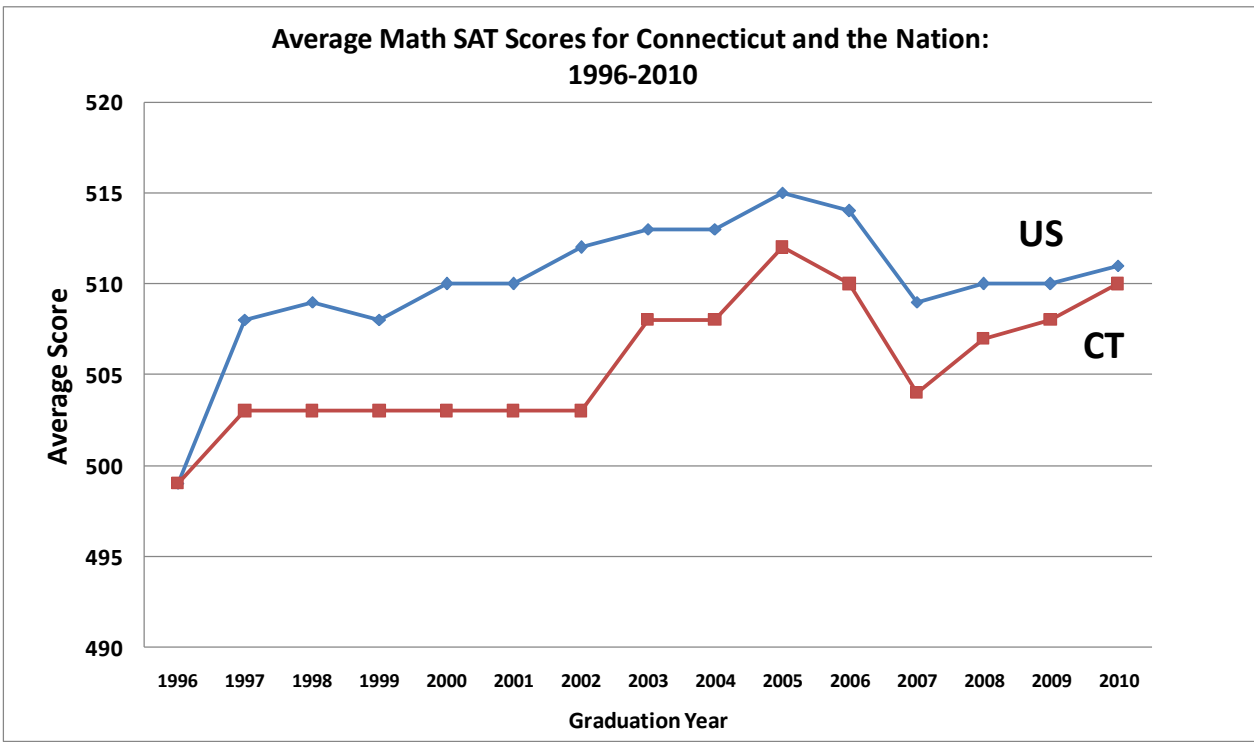
## Trends in SAT performance in Connecticut and the U.S.

The following figures display trends in average SAT scores for CT and the rest of the nation's public school graduates. Critical Reading and Math scores are shown from 1996 to 2010. Writing scores are reported from 2006 to 2010.

**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**



**Figure 3**

