

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Despite Dip, Cobb SAT Scores Remain Ahead of Georgia, Nation**

Cobb County's senior class of 2010 continued to outperform their state and national peers on the SAT test for college readiness, despite a decrease of 11 points in the average score. This year's graduating class had an overall average score of 1523 (Reading, Math, Writing), besting the state average by 70 points and the national average by 14 points.

On this year's SAT, seven of Cobb's 14 high schools had combined totals higher than the national average of 1509 and six showed improvements over 2009 scores. Wheeler High School posted the biggest gain with an average of 1655, a 15-point increase from last year and an 81-point improvement over 2008 scores. Other schools showing increases from 2009 include Hillgrove (10), Kell (12), Kennesaw Mountain (2), North Cobb (4), and Pebblebrook (6).

Cobb students' scores decreased marginally in each of the three academic areas of the test - four points in Reading, two points in Math and five points in Writing. The overall state scores reflected similar decreases in all three areas. National SAT scores in Math improved by one point, held steady in Reading and decreased by one point in Writing.

A total of 5,098 Cobb students voluntarily took the SAT in 2010, representing 67 percent of the total graduating class, a one percent increase over 2009, but still well below historical participation rates. While SAT participation is on the rise for Georgia overall, Cobb students' focus has shifted toward the ACT as a measure of college readiness. Since 2006, Cobb has seen SAT participation fall from 77 percent to 67 percent. Over the same time period, the number of Cobb students taking the ACT has grown by the same percentage, from 27 percent to 37 percent.

"Obviously, I am not pleased when our scores drop," said Superintendent Fred Sanderson, "but I think it's important that we keep things in perspective. There are a number of factors that could account for scores changing year to year. Over the last several years we've seen a real shift as more and more students are taking the ACT. A lot of those kids are relatively high achievers whose scores would have improved the district average had they taken the SAT instead. You also have to consider the makeup of each class of students. Some classes have

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stronger students and better test-takers than others. Instead of reacting to point swings year to year, up or down, it's probably wiser to look at where our scores stand in relation to state and national averages over a period of several years. Our biggest concern is making sure our students are prepared for a college curriculum, and in that regard I think we are doing well with our scores still easily above the state and national averages, as they have been for some time. Colleges and universities nationwide will continue to see Cobb County students as relatively strong performers."

The SAT is designed to predict a student's potential for success in the first year of college. It tests students' knowledge and application of Reading, Writing and Math. The writing section of the test asks students to write an essay that requires them to take a position on an issue and use reasoning and examples to support their position. The Math section of the test includes topics from third-year college-preparatory math, such as exponential growth, absolute value, functional notation, and negative and fractional exponents. The Critical Reading section, previously known as the Verbal section, includes short and long reading passages.

Both nationally, in Georgia and locally, the class of 2010 is the most diverse set of SAT test takers in the exam's history. Cobb saw increases in the respective numbers of Black, Hispanic, and Asian students taking the test and a slight decrease in the number of White and Multi-racial test takers. Hispanic students showed an 11-point increase in average SAT score over 2009.

Many factors affect SAT scores from year to year, including the percentage of students taking the test, student academic preparation, knowledge of English, parents' education, and locality. Cobb information shows that the higher the grades and rank-in-class achieved, generally the higher the mean SAT scores.

Parents who desire more information about their student's SAT scores should contact counselors in the local high school who can provide proper interpretation to help make the best use of test results.

SAT scores for individual Cobb high schools are listed in Table II.

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## Quick Facts about the Cobb County School District 2010 Seniors taking the SAT

- ✿ The overall total SAT score for the District was 1523. This is 70 points higher than the State's score of 1453, and 14 points higher than the National average of 1509.
- ✿ Cobb's overall 2010 SAT score dropped 11 points over the previous year, while state averages declined 7 points and the national average remained unchanged.
- ✿ A total of 5,098 graduating seniors in Cobb voluntarily took the SAT in 2010. This represents 67% of the total graduating senior class and an increase in participation compared to 66% last year.
- ✿ Six Cobb high schools had an increase in SAT total: Hillgrove (10), Kell (12), Kennesaw Mountain (2), North Cobb (4), Pebblebrook (6), Wheeler (15).
- ✿ Seven Cobb high schools had SAT total scores higher than the national average: Harrison, Kell, Kennesaw Mountain, Lassiter, Pope, Walton, Wheeler.
- ✿ The number of male students taking the SAT was 2300, (46%). The number of females taking the test was 2701 (54%). The average score for male seniors was 1543, two points lower than last year, while the average for female seniors dropped eighteen points from 1525 in 2009, to 1507 in 2010.
- ✿ 83% of the test takers were English-only speaking students. Nine percent identified themselves as speaking English and one other language. Eight percent of the testing seniors identified themselves as speaking a language other than English.
- ✿ Seniors taking the SAT identified their ethnicity as:

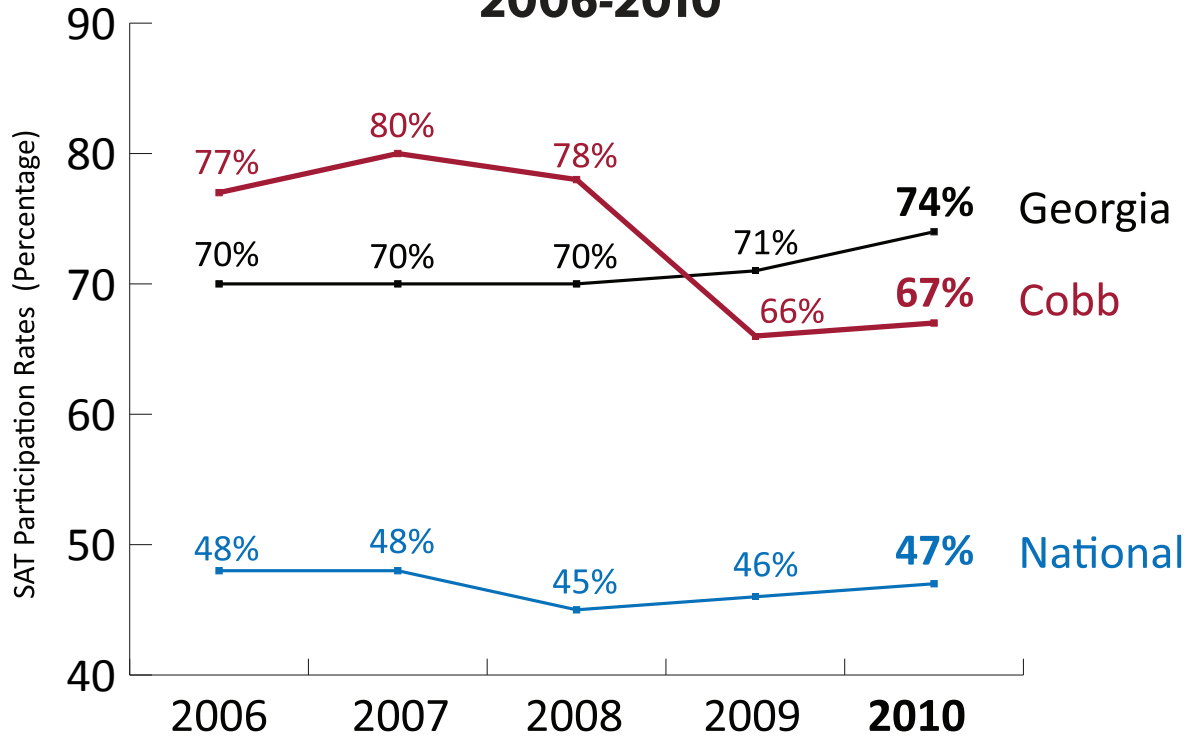
	2009		2010	
	%	Score	%	Score
<b>Native American</b>	0.3%	1587	0.4%	1505
<b>Asian</b>	6.5%	1697	6.9%	1651
<b>Black</b>	23.8%	1345	25.8%	1321
<b>Hispanic</b>	6.5%	1417	6.9%	1428
<b>White</b>	57.4%	1609	55.0%	1616
<b>Other / Multiracial</b>	3.5%	1506	3.1%	1470
<b>No Response</b>	2.0%	1546	1.9%	1525

- ✿ Seniors identifying themselves as Latino/Hispanic had a higher SAT total score by 11 points from the previous year, moving from 1417 in 2009, to 1428 in 2010. The total score for White students was 1616, 7 points higher than in 2009.
- ✿ Thirty-one percent of the test takers indicated their parents had a high school diploma or associate degree. Forty-one percent indicated their parents had a Bachelor's or 4-year degree. Twenty-six percent of the testing seniors indicated their parents had a graduate or professional degree.
- ✿ 2010 Seniors taking the SAT identified their family income as:

less than \$50,000	29%
\$50,000 to less than \$100,000	33%
\$100,000 and above	<u>38%</u>

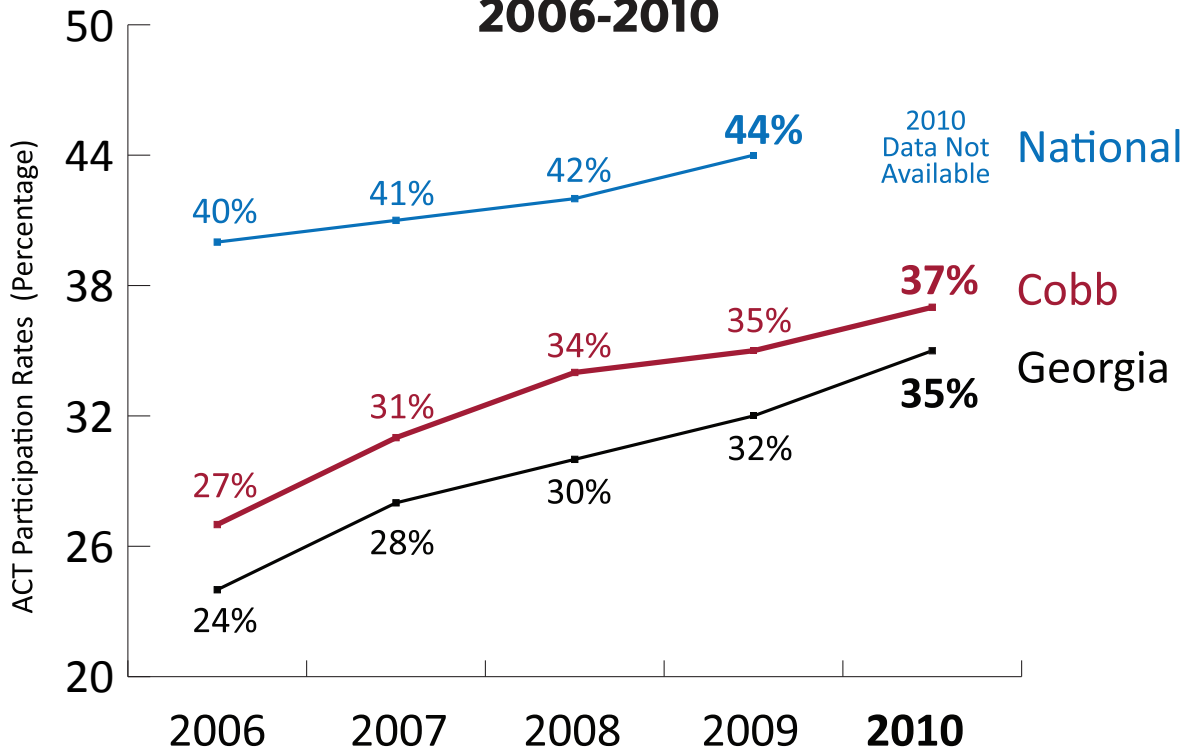
# SAT Participation

2006-2010



# ACT Participation

2006-2010



**A FIVE YEAR COMPARISON OF SCHOLASTIC ASSESSMENT TEST (SAT)  
SCORES FOR COLLEGE BOUND SENIORS\*  
2006 to 2010**

**READING**

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NATIONAL</u>	<u>COBB COUNTY</u>	<u>GEORGIA</u>
2010	501	511	488
2009	501	515	490
2008	502	511	491
2007	502	515	494
2006	503	517	494

**MATHEMATICS**

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NATIONAL</u>	<u>COBB COUNTY</u>	<u>GEORGIA</u>
2010	516	517	490
2009	515	519	491
2008	515	514	493
2007	515	517	495
2006	518	517	496

**WRITING**

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NATIONAL</u>	<u>COBB COUNTY</u>	<u>GEORGIA</u>
2010	492	495	475
2009	493	500	479
2008	494	499	482
2007	494	502	483
2006	497	504	487

Scale: 200 - 800

**Percentage of Students Taking the SAT:**

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
<b>NATIONAL</b>	48%	48%	45%	46%	47%
<b>GEORGIA</b>	70%	70%	70%	71%	74%
<b>COBB COUNTY</b>	77%	80%	78%	66%	67%

\* All scores are reported on the recentered SAT score scale.

\*\* Estimated percentage of Georgia graduating seniors.

**COBB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SCHOLASTIC ASSESSMENT TESTS (SAT) SCORES\*  
2008 to 2010**

AREA/ SCHOOL	PERCENTAGE TESTED**			Critical Reading Scores			Mathematics Scores			Reading & Math Total			Writing Scores***			New Total		
	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010
<b>NATIONAL</b>	45%	46%	47%	502	501	501	515	515	516	1017	1016	<b>1017</b>	494	493	492	1511	1509	<b>1509</b>
<b>COBB COUNTY</b>	78%	66%	67%	511	515	511	514	519	517	1025	1034	<b>1028</b>	499	500	495	1524	1534	<b>1523</b>
<b>GEORGIA</b>	70%	71%	74%	491	490	488	493	491	490	984	981	<b>978</b>	482	479	475	1466	1460	<b>1453</b>
<b>ALLATOONA</b>	--	--	66%	--	--	489	--	--	490	--	--	979	--	--	475	--	--	<b>1454</b>
<b>CAMPBELL</b>	69%	62%	53%	497	498	495	486	491	485	983	989	980	488	486	484	1471	1475	<b>1464</b>
<b>HARRISON</b>	85%	73%	82%	529	536	531	528	541	536	1057	1077	1067	514	519	510	1571	1596	<b>1577</b>
<b>HILLGROVE</b>	70%	70%	74%	487	488	498	482	492	493	969	980	991	473	482	481	1442	1462	<b>1472</b>
<b>KELL</b>	79%	62%	72%	513	502	504	525	512	519	1038	1014	1023	499	486	489	1537	1500	<b>1512</b>
<b>KENNESAW MTN.</b>	82%	69%	69%	519	523	519	520	523	530	1039	1046	1049	503	505	504	1542	1551	<b>1553</b>
<b>LASSITER</b>	92%	77%	88%	545	555	546	560	567	562	1105	1122	1108	530	536	525	1635	1658	<b>1633</b>
<b>MCEACHERN</b>	73%	62%	60%	483	468	454	467	466	449	950	934	903	463	452	438	1413	1386	<b>1341</b>
<b>NORTH COBB</b>	70%	61%	55%	477	485	491	469	480	478	946	965	969	467	467	467	1413	1432	<b>1436</b>
<b>OSBORNE</b>	53%	45%	42%	411	429	409	418	437	399	829	866	808	408	419	388	1237	1285	<b>1196</b>
<b>PEBBLEBROOK</b>	62%	52%	52%	436	441	438	427	427	437	863	868	875	432	432	431	1295	1300	<b>1306</b>
<b>POPE</b>	93%	80%	81%	545	550	547	559	568	566	1104	1118	1113	542	538	540	1646	1656	<b>1653</b>
<b>SOUTH COBB</b>	64%	50%	46%	443	453	447	442	451	444	885	904	891	432	444	438	1317	1348	<b>1329</b>
<b>SPRAYBERRY</b>	75%	58%	56%	500	489	497	492	493	493	992	982	990	489	477	466	1481	1459	<b>1456</b>
<b>WALTON</b>	98%	85%	94%	564	575	565	586	589	593	1150	1164	1158	562	558	553	1712	1722	<b>1711</b>
<b>WHEELER</b>	74%	63%	68%	525	550	554	538	555	563	1063	1105	1117	511	535	538	1574	1640	<b>1655</b>

Score range 200-800 for all tests

-- No scores for Allatoona prior to 2010

\* All Scores are reported on the recentered SAT score scale.

\*\* Estimated percentage of Georgia graduating seniors.

Data Source: 2010 College Board Highlights  
2010 College Board Profile